

Starting your child at Salway Christian Pre-school

Please take time to read through the following, which covers some of the practical questions most parents ask. Please do not hesitate to ask for further clarification on any point, or any other matter that is not clear. Our settling procedures are under constant review and adapted according to government guidance and the local Covid situation but we always aim to be as flexible as possible to meet the needs of each family.

- **Dress** – please do not dress your children in their best clothes! While we will do our best to protect your child's clothing, many of the activities we do are messy. The children also need to be wearing clothes that are practical for physical activities and easily removed for going to the toilet. We ask that the children do not wear jewellery, flip-flops or boots that are difficult to climb and balance in.

As we use the garden every day and take the children out for the “daily mile”, whatever the weather, we do ask that your child brings a named coat when the weather is cold or wet and a sun-hat when it is hot. If you can help your child to recognise their own coat that is very helpful and saves a lot of staff time. We will provide a named bag for your child when they start. Please ensure you bring this bag each day with a set of spare clothes for your child and nappies wipes etc if necessary.

The Daily Mile is an initiative for schools to help improve children's health, fitness, concentration and general wellbeing. Please look at <https://thedailymile.co.uk/> for more information. Although many of our children are too young to manage a mile, they can manage 15 minutes of walking/running/moving in different ways and by the age of 4 should easily manage a mile. We take the children out in small groups before their story time. This is an activity done in normal outdoor clothes in all weathers except the most extreme it is not competitive but social.

- **Arrival and departure** – we open the front doors at 9.15 a.m. and lock them at 9.25 a.m. If you are late for any reason or need to collect your child early please ring the bell on the Forest Approach entrance or rear fire door
- The doors will be re-opened at 12.15 p.m. We do ask that you are punctual in collecting your child, as it can be very unsettling if they think no one is collecting them. Please do be patient as we ask the children to remain seated on the carpet until a staff member calls their name. In this way we can ensure that no child leaves on their own and no child leaves with the wrong adult. Once we have called your child's name, please ensure they remain with you. When your child starts, we will ask you for a password in case you ever have to send someone we do not know to pick them up. We will not release a child to a stranger without contacting you first, so please let us know, preferably in writing, if you are sending someone we are not expecting. If for any reason you leave after the doors are locked please ask a member of staff to let you out. PLEASE DO NOT AT ANY TIME UNLOCK A DOOR YOURSELF. We need to work together to ensure the security of your children.
- **Personal possessions** – please do not bring your child's favourite toy to pre-school unless it is essential to help them settle. If possible take it home with you and bring it back at the end of the morning, otherwise try to leave it in your child's bag or give to a member of staff to keep until needed. We suggest this approach so that a favourite toy/comforter is not lost or forgotten until bedtime when it is too late to retrieve it. Also, it is hard for other children to understand that a toy belongs to another child and is not for sharing.

- Settling in your child – Please talk to your child’s key person about this process. As each child is different and has had different experiences up to this point this will be different for each child. We would encourage you to stay as long as is necessary for your child to feel secure but during this time to gradually encourage your child’s first steps of independence perhaps at first by keeping to the other side of the hall, then leaving for short periods. We do not want to rush this, but we will try to encourage you to leave as soon as your child seems ready. We suggest that to help your child you:
 1. Explain to them exactly what is happening and who will look after them until you return.
 2. Settle them with an activity they enjoy
 3. Say goodbye confidently and move out of sight.

If your child cries do not return immediately, many children cry for a few minutes when first left then settle down happily. We will of course contact you if your child shows prolonged signs of distress. Throughout this time, it is most important that you stay in control, so we recommend that you don’t tell your child you are going to leave unless you are confident you can carry it through. If you are unable to do as you have said the process can become much longer and more painful for everyone involved.

- Toilet training – please discuss this with your key person so we can work together to help your child progress to using the toilet independently. Initially we will give them as much help as they need. **If your child is still in nappies or pull-ups you will need to provide nappies wipes and nappy sacks in their bag if you wish staff to change them. If possible, please use nappies then move to pants as pull ups are difficult for staff to change and do not help children to learn to use the toilet.**
- Working together – your child will get the best from their time at pre-school if we work together so please do give us feedback and keep us informed of any significant events in your child’s life, or any concerns you may have. Do look at the plans and ask if you are unsure how your child is spending their time with us.
- Please do take home your child’s work. If parents value their child’s efforts even at this early stage they are more likely to be motivated to learn in the future. Another way to encourage your child and to help us is to help on the rota but please check your child is settled before you do this. If you have any particular interest or skill that you can share with us please let us know. (E.g music, dance, gardening, IT skills, washing up, taking photos etc.) regularly looking at and contributing to your child’s profile book is another good way to be involved with their pre-school experience.
- Snack time - we try to encourage healthy choices at snack time so ask parents to donate about 40p per day if possible. There is a box on Liz’s table and money can be given daily/weekly/termly as convenient to you.
- Complaints procedure – we hope that you will have no cause to complain during your time at pre-school and that any concerns can be dealt with informally. However, we do have a formal complaints procedure, which is available from Liz, in the policy folder or on the website and on the notice board where you can also find details about how to contact Ofsted directly.