

## **Welcome to the Taunton YMCA Pre-School**

The YMCA Pre-school is a very lively and active Pre-School, situated in a purpose built room in Lisieux Way, the home of Taunton YMCA.

The Pre-School is comprehensively insured.

Through all the varied activities the children reach a good level of independence by the time they go to school.

We at the YMCA Pre-School hope to provide a happy place where we can offer a wealth of information and experience to encourage and stimulate your child's needs through a well structured session.

We pride ourselves on the high ratio of staff to children, our approach to learning is 'learning and developing together' involving the family.

The Taunton YMCA Pre-School is a registered charity.

### **Our aims for your child**

Our aims are;

1. To enhance the development and education of children under statutory school age in a parent involving community based group
2. To provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment in the YMCA
3. To work within a framework this ensures equality of opportunity for all children and families.

We offer your child:

1. Especially tailored curriculum leading to approved early learning goals
2. Individual care and attention made possible by a high ratio of adults to children
3. Fun and friendship with children and adults
4. Opportunities for you and your family to be directly involved, in activities of the group and in your child's progress

## Our Curriculum

What will your child have the opportunity to learn at Pre-School?

1. Within the group, all children are supported in developing their potential, at their own pace using the key-worker system.
2. Our high ratio of staff enables us to have a planned curriculum, tailored to the needs of the individual child
3. By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and high level of adult input, we offer a curriculum, which leads to nationally approved early learning goals.
4. These learning outcomes are defined in more detail under the heading;
  - a. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
  - b. Communication and Language
  - c. Physical Development
  - d. Understanding the World
  - e. Literacy
  - f. Mathematics
  - g. Expressive Arts and Design

### a) PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL 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 group, sharing and co-operating with the 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 property.

### b) COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE

In both small and large groups, Pre-School children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening, and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes. We encourage the children to sign, so understanding the need for different forms of communications.

### c) PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

A range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, allows children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. A very high level of adult supervision allows children to safely create and meet physical challenges, 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.

During planning we include individual plan for children with additional needs.

#### d) UNDERSTANDING 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 a group and also in a wider community. A range of 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.

#### e) LITERACY

children have many opportunities to handle books, always sharing stories with staff, looking at words and letters which encourages their development and their literacy skills. As children play and use their hands, they are gaining increasing control over their movements working towards increased pencil skills. To develop this further, children are encouraged through their play to create shopping lists or menus. Children learn to respond to patterns in language exploring and naming sounds, by imitating words. They share books which supports their increasing knowledge of letter sounds and how written and spoken words are formed.

#### f) 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 assisted to learn and use the vocabulary of mathematics, identifying objects by shape, position, size, volume and numbers.

Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of numbering sequencing and when they are ready, to use simple mathematical operations such as adding.

#### g) EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN

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

# MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

## DECISION MAKING

The Pre-school is managed by the YMCA Pre-school trained staff in conjunction with the Board of Management of Taunton YMCA.

## POLICIES

A copy of our policies are available for you to look at.  
All our policies are designed to offer the best possible experience for the children and families of the group.  
Our policies are reviewed on a regular basis; comments and suggestions from parents/carers are always welcome.

## FEES

Fees are £3.90 per hour for early, morning, lunch, afternoon and late session (for children not in receipt of any Government Nursery grants. see below), payable half-termly in advance.  
Fees continue to be payable if a child is absent for a short time.  
In the case of prolonged absence, parents/carers should consult the Pre-school Administrator about fee payment.  
Each child's attendance is conditional upon payment of necessary fees and/or Nursery Grant eligibility. (Please see further information about this below).  
Consideration to altering the fees policy will be treated on an individual basis and in the strictest confidence.  
At least two weeks written notice is needed if a child is leaving Pre-School.

## NURSERY EDUCATION GRANT FOR 2, 3 & 4 YEAR OLDS

This is a scheme run by the Government, which funds all 3 & 4 year-old children, your child will be entitled to 570 hours free per year, starting the term **after** he/she is 3 years old. The Government also fund some 2 year old children, there is a strict criteria to meet for this funding.  
You will need to pay a top up fee for the early session, morning, lunch, afternoon and late session for any sessions required over the maximum free of hours allowed under the scheme

## **STAFF AND RECORD KEEPING**

Regular staff meetings are held to plan the Curriculum to meet the unique needs of each individual child. We work with parents through shared record keeping to ensure all children are encouraged to realise their potential.

### **STAFF TRAINING**

All staff are encouraged to maintain a high level of further training. We are proud of the high ratio of adults to children in our group providing individual attention. Through Early Years training we are constantly in touch with new thinking in the field of child education and care. We have access to a range of professionally produced publications. Parents/carers may ask to see these. In addition on going training is available through Early Years courses, which welcome both staff and parents/carers. Information and training are available through local meetings and conferences, parents will always be informed of these.

### **PRE-SCHOOL STAFF**

The regular staff in the Pre-School are:

Mrs Judy Cannings	Pre-School Manager
Mrs Jackie Northcott	Administrator / Deputy Manager
Miss Gemma Brown	Assistant
Mrs Zoe Shattock	Assistant
Miss Sarah Milton	Assistant
Mrs Neeley Upham	Assistant
Miss Amy Northcott	Assistant
Miss Carly Fitzgerald	Assistant
Miss Natasha Bull	Apprentice

## THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

Our Pre-school recognises Parents/Carers as the first and most important educators of their young children. Our Pre-school aims to support Parents/Carers.

Parents/Carers are welcome:

1. To work in the group with children
2. To assist with the fund-raising
3. To attend training courses, workshops and conferences organised by Early Years.

## PROJECTS

During the course of the Half term, we work as a group on various projects and activities. This may be related to subjects such as, the seasons, the weather, shapes and colours, growing, festivals and events such as Bonfire night.

We always display items brought in by the children and have an interest table for the children to observe and discuss.

We encourage the children and parents to contribute in any way to these projects.

We feel that the parents can benefit enormously from these activities, we always welcome ideas from parents for future projects, please feel free to discuss your ideas with the Pre-School Manager at any time.

## SPECIAL NEEDS

The number of adults in the Pre-School enables us to provide individual attention for each child. Each child is able to progress at his/her own rate in all areas of development. This is true for children with and without disabilities or learning difficulties.

We are experienced in working in close liaison with professionals across the range of special needs. If you would like to discuss the group's ability to meet your own child's needs, please talk to the Pre-School Manager.

Our full policy on special needs is available for you to read on request.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **SIGNING IN AND OUT**

You will be required to sign and time your child's arrival and departure at each session. Staff will be available to assist you.

### **COLLECTING YOUR CHILD FROM PRE-SCHOOL**

1. Please inform a member of staff if someone other than yourselves will be collecting you child from Pre-School.
2. In the interest of safety we request all Parents/Carers to drive with due care and consideration outside the Pre-School.
3. Please do not park in the disabled parking bay unless you are entitled to i.e. you have a disabled parking badge.

### **IF YOUR CHILD IS UNWELL**

We would respectfully request that your child does not attend Pre-School if he/she is feeling unwell. Taunton YMCA Pre-School has a policy that a child needs to be clear of sickness or diarrhoea for 48 hours before returning to Pre-school. If you are in any doubt please contact the Pre-School Manager for advice.

### **WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD NEED?**

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 and not too new. Aprons are provided for water play and painting etc.

It is good for children to practice the skills, which make them independent. Simple clothing which they can handle themselves will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to and put on and take off their outdoor clothes without being too dependant on adult help. **All clothing should be clearly marked.** Should any other special clothing or equipment be needed, a request will be made in advance.

We encourage children to bring any objects of interest to themselves or relating to projects being carried out in the group.

If your child is staying for lunch, please can you provide a named packed lunch box with healthy food and a drink included (Non-carbonated)

## DISCIPLINE

If a situation arises when we feel that a child may need to be disciplined we will take the child to one side and explain to him/her what he/she was doing wrong so that they all learn to play nicely in a mixed environment.

## 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 Pre-School staff to work together to help the child to 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 little while to settle.

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

*STAFF WILL ALWAYS BE AVAILABLE TO LISTEN TO ANY PROBLEMS YOU MAY HAVE CONCERNING YOUR CHILD.*

AN WAITING LIST FORM CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE PRE-SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR.

Taunton YMCA Pre-School: 01823 283899  
Administrator : 01823 288181  
Email; [ymcatauntonps@btconnect.com](mailto:ymcatauntonps@btconnect.com)