



Little Stars Pre-school

at Emmanuel Church

Prospectus



Emmanuel
Church

General Information

Little Stars Pre-school at Emmanuel Church is a privately run, funded, equal opportunities, sessional day care Pre-school, owned and managed by Emmanuel Church PCC. Little Stars has been validated by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance. Most of our staff are Christians, worshipping at Emmanuel or other local churches.

We originally opened as Emmanuel Playgroup in 1976. Since then we have thrived and grown in experience and we are proud of the part we have played in the educational life of many of the children in the Stoughton community for over 30 years.

*We are open 36 weeks of the year and

offer up to five morning sessions a week:	Mondays to Fridays
Each session is three hours long from:	09.15 - 12.15
There is an optional lunch club from:	12.15 - 13.00
Number of children per session:	Maximum of 32
Staff Ratio:	1:4 for 2 year olds 1:8 for 3-4 year olds

Contact Details:

Little Stars Pre-school at Emmanuel Church
Shepherds Lane
Guildford
GU2 9SJ

Telephone: 01483 301254 (during Pre-school sessions)
Church Office: 01483 561603
E-mail: littlestars.preschool@emmanuelchurch.co.uk

Admissions Policy:

Children are accepted at Little Stars Pre-school in the term in which they have their third birthday. We provide a place for a maximum of 32 children on any given morning. Preference is given as follows:

1. To children whose siblings have attended Little Stars Pre-school.
2. Children of families who are part of the regular worshipping community at Emmanuel.
3. Chronological termly order on the waiting list.

We are often over-subscribed and it is advisable to put your child's name down on the waiting list as early as possible.

***NB: Little Stars Pre-school offers sessions for 36 weeks of the full Early Years entitlement of 38 weeks a year. We cannot guarantee every child five 3 hour sessions a week.**

Our Aim is:

to build a secure bridge between each child's home environment and their future school careers by:

- providing a safe, secure, happy and stimulating environment where your child can develop their confidence, independence and self-esteem and learn alongside their peers through play.
- enhancing the development and education of children under statutory school age in a parent-involving community based group providing a sound basis on which your child can build their future learning.
- Working within a framework which ensures equality of opportunity for all children and their families.

We offer your child:

- a well planned and resourced curriculum leading to approved learning outcomes.
- individual care and attention made possible by a high ratio of adults to children ensuring that each child is able to develop at their own pace and realise their full potential within the group.
- the opportunity for fun and friendship with children of their own age and with staff.
- the support of a key person.
- Opportunities for you and your family to be directly involved in the activities of the group and in your own child's progress.
- Continuity of Pre-school education over two years, leading into the child's reception year at Primary school.
- Excellent links with local schools. (Children are visited by their Reception Class teachers in the summer term prior to their move to Primary School).

Within the setting, all children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. Our key person system enables us to monitor your child's progress and plan our curriculum appropriately, incorporating the needs of each individual child. We offer a wide range of play activities, within a well resourced and stimulating environment with the added benefit that your child's development can be monitored within a keyworker file which will ensure your child's smooth transition into the reception year of their chosen primary school. At Little Stars we support, stimulate, observe and record children's progress to provide a continuous record of your child's achievement throughout the Foundation Stage.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (Dept. of Education) states:

"The Early Years Foundations Stage (EYFS) sets the standard that all early years' providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life".

There are seven areas of learning and development. The three *prime areas* are particularly important for provoking children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and also building their capability to learn and form relationships. These *prime areas* reflect the key skills all children need to develop and learn effectively to be ready for school

The prime areas are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language
- Physical development

Practitioners must also support children in four specific areas, through which the prime areas are strengthened. The four specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

Practitioners working with the youngest children are expected to focus on the three prime areas, which are the basis for successful learning in the other four specific areas. The three prime areas reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively in order to become ready for school.

It is expected that the balance will shift towards a more equal focus on all areas of learning as children grow in confidence and ability within the three prime areas. If a child's progress in any prime areas gives cause for concern, practitioners must discuss this with the child's parents and/or carers and agree how to support the child.

Characteristics of effective learning

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically, underpin learning and development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- **Playing and exploring** – children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'
- **Active learning** – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements and
- **Creating and thinking critically** – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

Within our daily provision, there are opportunities for a balance of adult guided and child-initiated spontaneous play. Staff spend time interacting with children to promote creative and critical thinking skills and early language and communication. Additionally staff are deployed during the morning to lead small group adult-led activities in those areas of learning where there is a cohort of children with a similar need, in these small groups children find it easier to process information, concentrate and learn.

Special Needs

We are an equal opportunities Pre-school and will seek to include your child whatever the special needs. Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator works closely with parents, health visitors (and other health professionals) and Surrey Early Years, to provide individual support and learning programmes for any special needs child. We display an up-to-date allergy/diet/special needs information sheet for all staff to be aware of during our sessions and all staff work hard to support our special needs children and their parents.

We work closely with children whose first language is not English to promote their communication language and literacy skills and help them integrate well with their peers. We endeavour to support their families and provide advice and any resource material which we feel may help the child to assimilate the English language. We will also seek to make them feel at home with our culture and traditions and religion by being aware of their own culture, traditions and religion. This is always an enjoyable and educational experience for the other children and staff, adding more to everyone's knowledge and understanding of the world.

Key Person

Our key person system gives each member of staff particular responsibility for a specific number of children. Thus each child and its parents have one designated member of staff as an initial point of contact which helps settling into the group and keeping parents informed as to their child's progress much easier (although children often attach themselves to another adult in the group: this is fine, as we all share in the task of caring for, interacting with, observing and recording each child's progress). The key person is responsible for charting the development of, and maintaining the records for, their key children. This also involves fostering links with each child's parents through meetings and record keeping, to ensure that all the children are supported in reaching their full potential. The key person is able to target specific areas of learning or development goals for their key children and tailor the group's curriculum planning to reflect the unique needs of each individual child.

Record Keeping

We have an effective curriculum planning system which permits us to plan, resource and work with all the children in a nurturing and individual way. The staff share in recording information on children's progress on a daily basis and the key person system provides each member of staff with particular responsibility for using this information to maintain the records of a specific group of children. Information on Pre-school/Foundation Stage Education is available from Surrey Early Years and Childcare Service, Fairmount House, Bull Hill, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7AH, Tel: 01372 833811, www.surreycc.gov.uk.

Adult Resources

We offer a high ratio of adults to children in the Little Stars setting. There is a staff ratio of 1:4 for 2 year olds and 1:8 for 3-4 year olds. We encourage parental participation in a number of ways, primarily by asking parents or carers to volunteer to help in a session on our Parent/Carer Rota. We are also blessed with many volunteers who come in to read stories, sharpen pencils, play the piano and so on. In addition to volunteers we also welcome students, usually year ten children who are on their work placement weeks.

Staff Training/Parent/Carer Training

We are fortunate to have a high percentage of staff qualified in Early Years practice. Staff are offered regular in-service training opportunities (provided by Surrey Early Years Education and Sure Start) which keep them up to date with current practice and thinking in Early Years Education. The majority of our staff hold a certificate of Paediatric First Aid, which is upgraded every three years. We also belong to the West Guildford Cluster Group of Pre-schools and Nurseries which meets regularly to exchange information, pool resources and access evening training courses. The Pre-school Learning Alliance continues to provide support, training, resources (often supplying Pre-schools with leaflets and free samples for parents). Some of the above courses are also available to parents and information is available through the Supervisor. We also post information on local parenting course, children's music groups etc on our notice board.

Communication with Parents

We have daily contact with parents/carers at the beginning and end of each session during which we can communicate information about the children. Parents are welcome to speak to the supervisor or key person after the sessions. We also hold regular parent consultations to discuss your child's progress. Parents are welcome to contribute to our recording process via their child's keyworker file. We also send home a half termly newsletter. We post daily information for parents on the notice board as well as drawing your attention to various courses and events which may be of interest to you or your children e.g local parenting courses.

The Role of Parents

At Little Stars Pre-school we recognise the importance of parents as the first and most important educators of your children. We aim to support parents in this role and parents are welcomed to:

- work in the group with the children.
- attend training courses, workshops and conferences organised by the Pre-school Learning Alliance or Surrey Early Years Education and Sure Start.
- contribute ideas and suggestions for the running or improvement of the group.
- assist with fundraising.

Parent/Carers Rota

Research shows that children learn better when their parents are involved. Our rota system gives all parents an opportunity to help at Little Stars. This adds to our already high ratio of adult support for each child, guaranteeing extra care and stimulation for the children. It also gives parents the opportunity to take an active part in the group, to see what happens there and to talk about it afterwards with their child. The child is able to share his/her Pre-school experiences with their parents, knowing they have seen the setting thus providing a wonderful link between home life and Pre-school environment. If you can help to facilitate this transition period in your child's life you are increasing your child's feeling of self worth and security. It also helps your child to develop emotionally if they have to "share" you with other children for a while and provides a valuable opportunity for all children to see their own parents/carers in a different role.

Policies and Procedures

Our policy statement is available on the setting's notice board or upon request to the supervisor. All our policies are reviewed on a regular basis and comments and suggestions from parents are always welcome. We are often asked about our behaviour policy and below is a brief guide to our procedure regarding inappropriate behaviour:

Behaviour Policy

(please read Policy Document for full procedure)

We expect our children to behave appropriately in the setting, so that all children are able to enjoy a secure, safe and happy environment in which to play and learn. If there is inappropriate behaviour we will always observe the child and try to ascertain if he/she understands they are behaving in an unacceptable way. We seek to promote and praise the positive aspects of a child's character. We liaise with parents to find out if there is any reason for the behaviour stemming from the home situation. We work with parents and carers to resolve the issues. If however, the safety and wellbeing of the other children is threatened we will ask the parent to withdraw their child from the group sometimes temporarily, rarely permanently.

Health and Safety

We have an excellent health and safety record and our health and safety policy is available to read on request. At least two members of staff with a current paediatric first aid qualification are present at every session. Our premises are risk assessed and we complete a daily safety check of our part of the building (and any areas that the children visit occasionally, as and when they access these areas). We carry out regular fire drills with the children every half term during the year.

Management and Administration

Little Stars Pre-school at Emmanuel Church is owned by the Parochial Church Council (PCC). The day to day running and management is in the hands of experienced staff, led by the supervisor, who reports to the Little Stars Pre-school Management Committee. The Committee includes a member of Emmanuel Church and a member who is the parent of a child who currently or recently attended Little Stars Pre-school.

Fees

Fees are payable termly or monthly in advance (other arrangements can be made if necessary). Please see the Supervisor in confidence if you have any problems in paying the fees. Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent for a short time. In cases of prolonged absence, parents should consult with the Supervisor about fee payments. Each child's attendance at the setting is conditional upon continued payment of any fees or the allocation of Early Years Funding Entitlement. Your child becomes eligible for this funding in the term after they have had their third birthday, and you will be required to fill in a declaration regarding the days your child attends and any other setting they may be attending.

We request a £20.00 deposit if your child joins in the term before their third birthday, when you accept and register your child for a place at Little Stars Pre-school. Please ask for information about our current fees.

We accept child care vouchers.

We hope that you have found this Prospectus informative and helpful. The best ambassadors for our Pre-school are the children themselves and a visit to the Pre-school is the best way for you to assess its suitability for your child. You are welcome to visit on most mornings; please contact the supervisor for an appointment.



Timetable

09.00-09.15

Children arrive with parents, put their coats and bags on their named hook, and wait in the corridor.

09.15

Pre-school door is opened and children are met by members of staff. Any special notes about the children are written down by staff. Supervisor and staff are available to talk briefly to parents (or make appointment for longer or more confidential meetings out of Pre-school hours). Children find name cards and place in box.

09.15-09.25

Settling in time. Free Play. Parents leave.

09.25 -11.50

Free Play - the children are able to select their own toys to play with, or use what the staff have put out and Adult led activities (e.g. cooking, craft, science and maths investigation, ICT, nature study).

The outdoor play area is available every day, except when the weather is really bad. The children are allowed to come and go as they please.

Key persons can use this time to work with their key children to promote their individual developmental needs.

During this time our Snack Bar is open, small groups of children sit round a table with a member of staff and are offered a drink of milk or water and some pieces of fruit, vegetable and dried fruit.

11.50-12.00

Tidy up time. Settling into Singing/Rhyme time.

12.00-12.15

Singing, Rhyme and Story time.

12.15

Parents come in to collect children.

12.15-1.00

Lunch club children wash hands and sit down to lunch.

13.00

Lunch club children collected.

We also provide many extra activities and use other parts of the centre. We use the sports hall or upstairs rooms for P.E. sessions (it is important that children have access to large open spaces for physical play and the sports hall is especially welcome during wet play sessions). As part of our multi-cultural activities we visit the church to look at the harvest festival gifts and decorations. We also look at harvests round the world and try out bread from different cultures. At Easter time We have an Easter Celebration where we hear the Easter story and sing songs. Bonfire night links our themes of "Fire" "Light" and "Colour" together with the Hindu celebration of Divali. At Christmas the children perform a Nativity Play for their parents and friends in the church; most of the older children form the 'cast', and the younger ones sing in the 'choir' Some of our most popular extra activities are visits from people from outside the group For instance, in the last few years we had visits from the Fire Service, a veterinary nurse, a reptile owner (with his snakes and lizards!) and dog and tortoise owners with their pets. We have a regular supply of musicians who bring in their instruments which they play to us and let the children explore, and dancers who encourage the children to move rhythmically. People have brought in tractors, traction engines, wheel chairs and mobility buggies. Also, our local Community Police Officer, is a regular visitor, as is the Guildford Recycling Womble.

Through these visits the children are given many experiences of daily life and their opportunities for learning are increased. We hope this has given you an insight into our work at Little Stars, please contact us as above if you would like to come for a visit, or put your child's name on to our waiting list.

