



TOY BOX PRE-SCHOOL

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Welcome

Toybox Pre-school has offered sessional day care for 2 to 5 year olds for over 25 years. We run 10 sessions per week and cater for a maximum of 26 children each session. Toybox Pre-school is located in the Swainson Building next to Ansford Academy School, near Castle Cary in Somerset.

The staff and management committee know how important these developmental years are to both your child and yourself and so we provide a safe, stimulating and caring environment that promotes learning through play. We use a wide range of resources giving your child the opportunity to develop their social skills as they play and interact with other children.

We believe children learn through play

We aim to:

- Provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment with a warm, friendly family atmosphere.
- Work in partnership with parents to help each child to develop and learn.
- Work within a framework which offers equality of opportunity for all children and families.
- Ensure your child enjoys their time with us.

We do this through providing a range of activities including:

- Art and craft; painting and collage etc.
- Basic science and math activities; shapes/weight/matching/sorting/counting/games/rhymes/graphs/charts etc.
- Songs and rhymes.
- Role play; home corner/dressing up.
- Gardening; planting seed to observe germination and growth.
- Physical play; develop co-ordination.
- Stories and books; book corner.
- Alphabet letters; word games/rhymes etc.
- Sand, water and plasticine play.
- Cookery; non bake and bake.



Opening Times

Day	Session 1	Session 2	All day
Monday	09.15 – 12.15	12.15 – 15.45	09.15 – 15.45
Tuesday	09.15 – 12.15	12.15 – 15.45	09.15 – 15.45
Wednesday	09.15 – 12.15	12.15 – 15.45	09.15 – 15.45
Thursday	09.15 – 12.15	12.15 – 15.45	09.15 – 15.45
Friday	09.15 – 12.15	12.15 – 15.45	09.15 – 15.45

A morning session runs from 9.15 to 12.15 and an afternoon session runs from 12.15 to 15.45.

Children who stay all day, or arrive for the afternoon session should bring a healthy packed lunch.

You can register your child for as many or few sessions as you wish. Children often start off attending a couple of sessions per week increasing them as they get more confident or when the government funding becomes available the term after they turn 2 or 3.

We are not connected to any particular primary school and children usually leave us to go to a range of schools in the surrounding area.

We are open for 38 weeks of the year. We match our holidays to the Castle Cary Primary School holiday calendar and take our INSET days at the same time.



The Day

Your child's day will consist of varied and interesting structured sessions both morning and afternoon where he/she will learn through organised and free play. We have a secure outside play area and aim to allow the children to use it everyday. We also often take the children out on walks through the fields or into town.

General Daily Routine

09.15 – 10.45	Free choice of activities. Play areas are set up when the children enter. Each child is able to choose which area they wish to play in and may move freely between areas.
10.30 – 11.00	Registration. This is a chance for children share news, talk about the weather or the theme for the month and their routines.
	Snack time.
11.00	Tidy and clear space for next activities
11.00 – 11.15	Key person group time. Time for the key worker to work with, chat to and observe their key children.
11.15 – 12.15	Time as a whole group. Games, singing, dancing, physical movement, music, show and tell, rhymes or story time.
12.00 – 12.15	Students leave for home after the morning session or arrive for the afternoon session.
12.30 – 13.15	Lunch time, proceeded with quiet time on the mat with a book or DVD.
13.15 – 13.45	Free choice of activities. Each child is able to choose which area they wish to play in and may move freely between areas. Pack away.
13.45 – 14.00	Key person group time. In the afternoon this maybe inside or outside.
14.00 – 14.45	Time as a whole group. Games, singing, dancing, physical movement, music, show and tell, rhymes or story time.
15.15	Snack
15.45	Home time

The routine may change at any time in response to any child or the whole group needs and requests, special visitors, weather or the choices of the children themselves.



Staff

All of our staff are dedicated and caring and hold a wealth of experience between them. The Manager and Senior Practitioner hold a Level 5 qualification and all the practitioners hold at least a relevant Level 3 childcare qualification. We are committed to recruiting, appointing and employing staff in accordance with all current legislation.

We are committed to providing our staff with an ongoing programme of development. Our staff participate in regular in-service training.

All our staff and committee members undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check.

We ensure that either the Manager or Senior Practitioner is present during each session, in fact most of the time they are both present.

The legal child/staff ratio is 8 to 1 with 3 and 4 year olds, and a ratio of 6 to 1 with 2 and 3 year olds.

However, we prefer a ratio of 6 to 1 and 4 to 1. This means that with 2 members of staff present, we will have a maximum of 12 or 8 children. We feel this is much more workable.

As part of our aim to support and nurture children both developmentally and personally, staff are called by their first names allowing the children to form stronger partnerships with them.

Key Person

The pre-school uses a key person system. Parents will know who their child's key person is and will be able to talk to them about any comments or concerns they may have. The key person will ensure that the needs of the child are recognised and the curriculum planning is tailored to meet those needs. The key person will follow your child's progress and keep records of their achievements for them to take on to primary school. Key worker meetings are arranged twice each year although you can make an appointment for a meeting with your key person at any time.

Management and The Committee

We are a registered charity and run by a committee of parent/carer volunteers working under a constitution and voted in at our Annual General Meeting which is usually held in the autumn term.



The ToyBox Pre-School Committee

Chair Lianne Bourgoin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deals with outside organisations, including press.• Sets agendas and chairs meetings.• Checks budgets and accounts.• Deals with staffing and OFSTED, including police clearances and disclosures for staff and committee members.• Line manages Manager.• Conducts staff appraisals (with Manager).• Files and keeps records for the committee.• Delegates to Vice Chair.
Vice-Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chairs committee meetings in Chair's absence.• Updates policies and procedures.• Keeps up-to-date with legal requirements and employment issues• Searches for and applies for grants.• Deals with OFSTED inspections and ensures committee is kept up-to-date with changes.• Keeps parents informed of changes.
Secretary Roxene Weston	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sets agendas with Chair, takes and produces typed minutes.• Deals with correspondence and general communication.• Maintains lists of contacts.• Files and keeps records.
Treasurer Alison Wason	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keeps balance sheets and deals with accounts.• Sets budget (with committee).• Deals with funding and grants.• Produces annual financial reports for submission to charity commission.• Deals with insurances and memberships.• Checks banking (fees, payroll, rent, bills, petty cash).• Keeps accounts and financial reporting.



The Committee is divided into 2 areas: Finance and Staffing.

We have a Fundraising sub-committee, dedicated to raising money for our Pre-School.

It is vital that enough parents and carers become involved with the committee as without it Toybox would have to close.

We are always looking for willing volunteers to help out by taking on a role on the Committee, attending meetings and assisting with fund raising. If you would like to help out or even just find out what we do, you are welcome to come to a meeting to meet us socially. Just let any staff member or one of the committee members know you are interested.

The Fundraising Committee

Chair

Jean Shakespeare

- Communicate with staff and the committee to identify key areas and new equipment required for the children.
 - Organise fun and exciting fundraising events.
-

Visiting us and settling your child in

We are very happy for you to visit us at the Pre-school on most days. We prefer your visit to be between 10.00 and 12.00 or 13.00 and 14.45. You may bring your child with you or come alone. Please make an appointment with the Manager on the number given on the front page.

Once your child starts with us you are welcome to stay around for a while in the mornings to help them settle in. Each child is different, but please remember that sometimes things can be more difficult for the child if you do stay for long periods. Our staff will be happy to chat to you about the best course of action for your child.

Facilities and Equipment

We are fortunate to have the Swainson building which is a large, spacious building where children have ample personal space to play and explore. Additionally we have a secure outdoor play area.

We have extensive resources and a variety of equipment maintain the interest of your child so that they develop in all areas of the curriculum.



The Curriculum

We follow the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which covers children's learning from birth until the end of the reception year. The curriculum is carefully planned to provide the children with the knowledge, concepts, attitudes and skills to meet the early learning goals within the six areas of learning and development that the EYFS recommends.

All children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. Our key worker system enables us to ensure a planned curriculum tailored to the needs of each individual child.

By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and a high level of individual staff input, we offer a curriculum which leads to nationally approved learning steps and prepares children to continue with the Foundation Stage Curriculum in their reception class at school.

A Principled Approach

Effective practice in the EYFS is built on four guiding themes which describe how staff should support the development, learning and care of young children. Each theme is broken down into four commitments describing how the principles can be put into practice.

- **A Unique Child** – recognises that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. The commitments are focused around development; inclusion; safety; and health and wellbeing.
- **Positive Relationships** – describes how children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person. The commitments are focused around respect; partnership with parents; supported learning; and the role of the key person.
- **Enabling Environments** – explains that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The commitments are focused around observation, assessment and planning; support for every child; the learning environment; and the wider context – transitions, continuity, and multi-agency working.
- **Learning and Development** – recognises that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.



The early learning goals are:

- **Communication, Language and Literacy**

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening, and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes. Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purpose of writing and, when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols themselves. The book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, to be able to handle them and be aware of their uses.

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children are individually supported in developing confidence 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 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 for the group, its members and its property.

- **Mathematics**

By means of adult supported practical experience, children become familiar with sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities, which form the basis of early mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, children are assisted to learn and use vocabulary of mathematics, identify objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences and to use simple mathematical operations such as adding.

- **Knowledge and understanding of 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 begin to share and record their findings. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding their environment, both within the group and the wider community. A range of safe and 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.



- **Physical development**

A range of equipment and opportunities both indoors and out of doors, allows children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own body skills, including controlling movement, climbing and balancing. At the same time children are supported in the development of fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils, and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

- **Creative development**

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings. Art equipment including paint, glue, crayons and pencils as well as natural resources and junk modelling, provides for open ended exploration of colour, shape and texture. Children join in with and respond to music and stories and there are many opportunities for imaginative role play.

Registration

Initially we ask you to call the Pre-school Manager for an informal chat. After that you will be asked to complete the welcome pack registration forms and return them with the fee of £25 to the Pre-school Manager. This welcome fee includes the cost of a Toybox bag, hat, t-shirt and sweatshirt.

Admissions

We take children once they are 2 years. We find that most children this age will settle in quite quickly. However, some do not and occasionally we recommend that the parents or carers of these children consider taking them out of the Pre-school and trying again a few months later. We prefer children to be toilet trained but will take children still in nappies. Unfortunately we are not able to toilet train children ourselves but parents' efforts to toilet train will be supported.

We arrange our waiting list on a strictly first come, first served basis and do not discriminate against any children on any grounds including gender, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion, ethnicity or language.



Fees

Fees are: Age 2 to 3 years old is £4.70 per hour; Age 3 to 5 years old is £4.60 per hour. **This is payable whether or not your child attends his or her regular sessions.** If you take your holidays in term time, sessions will be charged for as usual. If your child is unable to attend for a longer period of time you must discuss this with the manager.

Fees will be invoiced monthly, unless you only pay for snacks, in which case you will receive a termly invoice. Please note there is a £5 late fee on unpaid invoices.

For your child to keep their place at Toybox you must pay the fees. We follow a strict procedure for non-payment of fees. Our Fees Policy is available for you to read.

In case of difficulty with fees please speak to the Pre-school Manager first who will discuss the matter in confidence with the Committee.

Grants

Pre-school children who are 2 or 3 years and older are eligible for a government grant. Children will be eligible to receive the grant from the start of the term following their birthday. The grant may be claimed for up to 6 sessions per week. However, if your child attends another early years setting the grant can only be claimed once.

For more information on the grants please talk to the Pre-school Manager.

Attendance

Your child can attend between 1 and 10 sessions per week. You will be able to block book the same sessions each week. You will not be able to swap and change sessions each week.

Additional sessions

We offer additional one off sessions. You can book these by speaking with a member of staff and if ratio allow, staff will book your child in for the extra session. You will be billed for these on a month by month basis. Please note that staff decision is final and will be based on whether your fees are paid up to date and if child/staff ratios allow.



Cancelling Sessions

2 weeks' notice in writing is required when cancelling sessions.

Illness

Pre-school staff have the discretion not to accept a child who they consider is too unwell attend a session. If you think your child is unwell please keep them at home. It is Pre-school policy that a child who has suffered from vomiting or diarrhoea in the previous 48 hours should be kept at home.

If a child is taken ill during the session, the Manager will telephone for collection. Therefore, please ensure that the Pre-school is kept updated on changes of named contact and contact telephone numbers.

Drop off

You are welcome to drop off your child at 9.15am. The staff are usually in the hall from 9am preparing the room and setting up the activities for the children however, we are not insured to have children in the hall before 9.15am so we ask you to wait in the reception area with your child until we open the door. The morning is a good time to have brief chats with your child's key worker or see the Manager. You are welcome to stay until your child is settled however, do keep in mind that it often prolongs the agony of parting and is not always the best course of action.

Place the lunch boxes on the lunch trolley and hang the child's coat and bag on their named peg in the reception area and ask your child (after the first few days of attendance) to pick up and bring in their photo for self registration on the boards in the hall.

Collection

Whether you pick up at 12.15 or 15.45 we ask you to stand away from the door and wait for your child to come out. Children will be let out one-by-one, in no particular order, holding their bags, coats and anything they have made during the day. The lunch trolley will be in the reception area. If you wish to speak to anyone at this time please wait until all the children have come out before you speak to the person on the door.

We ask you to pick up promptly please. If you think for any reason that you are going to be late then please call the Pre-school before 3.30pm. We understand that occasionally lateness cannot be helped but we do have to pass on the staffing costs to you. We do have a 'Non-collection of Children' policy for you to view.



If you are not collecting your child yourself you MUST inform the staff in the morning of who will be collecting your child and sign the 'Book' to say this. We will not release children to adults unless the Book has been signed.

What to bring

- Our Toybox uniform consists of a sweatshirt & t-shirt (part of your registration pack). We ask that your child wears one of these when they go on trips and visits for safety reasons.
- Trousers, skirts, shorts, etc. are your own preference.
- In the summer please bring something to cover their shoulders and a sun hat to cover their necks. You must also provide sun cream.
- In the winter please leave a warm coat and hat on the child's peg.
- Please ensure that all your child's clothes are clearly labelled.
- With your child's Toybox bag: a spare pair of pants, trousers, socks and a t-shirt. This is in case your child has a toilet accident during the day or if they get wet or dirty during wet play or outside play.
- Should we need to provide your child with new underwear because there was none in their bag, there is a charge of £1.
- If your child is not yet potty trained, please include: spare nappies, latex gloves, wet wipes and nappy bags.

If any of these items are not provided, ToyBox shall insert a box of said item into your child's day bag and you will be charged the following on your next invoice:

Pack of nappy sacks:	£1.00
Pack of wet wipes:	£1.50
Disposable gloves: Box of 50:	£2.50
Box of 100:	£5.00

- We have a 'show and tell/focus' table and we encourage the children to bring in anything related to the focus to put on the table.

What not to bring

We would prefer it if your child left their own personal toys at home.

We can take no responsibility for them if they are brought in and get broken. We also ask you not to let children bring in money, sweets and chocolate.

What to wear

We provide your first Toybox sweatshirt and t-shirt as part of your welcome pack. We do not insist, but hope that you will purchase more so that your child can wear the toy box uniform



each day. This uniform consists of a blue Toybox t-shirt and a blue Toybox sweatshirt. Children should wear comfortable trousers or skirts and shoes. In the winter we ask that you leave a warm coat and hat for outdoor activities on the child's peg. In the summer we ask that your child bring something to cover their shoulders when we are outdoors and ask you to leave a suitable sun hat, which covers the child's neck. Please ensure that all your child's clothes are clearly labelled.

Outdoor play and visits

We aim to allow the children to play outside at every possible opportunity. This will usually mean in the outdoor play area or supervised in the adjoining fields and lanes. Sometimes we will walk further with the children and may even venture into town. For this reason we ask that you send appropriate clothing each day which should include either a coat and hat in cold weather or a sun hat and shoulder protection in hot weather.

In their final year before school we often take the children on visits to the doctor, hospital, dentist, fire station or library. If we need to take the children on a bus we ask you to bring in their car seat.

Snacks and foods

We provide your child with healthy snacks and occasional treats at snack time each morning and afternoon sessions, at a cost to parents of 35p each session. We also give your child a drink of milk, water or squash. Water is always available to children at any time.

Sometimes we make things to eat in our activity time. These are usually brought home in the afternoon but may occasionally be eaten. In addition we may bring foods in for the children to try when we are learning about certain themes.

If you do not want your child to try certain foods or they are allergic to anything please let us know and keep us informed of any changes.

Information we need to know and be kept up-to-date with



Please let us know:

- if your child is on any special diet. Any food items can be given to your child's key worker.
- if your child has any allergies.
- his/her permanent address. Please keep us informed of any changes as soon as they happen.
- your home and mobile phone number. Please inform us of any changes.
- if your child needs any medicines. The Pre-school staff are not permitted to give any prescribed medication to the children except inhalers or creams. These **must** be clearly labelled and we **must** have an authorisation letter from you in order to administer them.
- the name of your family doctor.

When we need your permission/signature

- We need you to sign forms in order that we can perform certain tasks for your child. These are:
 - to apply sun cream
 - to photograph or video your child
 - to administer medication
 - for emergency medical treatment
 - as a commitment to the payment of fees
 - to say you are happy for us to disclose information to inspectors such as OFSTED
 - to observe your child at play in order to keep developmental records
 - to apply a plaster to your child's cut.

We do have factor 50 sun cream for the children however, we ask parents to bring their child's own and labelled.

Confidentiality of Information

All information within the setting regarding your child is confidential and subject to Data Protection. We do ask you to sign to say that you allow us to show any of your child's records to inspectors of the Pre-school such as OFSTED.



OFSTED

We are OFSTED registered and a copy of our reports can be found, on the Pre-school website, on the OFSTED website or by asking the Pre-school Manager for a copy.

Communication and Notice boards

We have a regularly updated website: www.toyboxpreschool.weebly.com which contains all information you may require: from fundraising events to policies.

There is also a facebook page which you can join: *Toybox Pre-School Castle Cary*

You will also receive a printed newsletter at least once a term.

We try to keep our notice boards up-to-date with news and events. If you have a notice you are welcome to put it up on the notice board which is to your left as you enter the main room.

Events and Outings

We organise a range of events during the year, some for fundraising purposes and some just for fun for the children, parents and carers. Every year we try to organise a Christmas party, a leavers' BBQ and a summer day trip to a place of interest. We hope you will join us for these events as they are usually great fun and a way of getting to know other parents.

Rotas and donations

As we are a charity we try to keep our running costs down in order to spend as much money as possible on resources and trips for the children. For this reason we have a rota for the washing. Each family is asked to take home the Pre-school washing once during the year. The rota is posted on the notice board. Please check to see when it is your turn.

We are always grateful for any donations of tissues, wet wipes, biscuits, squash or anything suitable for cookery. Craft materials such as glue, pots, boxes and magazines are always appreciated and we are also happy to accept dressing up, books and toys.



Accident and Incident

We keep an Accident Book in which we record any type of accident your child may have, no matter how minor it may be. We then ask you to sign it at the end of the session to say that you have been informed of the details of the incident and what action, if any, was taken. Please keep us up-to-date with any medical conditions or allergies your child may have and your contact details, just in case!

Fire Drill

The Fire bell has a long, continuous ring. Should the fire bell ring while you are in the building the following will happen:

- the Pre-school Manager will line the children up at the safest exit, with the assistance of the rest of the staff
- the staff and children will walk to a safe place away from the building, where the register will be checked
- you should leave the building calmly and join the staff and children at the assembly point
- the Manager will take the register and the Senior Practitioner will check the building
- everyone will then wait there until the 'all clear' is given by the main school
- then, and only then, will we go back into the building and carry on as normal.

Policies

We have the following policies:

- Missing child
- Equipment and Resources
- Food and drink
- Student placement
- Non-collection of children
- Special education needs
- Admissions
- Behaviour management
- Complaints



- Equality inclusion and valuing diversity
- Payment of fees
- Parental involvement
- Health and safety
- Recruitment and selection
- Recruitment of Ex offenders
- Safeguarding children
- Staff training
- Sun protection
- Mobil phones and internet
- Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention& Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information
- Student and Volunteer
- Emergency and Compassionate leave
- When senior staff are sick

Copies of the Pre-school's policies are on the Pre-School website and are always available at ToyBox, you are welcome to read them at any time. Please request a copy from the Manager.

Policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the Pre-school is a quality service.

Complaints

Any parent or carer who is uneasy about any aspect of the group's provision should feel free to talk over any worries and anxieties with the Pre-school Manager.

If this does not have a satisfactory outcome within a couple of weeks, or if the problem recurs, the parent should put their concerns or complaints in writing and request a meeting with the Pre-school Manager and the Chair of the Management Committee. Both parents and the Manager may have a friend or colleague present if required and an agreed written record of the discussion will be made.

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What next?

We hope that after reading all of this information you would like to apply for a place for your child. If you do please complete the application forms attached and hand them to the Pre-school Manager. We look forward to welcoming both you and your family to Toybox Pre-school.