



345 Preschool Parent Handbook

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1 Playing to Learn

At 345 we encourage and help children to learn through their play in a way and at a pace that is right for them. Above all, we encourage and promote lively and inquiring minds and a caring and positive attitude towards others, which will pave the way for greater understanding and learning in the years ahead of them.

In accordance with the guidelines of the Preschool Learning Alliance we encourage 'free play' with a high ratio of adults to children (1 to 6). We also provide a more structured part of the session where children can build on their experiences in a more guided way. Research shows that a combination of 'free' and 'guided' play is very beneficial to preschool aged children.

2 Learning at 345

The provision for learning at 345 is based on the understanding that children learn best through play and have an innate motivation to learn. We provide an environment in which children feel safe and happy and are inspired to be creative and imaginative. The environment is stimulating and supportive, helping promote the development of each child's self-esteem and confidence. At 345 we promote parental involvement and provide equal opportunities for all children and their families.

Learning through Play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. 345 Preschool uses the practice guidance Early Years Foundation Stage to plan and provide a range of activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the practice guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Choice

345 sessions are arranged so that the children can choose from and work at a range of activities, and in doing so build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small and large group activities which introduce them to working with others.

Outdoor activities are important to the wellbeing of the child and their physical development and knowledge of the world around them. Children are offered the opportunity, and are encouraged, to take part in outdoor child-chosen and adult-led activities, as well as those provided indoors.

Listening Group

Children are invited to participate in Listening Group at various times throughout the week. Listening Group can either be by Key Person group (e.g. the Red Group), or by ability and need. During Listening Group we promote turn-taking, concentration, signing, and listening to instructions and others. We sing nursery rhymes and play adult-led games. Listening group is also an opportunity to address any Special Education Needs, for example, we incorporate activities suggested by the SALT (Speech and Language Therapist) as part of the game.

3 EYFS

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development. We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. These form part of children's records of achievement. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals.

Record of Achievement

We keep records of achievement for each child. This helps us to work in partnership with parents as we celebrate each child's achievements, and provides an opportunity for us to work together to enable each child's wellbeing and make further progress. Records are kept by the child's Key Person and are shared on a termly basis, usually during the Parent and Key Person Meetings.

4 345 Preschool Staff



Taryn Stroud, Team Leader/Administrator

"I became involved with 345 as a keen parent helper and joined the team in 1995 when my youngest child left to start school. I became Team Leader in 1996. My qualifications include a Diploma in Preschool Practice and Special Needs and I enjoy being outdoors, music and spending time with my baby grandson."



Debbie Markwick, Deputy and SENCO

"I became interested in working with children after spending time as a parent helper when my two daughters attended 345. I joined the team in 2001, and over the past 11 years have become Deputy and Special needs Co-ordinator. My qualifications include a Diploma in Preschool Practice and Special Needs and I enjoy horse riding, camping and drama."



Louise Knight, Assistant

"I am a 345 veteran as a mum of 4 grown boys. I was involved with the preschool as a parent helper and then later joined the team in 1992 when my youngest left to start school. I have over 20 years experience working with preschool children as well as the expertise gained having raised my own children. I enjoy being outdoors, football and travelling."



Sally Drew, Assistant

"When my two children attended 345, I headed up the Committee as well as spending time as a parent helper. I then joined the team in 2007. My qualifications include NVQ 2 and NVQ 3 in Children's care, Learning and Development. I enjoy cake

making and music, and I am currently learning to play the Piano.”



Tracey Pond, Assistant

“I am the newest recruit to the 345 team having joined in 2010, when my youngest child was still attending. My qualifications include NVQ 3 in Children’s care, Learning and Development. I have a son at University plus two young children, three dogs and recently got two tortoises and so enjoy being outdoors!”

5 Our Day

A typical session at 345 runs as follows:

9:15 – 11:00 ‘Free Play’ with activities such as sand, water, craft, paints, drawing, puzzles, book corner, small and large construction (e.g., Lego), home corner, play dough, etc. Children are also encouraged to play outside in the courtyard at the front of the hall, where we have a range of ride on toys and other outdoor play equipment available. Children are able to play indoors or outside according to their preference throughout the session. We have a rolling snack time which starts at about 10am. The children bring a healthy snack from home and we provide a drink of milk or water.

11:00 – 12:15 We all help to tidy away the toys and activities before taking the register formally. After register we sometimes have a story or song time, before all getting ready to go to play in the Patchwork Preschool garden. The children who go home for lunch are collected at 12:15.

12:15 – 1:00 The children sit in their Key Person groups for healthy packed lunches from home. This offers a further opportunity for relationship building between the children and their Key Person as they chat about the day. After lunch we have some more circle time with songs, games and stories.

6 Settling In

345 encourages children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help and friendship, and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed at preschool.

In order to help children settle in we:

- Encourage parents to visit the preschool with their children during the weeks before admission;
- Introduce flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of individual families;
- Make it clear to families from the outset that they will be supported in the preschool for as long as it takes for their child to settle;
- Reassure parents whose children seem to take a long time settling in;
- Introduce new families into 345 on a staggered basis (i.e. two new children a day, rather than ten new children all at once);
- Encourage parents, when and where appropriate, to separate from their child for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences.

7 Starting at 345

Drop off

Preschool starts at 9:15am.

- Sign in the child on the daily register, located on the Parent's Table.
- Children are encouraged to find their picture card and to put it in the "I am here today" board, a matching card is also on their coat peg.
- Place the child's snack in the coloured snack basket. If the child is also staying for lunch please put their lunch box on the trolley.
- The children often produce a number of creations! To keep these safe staff like to put them in a box to take home (usually a cereal box the parent has decorated with the child). These are placed in a container on the left as you enter the hall.
- Hang up the child's coat and bag (and wellies) on their peg.
- Children are encouraged to help with all of the above!

Pick up

Preschool finishes at 12:15 (or 1pm for those staying for lunch)

- Sign the child out of the daily register
- Collect the child's craft box, wellies, coat, snack/lunch box, etc.
- If the normal collection arrangements for the child change please ensure that staff have been informed in advance. If this is not possible due to an emergency, the person collecting the child will be asked for a password, which has previously been given to staff, before the child is allowed to leave the premises.

8 Key Person

345 offers the support of a Key Person system which involves each child being assigned to a particular member of staff. The Key Person ensures that the child is settled and is the main point of contact for the parent. The Key Person will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the children in their group.

9 General Information

The preschool meets during term time to coincide with local primary schools. Our terms are no longer than 12 weeks long and comply with the 38 weeks funding by the Government. The half terms are usually the same as the local primary schools.

Hours:

	Morning	Lunch Club
Monday	9:15 – 12:15	12:15 – 1:00
Tuesday	9:15 – 12:15	12:15 – 1:00
Wednesday	9:15 – 12:15	12:15 – 1:00
Thursday	Closed	
Friday	9:15 – 12:15	12:15 – 1:00

Address: 345 Preschool, Alresford Methodist Church Hall, 24 Jacklyns Lane, Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9JJ

Telephone: 345 Preschool 07826 948826

345 Committee 07766 940335

Email: info@345preschool.org

Website: www.345preschool.org

Parking: Free parking is available at the nearby St Gregory's Catholic Church on Grange Road and in the Pay and Display car park at Perins School.

10 Special Educational Needs

345 is an all inclusive environment enabling all children to participate in activities and use resources in an equal situation with others. We encourage all children to be aware of and respect the needs of others no matter what their circumstances, and we pride ourselves in having a rich environment with well trained staff that can provide stimulation and time to children.

All staff are trained in Makaton sign language, Cued Articulation (speech & language) and cascaded Positive Approaches to Challenging Behaviour. Taryn and Debbie have Speech, Language & Communication training as well as the standard SEN training. Debbie has also completed Behavioural Management, Understanding Schemas & Language Group training. We are able to access ongoing training which helps us provide the best support that we can for children with special needs.

If you would like to discuss the preschool's ability to meet your own child's needs please speak to Debbie Markwick, the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Our full Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy is on the Parents' Table and published on the website.

11 Snack Time and Lunch

345 promotes a healthy lifestyle, and therefore ask that children bring in a piece of fruit, cheese, cereal bar or similar for their snack. Free milk or water is provided. Snacks should be placed in a small bag or container as children are encouraged to become independent during this part of the session.

We also ask that children staying for Lunch Club bring a healthy packed lunch in a suitable container, please remember to include an ice block – especially in the warmer months. We sit in Key Person groups, and free milk or water is provided.

If your child has a food allergy or intolerance please notify the Team Leader/Key Person before your child starts preschool.

12 Parents

345 works on an open door basis and if you have any queries please do not hesitate to ask. All discussions concerning your child will be treated in complete confidence. Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights, including to be valued and respected, kept informed, consulted, involved and included at all levels.

As a community based, voluntary managed setting, we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going. We welcome any contribution parents wish to make within the sessions or behind the scenes:

- To work in the preschool with the children (parent help)
- To help with fundraising events
- To take part in the management of the preschool (via the Committee)
- To share skills which will enhance and enrich all children's learning and experience within the preschool and curriculum

Parent's Rota

Parents can sign up to a rota if they would like to help at a particular session. Helping at 345 enables parents to see what the day-to-day life of the setting is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities. Parent help is an essential part of the day to day running of 345 and helps enable staff to concentrate on the well-being and learning experience of all children.

Parents/Carers/Grandparents are welcome to participate in any activity throughout the session, in whatever way they feel comfortable. To comply with our Child Protection Policy, parent helpers are asked not to take any children (including their own) to the toilet, unless accompanied by a member of staff or they have specifically been police checked for this setting.

13 Management and Administration

345 is managed by a voluntary parent committee whose members are elected by the parents of the children attending the setting. The elections take place at the Annual General Meeting in October each year. The committee is responsible for:

- Managing the setting's finances, including fundraising
- Employing and managing the staff
- Making sure that the setting has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high quality service
- Making sure that the setting works in partnership with the children's parents.

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all the children who attend 345 Preschool. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan. All parents of children attending 345 are welcome to join the committee.

14 OFSTED

345 Preschool is Ofsted registered and our URN is **109957**. The most recent Ofsted inspection took place in June 2010. The preschool was deemed to be Good. Copies of the full report are available on request from the Team Leader or Committee Chair, by using the above URN at www.ofsted.gov.uk. There is also a link to the report on our website.

15 Policies

345 acts in accordance with policies as recommended by the Preschool Learning Alliance. All policies are reviewed annually. A complete set of policies are available on the Parents' Table/from the Team Leader or Chairperson and are posted in full on the 345 website.

Our setting is a no smoking environment both indoors and outdoors.

16 Complaints

345 Preschool believes that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We welcome suggestions on how to improve our setting and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns about the running of the setting. We anticipate that most concerns will be resolved quickly by an informal approach to the appropriate member of staff. If this does not achieve the desired result, we have a set of procedures for dealing with concerns. We aim to bring all concerns about the running of our setting to a satisfactory conclusion for all of the parties involved. For further information please see Policy 10: Making a Complaint which is available both on the Parents Table in the entrance and on our website.

17 Additional Information

Safeguarding Children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our setting and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff. The way of working with children and their parents at 345 ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

Taryn Stroud is the designated member of staff to oversee child protection issues. Lisa Green is the designated officer from the committee to oversee child protection issues.

Information Sharing

We recognise that parents have a right to know that information they share will be regarded as confidential as well as be informed about the circumstances, and reasons, when we are obliged to share information. Parental consent about information sharing is obtained on the Registration

Document. For further information on this subject, please refer to the following policies which are available on the Parent Table and are on the 345 website:

- 1.2 Safeguarding Children and Child Protection
- 10.10 Information Sharing

Fees

345 Preschool are in receipt of nursery education funding for three and four years olds. Children are eligible for 15 funded hours per week from the term after their third birthday. Fees only apply where funding is not received. For example, a child turns three and starts at 345 in October, but will not be eligible for funding until January.

The fees are £4 per hour, payable half-termly in advance. Fees must still be paid if children are absent without notice for a short period of time. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time please talk to the Committee Treasurer or the Team Leader. For your child to keep his/her place at the setting you must pay the fees.

345 Preschool accept Childcare Vouchers for payment of fees.

Clothing

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities, such as aprons, waterproof trousers, etc. The children are encouraged to play outside, both in the courtyard area during Free Play, and on the grassy area and at the Patchwork garden after taking the register. Parents are asked to provide wellies for their children to help keep socks and shoes dry!

We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

Illness

The table below provides useful information about many of the most commonly experienced childhood illnesses and how long to keep children away from preschool when they are ill.

Condition	Keep child away for...	Comment
Chicken pox	5 days from onset of rash	Avoid contact with people who are pregnant.
German measles (rubella)	5 days from onset of rash	Avoid contact with people who are pregnant (unless they have been vaccinated).
Measles	5 days from onset of rash	Avoid contact with people who are pregnant. All children older than 13 months should have been vaccinated against this potentially serious disease.
Shingles	5 days from onset of rash, or less if protected by clothing	Avoid contact with people who are pregnant, unless they have had chicken pox.
Mumps	5 days from onset of swollen glands	Protect with MMR vaccine. A frequent cause of viral meningitis and deafness in unvaccinated children.
Scarlet fever	5 days from beginning of antibiotics	Scarlet fever develops a red rash over the body which looks like sunburn. Antibiotics required.
Impetigo	Until lesions are healing	Earlier lesions are covered by dressing or clothing and antibiotics have been started.
Hand, foot and mouth	No need to keep away	Usually a mild, self-limiting disease.
Diarrhoea/vomiting	Until 48 hours after bowels are normal and/or vomiting has ceased	Most commonly caused by viruses.
Conjunctivitis	Until infection has cleared up	Contact your GP for eye drops available on prescription.
Whooping cough	5 days from beginning of antibiotics	Non-infectious coughing may continue for weeks. Children should have been protected by vaccination.
Head lice	No need to keep away	Look for lice (not just nits) and treat if seen.
Scabies	Until after treatment	Itching will continue long after treatment has been effective.
Meningitis	Contacts of a child with meningitis need not be excluded	Meningitis can be caused by several bacteria and viruses. Viral meningitis is unpleasant but not life-threatening (can sometimes lead to long-term problems – see Mumps). Bacterial meningitis can develop very quickly and is life-threatening. ACT QUICKLY if you are worried.
Tuberculosis	Contacts of someone with TB need not be excluded	Think about TB in a child or adult who has a persistent cough (for many weeks), especially if coughing up blood-flecked sputum, and who has stopped growing properly (or is losing weight if an adult).
Slapped cheek disease	No need to keep away	Usually a mild self-limiting disease. Avoid contact with people who are pregnant.
Threadworms	No need to keep away – please inform staff	Can be treated by over the counter medicine from the Pharmacy. Ensure fingernails are kept short and wash bedding, towels, etc. on hot.