

The Local Offer

Name of Setting: Sherard Preschool Playgroup

Telephone: 07749 006860

Email: ict.admin@sherard.leics.sch.uk

Name of person to contact: Mandy Whitelocks

My child has SEND. I would like to look around. What do I need to do?

Sherard Pre-school Playgroup welcomes all children to our setting and values their uniqueness and uses this to plan for their individual learning ensuring that each child reaches their full potential. We are open five days a week during term time from 8.45am until 3.30pm. We have an open door policy and you are always free to call in and have a look around. Alternatively you can telephone or e-mail to arrange a visit prior to your child's enrolment at the playgroup. A warm welcome will be given to you from all of our highly trained staff and our Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will be available to discuss your child's individual needs to ensure that all of their needs are met. You can find additional information such as our latest prospectus on the website.

How will my child and I be made to feel welcome and how will you get ready for my child coming?

Our staff have a considerable amount of experience in working with families who have children with additional needs, they recognise that each child is unique and that you as a parent/carer will know your child best. To prepare everyone, visits can be arranged to the setting as many times as necessary to ensure your child is comfortable with their new surroundings and staff. Home visits can also be made to help familiarise your child with their key person. Our SENCo and your child's key person will liaise with other professionals/agencies involved prior to their start to make sure additional support and equipment are in place to ensure the best learning opportunities are provided. Parents are encouraged to send their child's comfort objects into the playgroup and these are then offered to the child following parent's recommendations or if the child becomes distressed. When the child settled and was happy, staff would reduce the time the child had their comforter object. All parents are asked to fill in an all about me form prior to their child starting to ensure the setting knows the individual likes, dislikes and current interests.

How accessible are your premises?

We are committed to making our setting as inclusive as possible to all our children and their families. Access is through the main school gate, along a short path and through the settings locked gate. Our setting is all on one level with just a small step into the main door. Toilets and wash basins have stools to make them child friendly, there is a low level urinal and nappy changing facilities are available to support all ages of children (2-5). We have a securely enclosed outdoor area with all-weather surfaces; concrete and artificial grass, in addition we have a covered outdoor area. We have a large main room with a small room adjoining for small group/intervention work.

How will you keep my child safe?

The safety and welfare of children in our care is paramount. We have written policies in place and they are reviewed annually or more frequently if necessary. All staff are checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and they are reviewed periodically. Medications are administered in accordance with our medication policy, only prescribed medications are administered in the setting with prior written consent from parents, these must have a pharmacy label on with the child's details on and the dose of medication to be given. All medication that is given is witnessed by a second member and signed for by both staff and parents at the end of the session when they collect their child. Children's special diets and allergies are recorded on their detail form, all staff are made aware of these and special placemats are used at lunch times. Children's allergies are catered for at the snack bar and special meals can be cooked on site following the completion of a form by parents and the child's GP. In the past staff have had training on administering epi pens for children suffering with severe allergies and emergency meds for epilepsy. These need refreshing annually or for specific children so please discuss with staff prior to your child starting so they can be in place when your child starts. All staff are experienced early years practitioners that have undergone safeguarding training which is refreshed annually. We work on a higher staff ratio than required which helps to promote children's safety and where necessary we source additional adult funding for children with SEND. If an additional support worker is required and money is not available to cover this the setting will subsidise the member of staff. Regular risk assessments are carried out for all activities to ensure the safety of our children is never compromised. All equipment used is age and stage appropriate. Where additional equipment is required it will be sourced to meet the individuals' needs as recommended by external agencies. Access to our premises is strictly controlled through a locked gate and we operate a password system for collecting children. We have a positive behaviour policy that all staff follow, any incident of inappropriate behaviour is shared with parents, usually upon collection or before if necessary. ABC plans are used to monitor behaviour and behaviour plans are drawn up with parents where necessary.

How will you communicate with me what my child has done, enjoyed and learnt?

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We have a number of strategies to support communication with parents and carers. Each child will have a designated key person who is responsible for meeting and ensuring that child's safety, well-being and developmental needs are met. The child's key person or the SENCo will be available to talk with parents/carers at the beginning and the end of the session. Discussions with the groups will be arranged when convenient to ensure your child's individual needs are being met. Each child has an on-line Tapestry learning journal that is regularly updated by the child's key person, it enables staff to record achievements and track progress in the seven areas of learning, using observations and photographs as evidence. Parents have continuous access to this and are notified by e-mail when something has been added. In addition this is a valuable tool for parents to share with staff what their child has been doing at home. Home diaries can be set up to provide opportunities to share information, comments or questions between the key person and parents. A record of children's progress will be kept on a child's individual tracker to help assess their development. Parents receive two progress summaries each year and are encouraged to add their comments. Parents meetings are held twice a year to share your child's progress. If these dates are not convenient we are happy to arrange another time to suit. Newsletters and planning sheets are sent out to parents regularly to keep them informed and up to date with what is happening in the setting. In addition information is regularly added to Tapestry and the school have a Facebook page which is used to share information with parents. If your child attends more than one setting information will be shared with them on a regular basis.

How do you work with other professionals?

We have had a lot of experience with working with other professionals and have developed good relationships with many services. These include: The Area SENCo, Speech and Language Therapists, Autism Outreach, Physiotherapists, Educational Psychology Service and Occupational Therapists. Through working effectively with outside professionals we have supported and met the needs of many children who have a wide range of SEND, including arranging and taking part on review panels for some of these children. Liaising with professionals through a variety of ways e.g. telephone calls and meetings, information is shared and acted upon to give support in the best possible way available by acting on advice, updating individual plans and implementing strategies. We always keep parents informed of any information shared between ourselves and other professionals.

What training have you/your staff had in SEND?

The SENCo is fully trained and experienced in supporting children with SEND and has attended additional short courses to expand their knowledge further. Mandy is an experienced SENCo and Early Years Professional (level 6) who has a level 3 in Speech and Language Support for Under 5's (ELKLAN). She has also attended Making Sense of Autism, The Visually Impaired Child in the EYFS, Meaningful Movement, Basic Makaton, Communicating with Signs and Symbols and The Early Years Practitioner Inclusion Project All staff are highly qualified and have a wealth of experience in early years development. Between them they have attended a variety of short courses including: Autism Awareness, Social Communication Groups, Makaton, Behaviour Management and Supporting Boys to Achieve. All training is cascaded to the whole staff team during staff meetings. All members of staff are encouraged to attend additional training where possible to support the individual needs of a child. Termly update meetings are attended by the SENCo and we also have access to the school's SENCo Miss Walters for additional advice and support.

How will you adapt play opportunities for my child?

It is important to us to make children feel valued and individual regardless of the challenges they have to face, we therefore endeavour to find an achievable and manageable way to overcome these. Observations are recorded regularly and informal feedback is given daily, these also ensure that resources reflect the child's likes and interests. The child's key person or SENCo will attend any support meeting for the child to ensure partnership working. Activities are set out at an appropriate level to the individual children, if they are sitting on the floor resources are moved to the floor, if they have standing frames the resources are moved to an appropriate level. We also follow the advice of other professional involved to ensure the activities are tailored to helping the child meet their next steps. The high ratio of staff enables us to offer more support when modelling and interacting in play. Appropriate toys and equipment will be used to support the different ages and stages of a child's development. Activities are planned on individual children's interests they will be used in small group activities and social communication groups to support language interaction and confidence. Makaton and visuals cues including objects of reference, picture timetables and choice boards are used to support children's understanding. We have a small room for quieter 1-1 and small group activities and an undercover area for non-walking children to access all year round.

How will you get ready for my child going to his/her new school?

Transition into school can have a major impact on both the child and their families therefore we recognise that it needs to be as smooth as possible. Arrangements are planned and based on a child's individual needs. Meetings can be arranged with parents, other professionals involved with your child and their new teacher. Photo books of the new school can be compiled for the child to look at with their key person and parents/carers on a regular basis prior to the transition. Frequent visits to the school are arranged for the child with their key person to familiarise them with their new environment, to reassure them and make the transition as smooth as possible. Relevant information such as progress summaries and trackers are shared with the child's new school together with strategies and practical advice that has been proven to be effective in supporting the child. Friendship groups are shared with

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the child's new setting. With parents' consent key medical information and allergies are shared with the new school both verbally and through written SEND Support Plans and Education and Health Care Plans

How will you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?

Building a relationship with parents and carers enables everyone involved with your child to support their individual needs and help them develop to their full potential. Initially we rely on parents to help us to get to know their child through conversations with the SENCo and their child's key person. We ask parents to fill in an All About Me form prior to their child starting to ensure that we have up to date information about their child's interests, likes, dislikes and special comforters. Your child's progress will be shared with you daily via their key person. Progress summaries are sent out twice a year and parents meetings are held in the Autumn and Summer Term. Target plans are written and shared with parents, these contain ideas to support children's learning at home and include targets identified by other professionals. Where necessary Send Support Plans are written with parents and Education and Health Care Plans are requested. Communication is very important and a two way process, if you are more comfortable talking through a communication book this can be arranged with your child's key person and filled in on a daily or weekly basis. We recommend that you add comments as the child's first and foremost educators. Parents are always invited and encouraged to attend meetings with other professionals and agencies involved to enable them to add their experiences and input as we know that you know your child better than anyone. Your child's on-line learning journey is available on-line at any time for you to have a look at and share with your child's new setting. We will endeavour to answer any questions that you may have anytime.