



WELCOME PACK

We are very pleased to welcome you to Painswick Playgroup and we hope you and your child will enjoy your time with us.

This pack has been put together to give you some useful information which will hopefully make the initial days with us easier for both you and your child. We have tried to include all the information we think you will need, but please do not hesitate to ask if you have any other questions.

Painswick Playgroup recognises that for each child to progress we need to offer a fun, safe, secure, stimulating and educational environment.

The guidelines and standards that we follow are contained in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework – a nationwide set of guidelines to help promote high-quality childcare and education. Regular inspections are carried out by Ofsted, our governing body, to reinforce these standards.

Our aims and objectives are:

1. To build an effective partnership between Playgroup and home, and to recognise parents as children's first educators.
2. To recognise children as individuals and to respect their integrity and diversity.
3. To promote high self-esteem within children so that they may learn effectively and gain confidence.
4. To help children develop interactive social skills and positive relationships.
5. To use purposeful play as a powerful medium for learning and to promote imaginative play and creativity.
6. To recognise the importance of fostering an interest in books.
7. To provide many experiences that help develop children's language and mathematical skills (problem solving, reasoning and numeracy).
8. To ensure that children have opportunities to practise fine and gross motor skills and hand-eye coordination.
9. To create a safe environment where equality of opportunity is actively promoted and activities are adapted to suit individual children.
10. To ensure the safeguarding of children and to monitor and act on any issues that may arise.
11. To ensure the health and safety of the children both within the setting and when playing outside.

Session times

Morning sessions run from **9am** until **12pm** and afternoon sessions from **12.30pm** until **3.30pm**, except our Friday afternoon session which finishes at **3pm**. Our term dates follow those of the The Croft School calendar and can be found on our website. We also close on school inset days and finish at 2pm at the end of Autumn, Spring and Summer terms in line with the school. You will be advised of term dates at the beginning of the school year.

Fees

Painswick Playgroup is a charity that makes no profit, and all income received from either fees or funding is retained by the Playgroup to cover staff wages, equipment and resources, or to be put aside for future building costs. The prompt payment of fees is vital to help Playgroup meet its financial obligations. The current fees have been in place since September 2013.

We ask that all payments are made within two weeks of the date of your invoice, which is usually issued in the first week of each half term. However, if possible please pay your fees as soon as you can afford to do so. We reserve the right to discontinue our services to you should fees owing become unreasonably late.

All children aged 3 or over at the beginning of a term are entitled to 15 hours free early education and childcare through government funding. Some 2-year-olds are also eligible. For further information please visit www.gov.uk/find-free-early-education. These 15 hours can be split between two different childcare settings. Please note that when Playgroup is not open due to bank holidays, inset days or snow days then costs over the 15 hours entitlement are still chargeable.

Any sessions that fall outside of this free early education and childcare allocation are charged at **£10.50 per session** (or £3.50 per hour).

Playgroup reserves the right to change these fees at its own discretion.

Lunch Club

If you would like your child to stay for lunch at Painswick Playgroup, a 30-minute supervised lunch period is available at an extra cost of £1.75. Lunch Club runs from **12pm** until **12.30pm**. This enables children to have a full day at Playgroup if required. **Children must bring their own packed lunches.**

Ad-hoc sessions

If you would like your child to attend an extra session you can telephone in advance or on the day to see if there are any places available. Ad-hoc sessions will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Payment for ad-hoc sessions **MUST** be paid on the same day and government funding cannot be used to pay for them.

Childcare vouchers

Painswick Playgroup accepts childcare vouchers through Edenred, care4, Busy Bees and Computershare. If your employer uses a different scheme, our Treasurer will be happy to talk to you about getting it set up.

Staffing

Painswick Playgroup has a team of five staff, including two Playleaders – a Playleader will be present at every session. We provide a ratio of 1 adult to 8 children, and 1 adult to 4 children for under 3s. During your child's first week they will be allocated a Key Worker. This Key Worker will support your child during their time in Playgroup. If you have any worries please do not hesitate to come in and speak to your child's Key Worker or any other member of staff at any time. The Management Committee is dedicated to the appointment of caring staff with relevant qualifications who work together as a team. All staff have clearance from Police and Health authorities. Staff training is kept relevant and up to date with courses including Safeguarding Children and First Aid. Two staff members have also completed SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) training. Training needs are identified and a budget allocated so that the children will continue to benefit from the care of our Early Years staff.

Settling in

When your child first starts Playgroup, we'll work with you to help them settle in and feel comfortable in their new environment. Here are some things that can help:

- Prepare your child for Playgroup by bringing them along for a taster session so they can then meet their 'teachers' and become familiar with the environment that they will spend time in. We adults usually find the partings far more painful than the children so this is a good opportunity for parents to get to know the staff!
- On your child's first day, help him/her to find his/her cloakroom peg and tray.
- For the first two weeks, please feel free to come into the room with your child and settle him/her down with one of the planned activities. After this settling-in period we ask that you try to leave your child in accordance with the dropping-off procedure. If your child is still unsettled we will of course allow you to come in, but it's good to try to adapt to the dropping-off procedure quickly before your child becomes too dependent on you entering the main room with them. If your child remains unsettled after a four-week period, staff will discuss a settling-in programme with you.
- A booklet called 'All About Me' will be placed in your child's tray. We will ask you to complete this in the first few days to give staff an insight into your child when they start with us.

Please tell us if you have any worries or concerns about your child or any aspect of Playgroup life.

Parents/Carers as partners

We welcome the knowledge, expertise and involvement of all parents/carers in our Playgroup, and actively encourage you to get involved wherever you can. Do let us know if there's any specific way you could help us. Otherwise, we would appreciate your help in the following ways:

- Accompany the children and staff on visits e.g. local walks or trips further afield. We have higher adult to child ratio when we go out so we do depend on help from parents/carers.
- Attend committee meetings! Painswick Playgroup is run by a committee of parent volunteers and we cannot operate without enough of them. The committee gets together once each half term for a friendly, informal meeting on the day-to-day running of Playgroup and any issues arising from it. Please join the committee if you possibly can, even if you can't commit to a specific role within it. Non-committee members are also welcome to all committee meetings so please come and give your valued input.
- We always appreciate volunteers to help with jobs such as toy washing, window cleaning, guttering etc.
- Help with fundraising. We are a charity, and fees alone aren't enough to maintain our building and ensure the children have access to new and relevant equipment. Our main fundraiser is Painswick Easter Egg Hunt, which has become a firm favourite on the village calendar. It's a great community event and we need all parents to help out on the day or at planning meetings beforehand.

Stay and Play

When your child has had a chance to settle in at Playgroup, you may wish to sign up for the Stay and Play session. You will be able to join us for a session to play with the children and, although not compulsory, we do feel it's a great opportunity for parents to see what happens at Playgroup and how their child is getting on. Children have always found this a wonderful experience to 'share' their family with us. These sessions are not aimed just at mothers. Fathers, grandparents or other family members aged 17 or over are more than welcome to join us.

Curriculum

Painswick Playgroup is regulated and inspected by Ofsted. As registered providers we agree to:

- Work towards the new 'Development Matters' as specified by the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Have regard to the DfEE (Department for Education & Employment) Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Make information available to parents about such matters as the educational programme.
- Have the provisions inspected regularly and make the report and action plan available to parents.
- Work to the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.
- By using the guidance given by the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board, we will work with other multi-agency groups to ensure the safety of every child in our care.

At Painswick Playgroup we give the children experiences in different areas. We work towards the 'Early Years Foundation Stage', 'Every Child Matters'. The seven areas of learning and development are introduced through child-initiated play.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

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

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

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

These seven areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. We make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum in primary and secondary schools, but is suitable for very young

children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

When your child joins us they will begin their journey through the 'Early Years Foundation Stage'. This stage extends from Playgroup into his/her Reception year at school. At Playgroup, the children's progress is assessed through observing the '7 Areas of Learning and Development'. As each child is an individual the children within our group will be at different stages throughout the year.

Should you have any questions about the '7 Areas of Learning and Development' or the 'Early Years Foundation Stage', please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff who will be pleased to explain them to you.

Planning

Staff meet termly to discuss children's interests in topics so that they can be investigated and explored. Previous planning is reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis. Learning objectives are highlighted, and all activities are open-ended to allow the children to explore as they choose. The needs of individual children are considered. Sessions are evaluated daily and this is used to devise the following week's plans.

All children, whatever their pattern of attendance, are offered a broad, fun and balanced curriculum.

All curriculum-based activities are followed through into our outside play area where children can experience all areas of their development in a familiar and safe environment. We have also created a quiet area in our book corner, which can be adapted for any children with special educational needs or disabilities when necessary. 'Key' adults keep a special eye on the children in these areas and find it invaluable to observe them to use towards summative and formative assessments, plan individual learning, talk with the children, extend their play and support their social development. Large group speaking, listening and story sessions are planned daily, as is outdoor play or PE sessions.

Assessment

In order to help the children make progress we continually try to get to know them better. Staff do regular observations on all children to monitor their development and record this in different ways.

Learning Journals: Photographs and examples of your child's work are kept in these books, and linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage as evidence of the child's development. These books are given to the children as a keepsake on their last day at Painswick Playgroup.

Diaries: All children will receive a diary that staff will write in to let you know what your child has been doing. Parents and staff at any additional settings your child attends are welcome to write in these diaries too, and use them as a communication book.

Next-step observations: these are used to assess the child's development and also to plan for their individual needs. They are also used for our group planning to inform us what the next step is. You will be given a copy of these observations and an opportunity to comment on them if you wish.

Observation clouds: if staff observe something throughout a session they will fill in an observation cloud that will later be put in your child's Learning Journal.

Progress check at age 2: at some point after your child turns 2, we give a written summary of how your child is progressing against the 3 prime areas of learning:

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

Staff will be happy to chat with you informally about your child at the end of any of their sessions or during 1:1 consultations.

Behaviour

We believe that one of the important roles of our Playgroup is to encourage positive relationships between all children and adults. No adult, of course, ever smacks or physically punishes a child and we do respectfully ask that while parents/carers are on site, they refrain from using any form of physical punishment. We continually praise the children, use positive reinforcement and offer the children responsibilities i.e. to help take care of each other, to show respect to resources and environment. Any difficulties that arise are talked through with the children concerned.

If there is any real concern over behaviour, we would contact the parents/carers concerned and have a private chat. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you ever have any questions.

Painswick Playgroup has its own Behaviour Policy, and we can give you a copy of this on request.

Health and Safety

Great care is taken to ensure the children's safety, both inside the building and out of doors. The building and site are subject to annual inspections and regular risk assessments are carried out. Children are always closely supervised. The garden area is fenced.

All apparatus and equipment used by the children conforms to safety standards. Electrical equipment is regularly checked. No child uses an electric socket and all unused sockets have safety covers.

The external door has an internal bolt; the building has three smoke alarms in place. Fire practices are held termly throughout a whole week to ensure all children take part. Fire drill details are displayed in the Playgroup room and on

the notice board. There is also access to a fire blanket and fire extinguishers.

Staff take part in first aid training and first aid boxes are fully equipped to required standards. All first aid equipment, and any potentially dangerous substances or tools are kept out of children's reach. Disposable gloves are used whenever staff are dealing with body products. Paper towels and soap are available to children in the toilet areas.

We will administer medicine to a child that has been prescribed by a doctor and written permission must be obtained from parents/carers. We will need this written permission together with instructions for use/dosage. We do keep a record of any medical conditions, including allergies that you have alerted us to, and will contact you should your child become unwell during a Playgroup session.

With regard to illnesses that occur in our setting involving sickness and/or diarrhoea, we do ask that any child who has been suffering from either or both of these does not attend Playgroup until they have been clear of the symptoms for a minimum of **48 hours**. We need to take these precautions in order to prevent the spread of infection.

We recommend that children wear suitable clothes (named) and footwear to Playgroup bearing in mind that there is outside play when they have the opportunity to run, jump, climb and use a variety of equipment and apparatus. To this end, it is also safer if children with pierced ears wear only small stud earrings.

Playgroup logo tops can be purchased, please see a member of staff about ordering these.

Any accident, however minor, is recorded. Playgroup staff will always let you know if your child has had a scratch or tumble and ask you to sign an Accident Sheet confirming that you have been informed. If your child sustains a bump to the head you will receive a phone call to notify you that an incident has occurred.

Should there be a serious accident, and we are unable to make contact with you, or with the adults you have named, we would act in accordance with your wishes stated on your Emergency Treatment Consent Form, and take your child to the nearest casualty department whilst continuing to make every effort to contact you.

No child will ever be allowed to leave Playgroup other than with a parent or adult specified to the Playgroup staff by you.

Please let us know if your child is unwell and cannot attend a session or if you have any concerns.

Please see our extended Health and Safety Policy for more details.

Password Scheme

This scheme was set up as an extra safety precaution. It can be used in an emergency when due to unforeseen circumstances, you, or any of your authorised adults are unable to collect your child from Playgroup.

If this does happen, please telephone Playgroup and let a member of staff know who will be collecting your child and give a brief description of the person. You will then be asked to confirm your password.

When your nominated person arrives at Playgroup they will also be asked to confirm the password before the child is handed over to them. You will be asked to set up your password when your child starts at Playgroup.

Painswick Playgroup Telephone Number

Should you need to contact a member of Playgroup staff for any reason our telephone number is **01452 813316**.

Snacks

In keeping with the county's 'Healthy Eating Policy', we provide a varied and healthy snack time each session. We will provide milk or water at snack times. Fresh water is available from the water cooler at all times during sessions.

Insurance

The Playgroup carries full public liability and employers' liability insurance. Details are displayed on the notice board in the cloakroom.

Special Needs

We work in line with current legislation including the Early Years Foundation Stage & Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice. We have designated SEND Coordinators who are available at any time to discuss any worries or concerns you may have about your child. We work together with many different professionals (multi-agency working) and have regular training updates.

Equality of Opportunity

Our policy is to promote equality of opportunity for both adults and children, irrespective of culture, race, religion, gender, age, ability or disability. Each child is valued and respected as an individual. All children are given equal access to all activities whilst books, apparatus and equipment are chosen to reflect the contributions and roles of many different people. Painswick Playgroup has an Equal Opportunities Policy.

All our policies and procedure documents are available for you to see at any time.

Nappy Changing/Soiled Clothes

If your child is still wearing nappies/pull-ups, we will ensure that they visit the toilet regularly throughout the session. If any child has an accident we will change them. We do not supply nappies or pull-ups so please ensure you have provided these for your child.

If your child is just out of nappies please send spare clothes in case of accidents.

Car Parking

Although our Playgroup is on the school site, we do not have a specific parking area. Please do not park right outside the Playgroup building or in the lower car park as this is for the exclusive use of school staff, official visitors and the emergency services should they need to enter the site.

Dropping Off/Collecting Children

Dropping Off Children at all Times

After the initial settling-in period parents are asked to say their goodbyes in the lobby area. A member of staff shall be manning the yellow door and will welcome all children into the main room. Parents are not permitted to enter the main room at this time unless you are attending for a Stay and Play session or if your child is extremely distressed. **Please remember to sign your child in.**

Picking Up Children at 12 or 12.30pm

A member of staff will get all children who are going home at 12.00 to check their trays and to get their coats on. Children will wait in the lobby area with a staff member until they are collected. Parents will not be permitted to enter the building until all children staying for Lunch Club are seated in the main room. Staff members can sign children out and pass them over to parents/carers through the main door.

Picking Up Children at 3.30

The main door will be opened at 3.25 and parents/carers may wait in the lobby area. A member of staff will hand children over through the yellow door. Doors will be open from 3.10-3.15 for anyone who needs to collect their child early. They will then be locked again until 3.25 so that story time is not interrupted. **Please remember to sign your child out.**

If for any reason you are going to be late collecting your child please contact staff ASAP. In the unlikely event that your child has not been collected and no contact has been made, the staff will try to contact you and other named people on the registration documents. If the staff are unable to make contact with anybody within 30 minutes of the due collection time, the local CYPD (Children & Young Persons Directorate) will have to be informed.

Staff are not permitted to allow children to leave with anyone who is not authorised unless previously arranged. Please remember to use The Password System. Staff are not permitted to take children home.

This procedure is purely for health and safety reasons, especially with regard to 'Stranger Danger'. We hope you will appreciate that the safety of the children is of paramount importance, and we thank you for your cooperation.

Complaints

If you have any complaints about any aspect of the service offered at Painswick Playgroup, we have a procedure in place to deal with this. The full Complaints Procedure is available for you to see at any time but the basic steps are:

1. Approach one of the Playleaders to voice your concerns. Most difficulties or misunderstandings can be sorted out through discussion and mutual agreement.

If the above does not result in a satisfactory outcome, you can make a formal complaint by putting your concerns in writing. Please address them to 'The Chairperson' and mark them 'Confidential'.

2. Finally, if you think that there is still no satisfactory conclusion, you may contact Ofsted directly at:

Applications, Regulatory and Contact (ARC) Team
Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
MANCHESTER
M1 2WD

Tel: 0300 123 1231

For more information see our Complaints Policy.

**WE HOPE THAT BOTH YOU AND YOUR CHILD WILL BE VERY HAPPY
DURING YOUR TIME WITH US AT PAINSWICK PLAYGROUP.**