

You & Me Pre-school

01245 466535

Portakabin, Church of Our Saviour
Ashton Place, Chelmer Village
Chelmsford, Essex
CM2 6ST



PROSPECTUS

Pre-School Manager - Clare Duncombe

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admin@youandmepreschool.co.uk

www.youandmepreschool.co.uk

A Registered Charity - 1130621

To avoid disappointment, please return application forms as soon as possible, to join our waiting list for sessions.

MEMBER OF THE PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING ALLIANCE

Welcome to the You & Me Pre-School

Our aim is:

- To provide a welcoming, safe, secure and stimulating environment
- To treat each child as an individual and allow them to progress at a rate that they are comfortable with, whilst stretching their imagination and creativity
- To plan and provide an extensive range of activities and play opportunities
- To be committed to staff training and development, which will enhance the quality of learning and the overall effectiveness of the Pre-School team
- To promote acceptable behaviour so that each child can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect
- To work in partnership with parents* to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group
- To provide a framework which ensures equal opportunities for all children and families

We offer your child:

- The opportunity to increase confidence and independence, to enable them to make decisions for themselves and be responsible for their actions
- Fun and friendship with children and other adults
- Individual care and attention made possible by a high ratio of adults to children
- The support of a personal key-worker
- Reassurance, appropriate praise and encouragement to try new activities in a safe and supportive environment
- A specially tailored curriculum designed to achieve approved 'learning outcomes' in the six curricular areas of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum:
 - Communication, language and literacy
 - Personal, social and emotional development
 - Mathematics
 - Knowledge and understanding of the World
 - Physical development
 - Creative development

(* for Parent see Parent / Guardian / Carer)

We were established in 1982 and although we are affiliated to The Church of Our Saviour, we are run independently by Management Committee. The Pre-School operates from a purposely designed Portakabin set in a large safe, enclosed garden, both of which we have the sole use. We offer education and care on a termly basis for children below statutory School age and from the age of two years. You and Me can cater for a maximum of 20 children in each session.

Children shortly to start school are offered specially tailored sessions, 'Ducks', which tend to have more structured activities and less free play time. The other sessions, 'Ducklings', have mixed age children.

For **Autumn Term 2011** we are introducing two Full Day Sessions for Ducks, 09.05 – 3.05 Monday or Wednesday.

Our Pre-School meets:

	<u>A.M.</u>		<u>P.M.</u>	
Monday	09.05-11.35	<i>Ducklings</i>	12.05-3.05	<i>Ducks</i>
Tuesday	09.05-11.35	<i>Ducklings</i>	12.05-3.05	<i>Ducks</i>
Wednesday	09.05-11.35	<i>Ducklings</i>	12.05-3.05	<i>Ducks</i>
Thursday	09.05-11.35	<i>Ducklings</i>	12.05-3.05	<i>Ducks</i>
Friday	09.05-11.35	<i>Ducklings</i>	12.20-2.50	<i>Ducklings</i>

Term dates and events are advised by our regular newsletter. Our Admission Policy and application form can be found on pages 8/9 of this Prospectus.

Management Committee

You and Me Pre-School is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance, and has adopted their constitution. Once a child starts, all parents* automatically become members of the Committee. They are encouraged to attend the regular Committee meetings, and are required to attend the Annual General Meeting. Parents* can be voted onto the Committee as 'elected' members and can also serve as an 'elected officer'. The constitution states that in order for the Pre-School to function, a full Committee must be voted in place, which must consist of four officers (Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Admissions Secretary) and between two and nine additional elected members. In order to fulfil the requirements of the constitution, a minimum attendance/quorum at the AGM is 30% of the total members (i.e. the parents* of the children attending the Pre-school as at the date of the meeting). The Committee meetings have an informal structure and are a great forum to discuss issues that affect the running of the Pre-School. They are attended by Staff representatives, and new parents* with fresh ideas are always welcomed.

At the start of each term we look to hold an Induction Evening for our new parents, to share with them more details about how the Pre-School operates, and how as parents you can be involved in your child's education.

Staff

We are proud of the high ratio of adults to children in You and Me. This ensures individual attention to the needs and development of each child. Our friendly and approachable Staff are all CRB checked, 8 out of the 9 staff hold level 3 or level 2 qualifications. Staff leading the sessions hold N.N.E.B. or Diploma qualifications and staff are First Aid trained. Our membership of the Pre-School Learning Alliance ensures that we are constantly in touch with new thinking in the field of child education and care, and we have access to a range of professionally produced publications and recommended courses/qualifications.

Staff are entitled to 3 days training (equivalent to 6 sessions) within term time each academic year. This training ensures that staff are able to maintain the high standards of care we are so proud of at You and Me, and is therefore beneficial to all. Please note that Fee paying children will be charged for these sessions but staff will endeavour to stagger training days in order that they do not fall on the same weekday each term.

Keypersons

Our keyperson system gives each member of staff particular responsibility for recording the development of a small group of children. The keyperson works with parents* through shared record keeping to ensure that all children are supported in reaching their full potential. They complete Early Development Books with photographs to document the children's time at Pre-School.

Parents Role

We actively encourage parents* to be involved in Pre-School. You are welcome to stay and help at any session, and we welcome assistance/support with our fundraising activities and events. We appreciate that parents* are the main educators of their children before they attend Primary School, and we therefore encourage parents* to learn about the Pre-School curriculum, daily routines and themed activities, so that they can instigate/continue discussions with the children at home.

Premises

The Portakabin has two toilets, a small kitchen with a locked door, a secure front door, a large open plan playroom, with a home corner area at the far end. The decoration is welcoming and friendly, which conveys a bright and positive atmosphere, and children's artwork can be seen on display. We have several large notice boards in the entrance area and by the front gate, which display notices about activities, events, Committee information etc. In the safe, secure garden, there is a large paved patio area, and a substantial lawn.

Activities

During the sessions, the activities offered include enjoyment of a well-stocked book corner, building and construction toys, cooking, dressing up and imaginative play, crafts to extend the themes, dough, home corner, large and small toys, painting drawing and colouring, puzzles, sand and water. In the garden, play facilities include a play house, large Little Tikes play gym (slides, platforms and tunnels) and an extensive selection of outdoor toys, bicycles, scooters, cars, prams and small apparatus for games.

The play opportunities we provide are carefully structured to:

- Stimulate children's imagination and creativity
- Enrich language
- Form the basis of mathematical understanding
- Enable children to come to terms with aspects of their own lives and to express their feelings
- Encourage the development of manipulative skills
- Offer the chance to explore and enjoy natural materials
- Develop muscular strength and co-ordination
- Establish the use of symbols and patterns which form the basis of reading and writing
- Help children to value, respect and enjoy the companionship of other children and of adults
- Create habits of listening and concentrating
- Extend children's understanding of science and the world around them
- Respond to children's need to explore through their senses

Fundraising/Events

Each year we organise a Christmas Nativity for the Ducks and Christmas party, for all the children. During the summer the whole Pre-School goes on an outing, with parents* and younger siblings being invited. We also hold a sports afternoon for the children leaving in the Summer. Other fundraising events often include raffles, quiz nights, sponsored activities and a regular photographer. Without fundraising, we cannot replace or purchase equipment for the further development of the children.

Sessions for Older Children Approaching School Age (Ducks)

The aim of the specially tailored 'School Preparation sessions' is to provide a stepping stone between Pre-School and School, where children are encouraged to become more independent and responsible for themselves. The children say good bye at the gate and hang their coats/bags up change their own shoes, have registration and discuss the days theme, the children then have the choice of activities and toys inside and out side but are encouraged to come to adult led tables and activities. The structured activities incorporate letters, numbers, colours, shapes/ computer skills/ learning to use equipment safely. and are themed to more specific topics than the other sessions. They also do 'P.E. sessions' and bring in packed lunches as a practice run for school.

Policies

We have a wide range of policy statements which are designed to ensure we offer the best possible experience for the children and families in the group. Copies of these policies are kept in our information folder which can be seen on any visit, and can be accessed on our website (www.youandmepreschool.co.uk). Our policies are reviewed on a regular basis and comments and suggestions are welcome.

Curriculum

All children are encouraged to develop their potential at their own pace, and the key-person system ensures that the planned curriculum is tailored to the needs of each child. Appropriate play activities and a high level of individual adult input, means that the children are guided towards nationally approved 'learning outcomes', which prepares them to progress with confidence and continuing to follow the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum when they join the Reception Year of School.

Communication, language and literacy

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking, listening and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes. Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves. A well-stocked book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, how to handle them with respect, and become aware of their uses, both for reference and as a source of stories and pictures.

Personal, Emotional and Social development

Within a nurturing environment, children are individually supported in developing confidence, autonomy and self-respect. They are encouraged to work and concentrate independently and also to take part in the life of the Pre-School, sharing and co-operating with other children and adults. Through activities, conversation and practical example, they learn acceptable ways to express their own feelings and to have respect for the feelings of others. All children are given the opportunity, as appropriate, to take responsibility for themselves and also for the group, its members and its property.

Mathematics

By means of adult-supported practical experience, children become familiar with the sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities, which form the basis for early mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, children are given assistance in learning to use the vocabulary of mathematics, identifying objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

A safe and stimulating environment allows children to explore and experiment with a range of natural and manufactured materials. They learn to observe the features of objects and substances recognising differences, patterns and similarities and to share and record their findings. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding their environment, both within the group and also in the wider community. A range of safe and well maintained equipment enables children to extend their technological understanding, using simple tools and techniques as appropriate to achieve their intentions and to solve problems.

Physical development

A range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and out of doors, allows children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. A very high level of adult supervision enables children to safely create and meet physical challenges, whilst developing increasing skills and control in moving, climbing and balancing. At the same time, children are supported in the development of the fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils, and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

Creative development

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings and to construct their individual responses to experience, in two and three dimensions. Art equipment, including paint, glue, crayons and pencils as well as natural and discarded resources (junk), provide for open-ended exploration of colour, shape and texture and the development of skills in painting, drawing and collage. Children join in with and respond to music and stories, and there are many opportunities for imaginative role play, both individually and as part of a group.

Starting Pre-School - The first days

A child who is tense or unhappy will not be able to play or learn properly, so it is important for parents* and staff to work together to help the child feel confident and secure in the group. This takes longer for some children than for others and parents* should not feel worried if their child takes a while to settle. Parents* are welcome to stay all, or part, of the session and supervisors are always happy to discuss any problems.

Starting Pre-School – What to wear?

In order to feel free to explore and experiment with all kinds of materials, including messy ones, it is best to send children dressed in clothes, which are easily washable or are not too new! It is good for children to practice the skills, which will make them independent. Simple clothing, which they can handle themselves, will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to and to put on and take off their outdoor clothes without being too dependent on others help.

Starting Pre-School – What to bring to each session?

- A change of clothes for those recently toilet trained, in case of accidents.
- Sun Hat (and sunscreen applied at home) during hot weather.
- Something for the interest table – list of themes for sessions are on the notice board.

Clothing and bags must be clearly labelled with the child's name. Children who are not yet toilet trained are welcome at our Pre-School. Please provide a spare nappy in a bag.

Starting Pre-School – What happens during a session?

A broad outline:

- Welcomed by Supervisor and hand in item for interest table
- Hang up coat/bag and say goodbye to parents
- Enjoy and explore playroom activities with assistance and interaction where required both inside and outside
- Tidy-up time (children as well!)
- Drink and snack (milk or water and a healthy snack provided)
- Further play inside and outside
- Story-time/singing and discussion on topic of the day/week
- Children remain seated waiting for their parents to approach them.
- Collect any artwork or work made
- Collect coat/bag and say goodbye to staff

Collection from Pre-School

If the child's parent* or guardian is unable to collect them, a letter of consent for another adult to do so, must be handed to the Supervisor at the beginning of the session. The person collecting the child will be asked to sign the collection book. In the event of another adult regularly collecting a child, one letter per term is acceptable.

Complaints procedure

If you have a complaint about anything to do with You and Me please speak to the Supervisor, and then if necessary, to the Chairperson of the Committee. If you are still not satisfied, you may then contact Inspection Unit, Essex County Council, Social Services Department, PO Box 3591, 66-68 Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JT giving full details of the complaint.

Health & Safety

In the event of a child become ill during a Pre-School session, the Supervisor will telephone the parent* or guardian so that they can collect the child. The Supervisor must be notified of any contagious diseases. In the event of:

- Sickness or Diarrhoea - The child must be kept away from Pre-School for at least 48 hrs
- Chickenpox - The child must stay away for at least a week and until all the spots have dried up.

Fees

Fees are payable each half term in advance. Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent without notice for a short time. You may “sell” individual sessions to other parents by placing a note on the notice board inside the Portakabin, but this only applies to sessions paid for by cash, not those funded by the Government (Early Years Development Plan) after the child qualifies for funding, which in this area is currently the term after the child reaches the age of three.

Once a child receives Government funding, the Pre-School requests the payment of **£20.00 (from Summer Term 2011)** per half term, per child as a donation towards the cost of the ‘healthy eating’ snack, and the cost of photographs required for the Early Years Progress Record Books. This donation is known as the ‘Fruit’n’Photo Fund. In cases of prolonged absence, parents* should consult the Supervisor about fee payment.

Each child’s attendance at the group is conditional upon continued payment of fees and/or completion of the Early Years Development Plan declaration form for funded sessions. From September 2011 the cost of each session is **£11.00 Cheques should be made payable to “You and Me Pre-School”**.

If you have any difficulty in paying fees, please speak to the Supervisor in confidence. Invoices for all payments due are issued at the end of the previous term for prompt payment. Unpaid fees or fruit’n’photo payments may result in the loss of sessions.

Admission Policy

‘Children are able to start to attend the You & Me Pre-School from the beginning of the term that they become 2.5 years, if spaces permit.’ Children generally start with 2 sessions per week for the first term to ensure that they are fully settled in before other sessions are offered.

The maximum number of children allowed to attend any one session is 20. As children only leave the Pre-School to attend School at the end of the Summer Term each year, it is not possible to guarantee availability of additional places during the year to any parent. If all sessions are running to capacity as early in the year as the Autumn Term, then no new children will be able to start until the following academic year.

The cut off date for the school year is 1st September, and therefore some children maybe with us for 2 ½ years, some only 1 ½ years dependent on when their birthday falls/which school year they fit into. For this reason, we categorise children as ‘Early Starters’, ‘1st Years’ and ‘2nd Years’.

It is therefore essential that we introduce a clearer guideline as to the number of sessions a child maybe offered, again spaces permitting. **Obviously, if more sessions are available then they will be offered.**

2nd Years: Our priority is to prepare children for school life. We will therefore endeavour to offer 2nd years, 5 sessions per week.

1st Years: Start with 2 sessions and are offered more when they become funded, in the term after their 3rd birthday, subject to availability.

Early Starter: Children with September and October birthdays may start in the summer term if spaces permit. No early starter would be offered more than 1 session per week until they become a 1st year.

Enrolment

You may enrol your child with us at any time, but we would appreciate early enrolment to assist us with planning, and strongly recommend early enrolment to avoid disappointment. We encourage a visit before you make your decision. If you wish to enrol, complete the attached form and return it to Pre-school as soon as possible. You will then receive an acknowledgement letter, confirming that your child has been placed on the waiting list. We have a limited number of places each year for 2nd years (roughly 25), 1st years (roughly 25) and Early Starters (roughly 5). Our waiting list is held in date of receipt of application order, and separated into the school year the child would be placed, but priority for admission is given to children who would have a sibling already attending the Pre-School (at the same time). Once we have reached the maximum number of children we have spaces allocated for, all remaining applications are kept on our reserve list in 'receipt of application' order. Our Admission's Secretary will contact you during the term before your child would be due to start to let you know whether he/she has a place available.

Once you accept a place for your child, a £20 registration fee is payable to hold your child's place until the start of term. As part of the welcome pack registered children will receive a Pre-School drawstring bag (perfect for holding your child's change of clothes) and a plastic water bottle to enable your child to bring a drink to each session they attend.

We hope that your child's time at You and Me Pre-School will be a happy and productive one. If you have any queries, or if we can be of any help, please contact us.

May 2011

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ENROLMENT FORM

Please remember that sessions can only be offered if there are vacancies

Child's Full Name			
Date of Birth			
Parents' Name & Address			
Home Telephone		Work Telephone	
Mobile Number(s)		Contact number (if neither parent can be reached)	
Email Address			
Any other children in the family? If so, please give their names and ages			

Enrolled with any other Pre-School or Nursery? If so, which one?	
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I/we agree to abide by the policies of the You & Me Pre-School and accept that fees and fruit'n'photo fund payments must be paid promptly. I/we accept that information maybe shared without your consent if it is to safeguard a child or vulnerable adult in accordance with our Safeguarding Children and Child Protection policies.

Signature of parents Date

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For office use only

Child added to waiting list	
Acknowledgement letter sent	

Date child reaches 2 ½ years	
Date child due to start school	

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PLEASE RETURN TO PRE-SCHOOL IN AN ENVELOPE MARKED 'FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE ADMISSIONS SECRETARY'.