A church with a cross and sun

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**Ditton Church Pre-School Q&As**

At Ditton Church Preschool we do our best to provide as much information as possible to parents/carers prior to your child joining us. We endeavor to maintain an informative website and detailed welcome pack and ‘All About Me’ booklet, but realise there are many questions you may have that we haven’t thought of. We have therefore put together the Q&As below but welcome your suggestions on further questions we could add to the list. Some of the questions listed below will be covered in more detail in our policies which can be found on our website [www.dittonchurchpreschool.org](http://www.dittonchurchpreschool.org)

1. **At what age can my child join Ditton Church Preschool?**

At Ditton Church Pre-School we take children from around the age of two and a half, but no younger than two years and four months. We operate two intakes per year, one in September and one in January. Children will be invited to join us at whichever intake is closer to them being two and a half.

For more information please see Admissions Policy which can be found on our website

1. **Can I claim free funding for working parents work and how do I apply?**

Some working parents of 3 and 4 year olds can claim up to 30 hours free funding.

From April 2024 some working parents can claim 15 hours funding from the term after their child turns 2

Please see the links below:

<https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/free-childcare-offers-what-parents-and-carers-need-know>

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

1. **If I am not eligible for two year old funding what happens when they turn three and do I need to do anything?**

ALL children are entitled to 15 hours of funded childcare from the term after they turn three (until then you will pay fees). This is called ‘universal funding’. This does not guarantee that any one setting can offer the 15 hours immediately as it would be subject to availability, however funding can be split between up to two different settings in one day (ie a preschool and a childminder). We provide the funding form and ask you to confirm the amount of hours they will be attending and sign the form and we then make the claim. You do not need to do anything else.

1. **When will I be invoiced and how do I pay?**

Invoices are issued at least two weeks prior to the start of a term and must be paid in full before the first day of term. We prefer payment by BACS. The invoice will be emailed to you by our treasurer.

1. **Are there any additional costs above the hourly fee?**

We ask for an amount per session for consumables (From Sept 2024 this will be 50p per session). This covers things like a snack and drink during the session, wipes, suntan cream, cooking ingredients etc. Children who stay all day need to bring a packed lunch with them and will also have to pay a lunchtime fee for the time between the morning and afternoon sessions as this is not included in our funded pattern (funding can be used between 9 and 12 and 12.30 and 3.30)

1. **Does my child need to be toilet trained before starting Preschool?**

Children do not need to be toilet trained before starting preschool, but we ask that you provide a backpack with spare nappies, wipes, nappy sacks and a set of spare clothes. When you have started training please let your child’s key person know so that they can mirror what you are doing at home. If they are wearing pants at home at this stage please do not put them back into a nappy to attend preschool as this will confuse them. We are happy to deal with accidents but ask that you send plenty of spare clothes. We strongly advise that you start training by the beginning of the year before they start Infant school.

1. **What happens on days my child’s keyperson isn’t at work?**

Each child is allocated a named key person who is primarily responsible for helping them to settle in and monitoring their progress, however at Ditton Church Preschool all staff aim to build a relationship with all children so they know they can come to any of us. We also operate a ‘buddy’ system, whereby they have a second named person who will stand in as key person on any days that their first named key person does not work or is absent for any reason. The noticeboard outside details who is keyperson or buddy to each child each day.

1. **What happens if my child struggles to settle?**

Occasionally some children take a while to settle in. It isn’t unusual for them to have a good first week then dip a bit in the second week and then start to settle properly from around the third week. We advise parents to aways say goodbye to your child, rather than trying to slip out when they aren’t looking, but then to leave quickly as children tend to settle quicker once parents have left.

If your child really struggles to settle we would arrange for you to come in for a settling in meeting where we can discuss options such as building up the length of time they stay. It is very rare that this is necessary.

1. **What time do children eat lunch?**

Children who attend all day eat their lunch at midday.

1. **What happens if my child needs medication?**

Children who are fit for preschool but need long or short term prescribed medication will need a care plan in place, giving clear instructions and permission for staff to administer. Children who are unwell with contagious viruses should not attend. If you feel your child needs a dose of Calpol in the morning they should not come in.

1. **Can I take my child on holiday during term time?**

As preschool is not statutory education you can choose to take holiday during term time, however fees are still payable.

1. **When can my child start doing a full day?**

‘Rising Stars’ children can stay all day. If places remain, younger children can stay all day from the term after they turn three.

1. **What do I do if my child is ill or absent?**

If your child is going to be absent for any reason please call us on 07845 921621 so that we can update our registers accordingly.

1. **Do I have to continue doing the same sessions in the second year?**

No. you can choose different days for the second year. You will be asked to select your preferences earlier in the year and once chosen these cannot be changed.

1. **What happens at Rising Stars sessions?**

Rising stars sessions are similar to other sessions in that the majority of the session will be ‘free play’ where children choose what they want to do, but there will also be more adult led activities aimed at preparing children for the transition to Infant school, such as P.E., library, phonics and maths activities. Please see our Rising Stars booklet on our website for further information.

1. **Can preschool help if I have any concerns about my child at school , their development or about homelife?**

Yes preschool can help and can also signpost to other agencies or speak to other professionals if needed.

1. **What does my child need to bring to preschool?**

Your child will be given a box which they should bring daily. This is so we can send home artwork, letters and have a shared communication book. If they require nappies or spare clothes these should be sent in a separate named backpack. Children who stay all day need to bring a packed lunch with a drink. Suitable clothing for all weathers should be provided and please ensure everything is clearly named.

1. **What is the communication book for?**

The communication book is a means by which we can share quick notes with each other, but for longer questions or concerns we would ask you to come in and talk to us or phone if you are not able to come in. We ask that you do not name other children in your communication book.

If your child attends another setting or childminder we will also ask for your permission to share a second communication book with them, to allow us to share relevant information about your child’s development.

1. **What should I include/not include in my child’s packed lunch?**

At Ditton Church Preschool we promote healthy eating so request that children do not bring sweets or chocolate. A sandwich or wrap, salad, sausage rolls, cheese, crisps, yoghurts and fruit are usually popular choices. Please do not send in fizzy drinks and we prefer that you avoid packets of processed food.

1. **What happens if my child has an allergy?**

If your child has an allergy or food intolerance we will complete an allergy card which will have a photo of your child, their name and what they are allergic to and this will be used at the snack bar to ensure that all staff members are aware. We also ask you to provide clear instructions on procedures to follow in the event of an allergic reaction. Staff are all pediatric first aid trained, which includes use of EpiPens.

1. **How long does my child need to stay home after sickness or diarrhea?**

Children should stay at home for 48 hours from the last bout of diarrhea or sickness.

1. **Can they come to school if they have had Calpol?**

No. If you feel your child needs Calpol they should stay at home. We do keep a supply of Calpol in stock in case a child’s temperature should spike whilst in our care. We ask you to sign to give permission for us to administer if we feel necessary but would then ask you to collect your child.

1. **What happens if my child has headlice?**

We cannot exclude children with headlice but they must be treated before coming in.

1. **How am I informed about my child’s progress?**

Your child’s key person will write three short reports per year and will put together a ‘Learning Journey’ folder containing written observations, reports and artwork. This will be used as a working document while they are here and then be given to you to keep when they leave. We have an open door policy so if you wish to speak to your child’s key person at any time we can arrange for that too. Each child will also be given a communication book where we can share short messages if you don’t have time to come in but want to share something.

1. **Does my child need to bring a drink/their own cup?**

Only if they are staying all day and bringing a packed lunch. We provide milk and water and cups throughout the day.

1. **Can my child bring a comforter/toys?**

When your child first starts preschool they may bring in a comforter but after they are settled we ask that they do not bring toys into preschool as it can cause upset if they get lost or other children want to play with them.

1. **If my child is not toilet trained should they wear a nappy or pull ups?**

If they are not yet ready to be trained we prefer nappies, but if they are using pull ups as a training aid then these are fine.

1. **How do I order uniform and is it compulsory?**

Uniform is not compulsory, but most children do wear it and it does help your child to feel part of the setting and understand that it is a school day. If you choose not to buy uniform we ask that you send your child in old clothes as they will be involved in a lot of messy play! Second hand uniform is also available to purchase.

There will be a uniform order form in your child’s welcome pack, your child can try uniform on when they visit prior to ordering, but we must receive payment (preferably by BACS) before you can the uniform home. If you wish to place further orders for uniform at any time you can email Jane at[office@dittonchurchpreschool.org](mailto:office@dittonchurchpreschool.org) and she will take your order.

Uniform is a purple sweatshirt and polo or round neck T-shirt, all with the preschool logo on. Some children choose to wear purple gingham dresses in the summer; we do not supply those as it is cheaper for parents to buy them from a supermarket than for us to order through the uniform company.

1. **Is there anything else my child should or shouldn’t wear to preschool?**

We have a large outdoor garden which we access throughout the year so children should always come dressed suitably for the weather! Please do not send your child in their best clothes as we do lots of messy play. We recommend clothing that children can manage themselves as this promotes high self-esteem; ie elastic waist bands and Velcro shoes. We do NOT allow open toed or sling back shoes. Trainers are preferable.