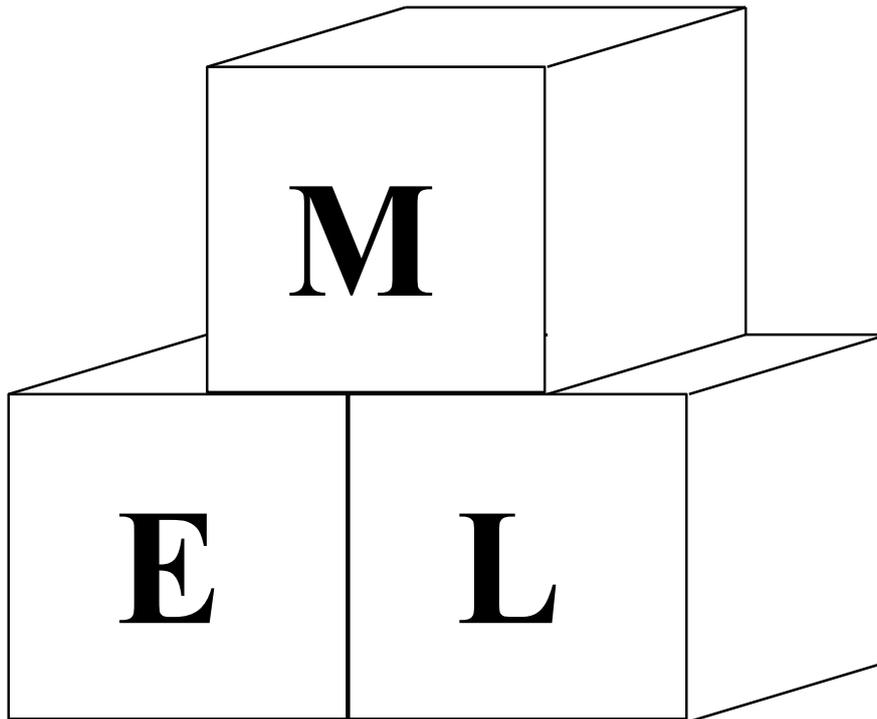


Mitcheldean Early Learners

PROSPECTUS



Contact us on 01594 541358 or 07890477370

Or email mitcheldeanearlylearners@eygloucestershire.co.uk

Or visit our website –www.mitcheldeanearlylearners.co.uk

Or join Mitcheldean Early Learners on Facebook

OUR ETHOS

At Mitcheldean Early Learners we provide a safe a caring environment to give all our children the best possible start in their early education and the knowledge they need to prepare them for their future success.

We allow them to explore and learn from providing fun oppertunities and positive experiences to reach their full potential.

Every child is cared about and encouraged to care about others, to respect their own beliefs and cultures whilst acknowledging and respecting those of others.

WELCOME TO MITCHELDEAN EARLY LEARNERS

We hope you will find this prospectus is helpful in answering your questions. We look forward to welcoming your child and hope that they will enjoy being a part of Mitcheldean Early Learners.

Mitcheldean Early Learners (staff, committee, parents and children) is a member of the Playgroup and Toddler Association (PATA). We have adopted the PATA constitution and are covered by insurance recommended by PATA.

We obtain guidance and training from other childcare/educational organisation as required.

We are registered under the 1989 Children's Act with the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

We operate from our own premises situated adjacent to Mitcheldean Endowed Primary School.

OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To work in partnership with the parents and guardians of the children in our group, providing a safe and caring environment which will allow the children to explore and learn through play by providing opportunities which will enable children to develop across the seven areas of learning as detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- To inform parents of all aspects of Mitcheldean Early Learners.
- To enable the individual child to achieve their full potential in all areas of learning, through play and guided activities.
- To provide positive experiences which will prepare them well for the more formal tasks in the reception class

A SAFE AND SECURE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At Mitcheldean Early Learners we see the safety and wellbeing of the children as paramount. All children are special individuals and have differing needs, abilities and potential.

We provide a range of activities and well-maintained play equipment where children can develop their skills at their own pace and where they are positively encouraged to participate.

Where a child has been identified with special needs of any kind (educational, medical, physical, emotional) we will work closely with parents and other specialist workers, involved in that child's specially devised programme, to enable them to fully participate in all our activities.

We have a programme of training to ensure that all staff are fully trained and conversant with procedures relating to the care of young children.

All members of staff present at each session has received training/instruction in the following areas:

- First Aid
- Child Protection

At least one member of staff present at each session has received training/instruction in the following areas: -

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Detection of Early Development Problems
- Planning to the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
- Observation and Assessment of Children
- Emergency Procedures for Serious Accidents
- Emergency Procedures for Fire Drills
- Procedures for Food Hygiene.

MITCHELDEAN EARLY LEARNERS' MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

The group is run by a committee of volunteers in partnership with staff. The committee are responsible for appointing, monitoring and appraising staff.

A list of our current committee is located on the notice board in the foyer of Mitcheldean Early Learners

STAFF

Early Years Manager and Deputy are qualified at Level 3

Early Years Assistants are qualified at Level 2 or above or have completed, or are in the process of, relevant Early Years training.

SENCO

(Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators) is Sarah Freeman. All staff have special educational needs training.

All staff will attend Child Protection, First Aid and Food Hygiene training.

All staff, committee and volunteers are DBS checked.

EARLY YEARS MANAGER

GINA ETTER

PATA Certificate in Care & Education, CACHE Certificate in Professional Development, NVQ Level 3
Early Years Care & Education

BUSINESS MANAGER

LAURA WINTLE

PATA introduction to children's play
ECDL
Professional Managers Programme
ILM Level 5 in Business Management

DEPUTY EARLY YEARS MANAGER

PAULA TAYLOR

PATA OCN Introduction to Children's Play Level 1
CACHE Diploma in Pre-school Practice Level 3

EARLY YEARS ASSISTANTS

SARAH FREEMAN

Level 3 NVQ in Children's Care, Learning and Development
SENCO

RACHEL BURRELL

Level 3 Diploma in Children's Learning and Development (Early Years Educator)

TYLER VILLIS

Level 3 Diploma for the Children's Workforce (Early Years Educator)

Cleaner

ALEXSANDRA KIRBY-LAWRENCE & SHIRLEY TAPFIELD

Your child's Learning & Development

All Early Years settings (Playgroups, Nurseries, Private Day Care, Reception Class) are required to work to the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (EYFS). The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning (which is how children learn), helps educators and parents understand how to support children's learning in a way that builds confidence, curiosity and a love for learning which supports the seven areas of Learning and Development: -

3 Prime Areas

- Communication, Language (CL)
- Personal, Social & Emotional Development (PSE)
- Physical Development (PD)

And 4 Specific Areas

- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding of the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts & Designs (EAD)

Characteristics of Effective Teaching & Learning
Playing and Exploring – engagement Finding out and exploring Playing with what they know Being willing to 'have a go'
Active Learning – motivation Being involved and concentrating Keep trying Enjoy achieving what they set out to do
Creating and Thinking Critically – thinking Having their own ideas Making links Choosing ways to do things

Area of Learning and Development	Aspect
Prime Areas	
Communication & Language	Listening attention & understanding
Personal, Social & Emotional Development	Self-regulation Managing self Building relationships
Physical Development	Gross motor skills Fine motor skills
Specific Areas	
Literacy	Comprehension Word reading Writing
Mathematics	Numbers Numerical patterns
Understanding the World	Past & present People, culture & communities
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with materials Being imaginative & expressive

AN EARLY LEARNERS SESSION

The group session should have the following personnel in attendance:

Early Years Manager/Deputy Early Years Manager (Early Years Assistants if numbers require) – all of whom have undergone enhanced DBS checks. Early Learners are committed to providing a good adult to child ratio enabling a smoother running of the session and encourages parental/guardian involvement. There is a maximum of 26 registered children allowed per session.

The session routine is usually divided into two parts, separated by circle time and a refreshment break for children and helpers.

Activities we offer are: -

CREATIVE AREA	eg; Water, sand, paint, dough, and expressive art activities etc.
BOOK AREA	eg: books, magazines, quiet activities etc.
MATHS AREA	eg: counting, sorting & matching games, abacus, dominoes etc.
JIGSAW AREA	eg: peg jigsaws, tray and interlocking puzzles etc.
IMAGINATIVE PLAY	eg; Home corner/shop, dressing up/small world play
OUTSIDE PLAY SPACE	eg: planting, mud kitchen, discovery area, bug hunting, climbing, wheeled toys, large construction etc.
ROUND ROOM	e.g: musical activities, ICT and small group activities

Old clothes are best for playing in, but we do provide aprons for messy activities, encouraging the children will wear them. You can purchase a M.E.L uniform from the group, please ask for more details. We have a selection of dry clothes should children have an accident.

The session usually ends with one of the following: - Show and Tell, Rhymes or Story Time.

YOUR CHILD'S WELFARE

For the health and safety of your child, and other children and staff at Early Learners, please observe the following: -

NO SMOKING –

We have a no smoking policy on our premises

ENTERING & LEAVING THE PREMESIS –

Please ensure you bolt both sides of the gates when you enter and leave the premises

ILLNESS –

Please DO NOT send your child to Early Learners if they are unwell, it is unfair on them, as well as the staff and other children at Early Learners. Please contact Early Learners at the start of the session they attend to let staff know that your child will be absent. A manager will phone one of your emergency contacts for clarification if we have not been informed.

If your child becomes unwell while at Early Learners, we will need to contact you. Please ensure that your Emergency Contact details are up to date at all times.

MEDICATION – (only medication prescribed by a doctor)

Should your child need medication whilst at Early Learners, please hand it to the Early Years Manager on arrival and discuss administration, and complete the correct paperwork with them. If at all possible, please avoid sending medication to Early Learners.

JEWELLERY –

Children are NOT encouraged to wear jewellery at Early Learners. The only exception to this is the wearing of small stud or sleeper earrings. The setting is not responsible for any loss, damage or injury that may occur.

SAFETY IN THE SUN -

During hot weather, please ensure your child brings a sun hat to Early Learners. Also apply sun screen to your child before each session. Please see our “Sun Care” information sheet.

DRINKS – Parents are requested to provide a named water bottle for their child to access through each session (to be kept at Early Learners). Water is available for your child to drink at all times.

PETS –fish in a tank inside the setting.

KEEPING YOU INFORMED

We aim to keep parents fully informed about our activities by means of: -

- A half-term curriculum sheet
- Notice board
- Stay and Play sessions
- Website/Facebook

We will also keep you informed of any medical problems, accidents, incidents, behaviour problems and any other significant events which may have occurred involving your child during the session.

RISING FIVES

During your child’s pre-school year, we will aim to extend your child’s learning and experiences to equip them for their transition into school. We run sessions dedicated to the children who will be starting school the following September.

These sessions will be open to all children irrespective of which primary school they will be attending.

The sessions are more structured than Early Learners, they are run by Early Years Manager/Deputy Early Years Manager/Early Years Assistants, all of whom have undergone the relevant enhanced DBS checks.

We attempt to follow various school routines such as PE sessions, ‘work’ times and book bags.

During the long free play periods the children will be called to complete tasks and activities in small groups. Activities are based on developmental stage, age-appropriate skills in the seven areas of learning and development.

As our building is adjacent to the local school premises this enables the children to become familiar with the school and its surroundings, but it also enables the Reception Teacher and the Head teacher to call in and become familiar faces to the children. This has been found to be most beneficial to both children and teachers alike, helping towards a smoother transition into school life.

YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS

As each child begins Mitcheldean Early Learners, they will be assigned to a Key Person who will observe and assess their progress. During their time with us, we gradually build up a special folder of work that shows your child's progress. This folder continues at Rising Fives and is sent home at the end of their last term.

All children are observed by key persons to monitor their progress and inform our planning, to ensure that everything we provide is age and stage appropriate.

As one of your child's first educators we appreciate your participation in your child's record of progress. We provide half-termly information sheets, weekly good news slips and parent's voice slips to enable you to contribute. We will also arrange consultations with your child's Key Person, at regular intervals, to discuss your child's progress.

A short-written summary of your child's development in the prime areas between the ages of 24 to 36 months. will be given to the parents/carer.

There will also be a written report for all Rising Fives children that is given to the Parents/Guardians, and a copy is passed on to the school with parental permission.

Children with additional needs

We work with parents, other professionals and our designated SENCO (special educational needs co-ordinator) to support all children where an additional need has been identified.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

At Mitcheldean Early Learners, we value you as parents a great deal, recognising that you are your child's first educator and you know them best. We aim to work in partnership with you to provide a safe and caring environment in which your child can develop to their full potential.

Every family is different; each needs options from which to choose to find an early solution to challenges as they arise. This solution could be as simple, for example, as talking with a worker in; a Children's Centre; School; with a voluntary worker; a faith worker; a GP; a health visitor or using a self-help checklist. *The Early Help Offer* respects every family's right to access information. *The Early Help Offer* is about working with other professionals to help children, young people and families deal with their issues as early as possible; providing information, advice and services at the right time; supporting them to resolve their concerns as needs emerge.

As a community group we rely on the support of parents and here are some of the ways you can get more involved.

- Become a Committee Member
- Fund Raising – good ideas are always welcome, support for fundraising events is essential
- Outings/Events – extra help is always needed
- Special Skills – sewing, cooking, pottery, woodwork, gardening etc.

STAY AND PLAY SESSIONS

Parental involvement is of great importance to Early Learners, and we will always encourage this. As well as mums, we also welcome dads, grandparents, aunties, uncles and childminders. We do not have a formal duty rota, but parents are invited to stay and play. This gives parents and Key Persons a chance to chat about the child's progress, it also gives parents the opportunity to play with the children and see how the session is organised and run. Parents can feel part of the group and see exactly what is available to their child and what they get out of Early Learners – Do they learn anything? Is the atmosphere friendly? Are the staff doing a good job? Parents of new starters will be invited to stay and play during the half term after their child has started the group, provided their child has settled.

Parents bringing younger children, who are not on the register, are responsible for their care during the session.

Early Learners is for your child's benefit and should be considered as your group too and it needs all its member's support to run smoothly, for the children's sake.

ADMISSIONS

We are registered for children aged from 2 years to school age. The maximum number of registered children per session is 26 (this number may be less at the discretion of the staff and committee).

Mitcheldean Early Learners is open during term time only.

Early starts from	8.30am/8.45am
Morning sessions will run from	9.00am - 12.00 noon
Afternoon sessions will run from	12. 00 noon - 3.00pm
All day sessions will run from	9.00am – 3.00pm
Late collections until	3.15pm/3.30pm

The Early Years Manager will discuss the number of sessions required with parents based on each child's individual needs.

A waiting list is kept of names, addresses and dates of birth of children waiting for places. Early Learners liaises with the Parent and Toddler groups (Mitcheldean Little Learners & Little Sprouts) to provide information and support. Posters are displayed at the Health Centre and Library informing parents about Early Learners.

Every effort will be made to make a place available at Early Learners and Rising Fives to prepare a child for school. An Early Learners place is available for children of the correct age, regardless of religion, race, ability or means. Children with special needs may be able to receive extra help through various sources if discussed with the Early Years Manager and setting's SENco (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator)

We strongly advise parents to bring their child for a visit to an Early Learners' session in the half term prior to their child starting, to get to know the staff and routines before they start. This can be arranged with the Early Years Manager.

Entry onto the register may be refused or withdrawn e.g. if the relationship between the setting and the child or their family breaks down irreparably/poor attendance or outstanding/poor payment in relation to a current or previous sibling.

CHARGING

Invoices shall be issued on a termly basis. For more information about our current hourly fees and charges please ask the Early Years or Business Manager. Fees must be paid in advance. Fees should be paid on receipt of invoice or a weekly/monthly/1/2 termly payment plan agreed

A definite number of sessions must be agreed in advance. Four weeks notice must be given if you wish to remove your child from the setting or reduce their hours.

You will remain liable for all session fees during the notice period.

For more information, please see our "Fees and Nursery Grant" Policy. A copy of our Policies and Procedures are available for parents to view in the entrance hall.

The Nursery Education Grant

- The Local Education Authority provides a Nursery Education Grant for 2-, 3- and 4-year-old children (please ask for more information if required). A maximum of 2 providers has the right to claim the Nursery Education Grant. Children who are eligible can claim funding for up to 15 hours/30 hours a week.
- Where Mitcheldean Early Learners receive an apportioned payment under the scheme, the number of hours covered by the grant will be calculated and the additional hours will be due from you at our current hourly rate
- At Mitcheldean Early Learners the scheme covers thirty-eight weeks of the academic year. Session fees will be payable for any additional weeks that Mitcheldean Early Learners is open, if parents choose for their child to attend these sessions. A bill will be issued for any additional fees due.

Mitcheldean Early Learners will normally be closed on any day that Mitcheldean Endowed Primary School is closed e.g. in-service days or inclement weather and may also close for our own in-service training day. Parents will not be charged for these sessions.

A fees and Nursery Education Grant information sheet will be given to parents/carers at their induction meeting.

SOME OTHER QUESTIONS YOU MAY ASK

CAN I STAY WITH MY CHILD WHILE THEY SETTLE IN?

We always recommend that parents bring their child for a visit, this gives you and your child the opportunity to come and play and see how things work. Usually, children will then be happy for the parents to leave them on their first session. However, some children may need further support with settling in and we have well tried and tested strategies which can be tailored to meet each individual child's needs. The Early Years Manager on duty will discuss these with parents should the need arise.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF MY CHILD NEEDS ME DURING A SESSION?

We keep a list of emergency contact telephone number for each child. We will try to telephone the person first on the contact list, if they are unavailable, we will continue down the list of emergency number until someone can be contacted.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I CANNOT COLLECT MY CHILD?

If you know at the beginning of the session that you will not be able to collect your child, please inform the Early Year's Manager on duty who you have authorised to collect your child at the end of the session. However, should circumstances arise during the session which would prevent you from collecting your child, please ring immediately and inform the Early Year's Manager on duty who will be collecting them, giving a brief description and a password in order for us to identify them if they are not known to us.

Should anyone without authorisation come to collect your child they will be refused until authorisation has been received. Please also inform us if you are going to be late so that we can reassure your child. Early Learners mobile telephone number is 07890 477370 / 01594 541358. We will always follow our late/non collection procedure, for more information please see our website.

WHAT IS THE GROUP'S POLICY ON BEHAVIOUR?

At Mitcheldean Early Learners staff/adults promote good behaviour and respect for others by providing positive role models. We actively promote inclusion, equality of opportunity, the valuing of diversity and British Values.

Children need consistency and a positive approach when dealing with their behaviour. We establish clear boundaries according to the child's level of understanding, so that children become aware of the setting's routines and procedures and know what is expected of them.

Good behaviour also applies to adults at Mitcheldean Early Learners (please see our "Stay and Play" information sheet)

(A full copy of our Promoting Positive behaviour is available on request)

HOW ARE FEES AND MONEY RAISED SPENT?

FEES – any money parents pay for their child’s place at Mitcheldean Early Learners, either by grant or by direct payment.

WILL BE USED FOR: -

- Staff wages and training
- Utility Bills
- Administration
- Insurance

FUND RAISING IS REQUIRED FOR: -

- Equipment
- Expendables – e.g. paper/paint/dough etc.
- Seasonal Parties/Fundays/Presents

Decisions on how the money is spent are taken by the committee in consultation with the staff.

WHO DO I SPEAK TO IF I HAVE ANY WORRIES OR COMPLAINTS?

If a problem arises or if you have any concerns regarding your child or the running of the session, please speak to the Early Years Manager on duty (unless your concern is about the Early Years Manager, therefore speak to the chairperson).

All information given to staff members is confidential. Staff are also able to seek advice from PATA or Early Years Team should it become necessary.

Problems relating to management issues e.g. fees/fundraising, policies, opening hours etc., should be addressed in the first instance to a member of the committee.

A copy of our Complaints Procedure is available on request.

COMPLIMENTS AND COMMENTS.

The staff and children put a lot of effort into a session which is so often ignored. If you are pleased with their work, please take time to write your compliments and comments in our book.

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Mitcheldean Early Learners has written policies and procedures available to read in our foyer or please ask for an emailed or paper copy if required.

Thank you for taking the time to read this prospectus.