

MARY'S



**WE HELP
GIVE YOUNG
CHILDREN
THE BEST
START
IN LIFE**

WELCOME

**INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS**

Welcome

Thank you for choosing Mary's Pre-School.

The Pre-School is run by Mary's, which is an independent charity created by St Mary's Church to serve the local community. We would like to welcome you on board and share with you some important information before you start.

It is our aim at Mary's Pre-School to provide a secure and happy environment where all children can develop to their full potential.

The Pre-School:

- provides a bridge between home and school
- encourages independence
- enables each child to develop vital Pre-School skills
- encourages social interaction, creativity and curiosity in a happy, safe and stimulating environment.

We aim to provide an inclusive setting that equally values children and adults and does not discriminate against anyone in any way. Respect for all staff and children is given and expected.

We have high expectations for all children attending Mary's Pre-School and aim to offer the education best suited to their individual needs from our broad and balanced curriculum.

Sessions run five days a week between 9:00am and 4:00pm during term time. Holidays coincides with the boroughs school holidays.

We hope to encourage all parents/guardians to work with us to foster the children's wellbeing and progress.



Partnership with Parents

To provide the best for your children, we need to work in partnership with you. We can achieve this through a number of routes, making use of your skills and gifts. We are always keen for you to be an active part of the pre-school and to put your talents to use within sessions. Please let the pre-school leader know what you would like to do, whether it be helping within a session, DIY, fund-raising, accompanying us on an outing or anything else. Your support contributes greatly to the shared life of the pre-school, and builds great practical links with the staff team.

Communication with Parents

For us at Mary's Pre-school, communication is our highest priority in order to best support and meet the needs of your child. This is how we go about it...

Key Person System - We nominate a key person as a contact for you and your child. This person makes sure that, within the day-to-day routine, each child for whom they have special responsibility feels individual, cherished and thought about by someone in particular while they are away from home. You, as a parent, will exchange information about your child with your key person. It is easier and much more organised to work as a one-stop shop, only having to speak to one person about your child. However, your child is part of a group, cared for and looked after by all members of staff. Therefore, if your key person isn't available on those rare occasions, please be assured that your child will be looked after and cared for by all other members of staff, who are all very familiar to them. In the case of a key person's absence, a co-key person will share vital information with you. In the first couple of weeks, we will allocate a key person for your child - though we know your child may have a favourite member of staff, so we may exchange the key person within a month from your child's starting date. There may be rare occasions when you or your child may feel the need to change key persons once more within the year - this is absolutely fine! We will do our best to ensure you and your child feel secure.

Each day you will receive brief information from your key person about your child's day. This exchange of information with you is very important as we work together to support your child. If there are concerns, we will discuss them with you in a designated meeting or to the side, away from your child at drop-off or pick-up time.

Settling In - We have a settling-in policy - which is available on our website - we will talk this through with you in more detail before your child begins at the pre-school. This gives more detail about why we settle children in over a gradual period, how you can prepare your child and how we do this together in the Pre-school. Please do ask if you'd like to know more.

Diary/Register - We keep a register of children on site between each session daily. This is done both paper based and electronically. Children also mark themselves in, by finding their picture and name and sticking it on the register board at the beginning of their session.

Newsletter - We create a termly newsletter, which updates you on all the fun and creative activities we do, as well as reminds you of upcoming events etc. Please take time to read the valuable information in it. We also have a newsletter for the whole of Mary's that goes out once a month. You can receive this regular update of all that Mary's does by becoming a 'FRIEND' through our website www.marys.org.uk

Photos - Photos that are taken daily are displayed or are uploaded in to your child's Capture Profile. So that you can see your children in action, please log in to your Capture account. Please note: as parents you are not permitted for safeguarding reasons to take pictures of any of the children within the setting, including your own. Please do not be offended if you are asked to remove photographic equipment.

Observations - Each day, your child's key person will be observing and collecting information on your child's development and interests. However, once in each term, your child will be a 'focused child' for a week, where all members of staff in the group will be observing him/her. You will be notified when your child is due to be a 'focus child.' If you have any concerns or wish to speak to us about your child's development at any point during the year, we can allocate times for an individual meeting - outside of the termly Parent Consultations. All these observations will be available for you to look at in your child's profile on Capture Education, which you will be able to access via the Capture for Families App - a link and a code will be emailed to you once your child starts with us. We also encourage you to upload your own observations from home, we would love to see what your child does at home that may be different than in the setting. This also enables us to link any at home learning to their time in the pre-school.

The Language Pyramid

A good communicator needs lots of different skills and each of these may develop at a different rate. This pyramid outlines all the skills needed to be a good communicator. We need to work on foundation skills before we can expect higher level skills.



If you have any concerns for your child, please speak to your child's key person. We are here to help and support you!

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Birthdays – You are welcome to bring in a small cake for your child's birthday but please do ensure it is nut free, not home made and handed straight to staff upon entry. Children will be able to share this as a snack with their friends and choose some favourite songs to sing together.

Snack Time – Each child must bring in a piece of fruit or veg for their session, this is a very important tool for communicating and linking home and pre-school. In allowing your child to choose a snack from home each morning to bring to pre-school, they will be able to talk about why they have chosen it, its shape, taste, smell and occasionally help staff to cut fruits before eating them. Children are also required to bring in a bottle of water each day for them to drink throughout the day, when we can top up for them when needed, fruit juices are not permitted unless it is with their packed lunch. All this is also a great educational tool in encouraging children to make healthier choices with snacks.



Packed lunches – If your child is here for the whole day please ensure all packed lunches are packed in a sealed container/cool bag. We are able to warm food for children, but please understand food must be stored correctly at home in containers if left overnight and must be put in the fridge. We cannot take responsibility for children being ill from foods brought in from home.

Library books – Each week we will select some children to visit the library, where they will choose a few books as a group. Borrowing a library book on a weekly basis is very important and educational. We wish to instil in our children a love and care for books. Reading is an important activity that exposes children to literacy and will have a tremendous impact at a later stage.

Administration & Fees

All parents are expected to register their details and child's details on our booking system at

<https://marys.magicbooking.co.uk/Identity/Account/Login>. Pre-school fees are due every month in advance. It is your responsibility to ensure that payments are made on time via bank transfer, cash or debit/ visa card. You can also pay online through your Magic Bookings account. Invoices will be sent out on time to your email address each month to support you in knowing what to pay if this is relevant for you. If you do change your email address it is important to inform the administration team, so we change your details on our system. Please ensure fees are paid using your account or the bank details below. Ad-hoc bookings on top of your regular booking is charged at £10 per hour.

Sort code: 40-52-40 **Account number:** 00024763 and use your child's name as a reference for payment.

Pre-School Opening - The Pre-school main opening hour is 9.00AM sharp at the Dagmar Passage entrance. We are unable to care for children who arrive earlier than 9:00AM as each minute of the morning is important for us to prepare for the day. This is equally the same for dropping off children at 1PM unless your child has been previously booked to attend from 12PM.

Pick-up - Pick-up time is at 12, 3 or 4pm. If you wish to collect your child earlier, outside of any individual arrangements, please let us know at drop-off and buzz the Pre-school (Dagmar Passage bell) on arrival where we will bring your child to you. If you are late to collect your child, we may need to charge you for an extra hour - extra hours are charged at £10.00 per hour. Persistent lateness cannot be tolerated and it can be upsetting for your child. It is not acceptable to be late at 12 as this disrupts the lunch time for the children staying for lunch and takes staff away from children who are busy eating. If you are going to be late, please call the Pre-school number in good time to let us know. We can also prepare your child for these times.

Government Funding or Two Year Funding - 15 hours of free Early Years Funding is received by the setting for all children aged 3 years and above who attend Mary's Pre-School. Please note that we apply for all children automatically and their entitlement for the funding starts AFTER the term they turn 3yrs. If you are eligible for 30hrs you will need to check your eligibility before the following term begins. The following link will support you further in ensuring you are getting your eligibility:

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/benefits-and-financial-support/free-early-learning>

If your child is 2 years old, you will need to register with the local authority to see if you are eligible on the link above. Please see our websites admissions policy for further supporting information.

Important Information

Illness - Our aim is keep all the children healthy! Please do not send your child to the Pre-School if you feel they are unwell or were ill the night before [eye infections, throat infections, diarrhoea etc. are highly contagious, please keep children off for a minimum of 48 hours before returning!]. Please respect our request if we call you during the day to ask you to collect your child. We do not administrate medicine unless it is a course of medicine prescribed by a doctor when the child is no longer contagious. Medication has to have the parents signed consent before administering and parents must sign at the end of the day if medication is administered.

Emergency medical treatment - If your child becomes ill or has an accident that may require monitoring or further medical treatment during the day, you will be notified immediately. We will care for your child until you or a representative comes to collect them. We will ask you to sign a consent form regarding this. All accidents will be recorded and you will be asked to sign the accident form when you come to pick up your child.

Calpol / Ibuprofen - We are unable to give this to children within the setting. If your child has had Calpol, it is an indication they be unwell. Please do not bring children in if this is the case, as we may have to call you back if they deteriorate later in the day.

Allergies - As parents, you are kindly asked not to bring into the Pre-school, food that may contain nuts, given the severe allergies that some children have. Also, we kindly ask you not to send your children in with

chewing gum! Please let us know if your child has an allergy as we may need to put a medical plan in place to support them within the setting.

Name Labels - Please clearly label with your child's name all items brought into Pre-school. We do our best not to lose items but things do get lost and mixed up when they are not clearly labelled. Please also put your child's spare clothes in a labelled bag.

Messy Play - We have lots of messy activities! We use bibs/aprons for such activities, however, clothes do tend to get dirty on occasion. As a precautionary measure, please send your children in comfortable clothes which you don't mind them getting a little dirty and/or stained. Also, please make sure we have a sufficient amount of spare clothes at all times for activities such as water play.



PRE-SC

Recycle - We like to recycle - it's good for Planet Earth! This is one of our ongoing projects. We love to reuse empty plastic containers or cardboard/paper containers. Feel free to bring with you items that you think we can use to build and design with [i.e. milk lids, all kinds of lids, buttons, shells, empty kitchen rolls etc]. Also, please feel free to bring in old purses, empty washed-out cream bottles, boxes, bags etc. Thank you!

Policies and procedures - Staff are asked as part of their induction and ongoing training to read and understand a number of policies on sight. These policies are all available for you to read online. Please request a copy to read or visit our website where they are available.



Security on site - Since our room is used for several different community activities, we have to set up and pack away each day. With this mixed use, we are careful about who enters our building. Please be mindful of who is coming in behind you. We will not allow your child to leave with anyone not known to a member of the the Pre-School staff or those who are not on your child's collectors list. You can add additional or remove people through Magic Bookings and contact us by phone or WhatsApp to inform us of the change.

Pre-School Sessions

In everything we do within the session, our aim is to provide the best possible inclusive experience for your child and also for you. We try to see things with the eyes and ears of our children and to work sensitively with both you and your child to enable them to settle quickly into the routines and enjoy their sessions. There is an individual coat hook and name badge for each child and draw for personal items made.

We are keen to learn of anything that will help in the care of your child and to get children engaged in the session's activities. If there is something you would like to discuss, please speak to your child's key person or the Childcare Service Manager after a session. Each session contains a balance of group activities, such as music; free play, art - where children choose from a range of focused activities and in and outdoor play. There is also some individual and large group work. We differentiate some activities by age and ability, which is particularly important for children preparing to enter Reception classes.



Every morning, the room is set up with a range of activities to encourage the children to explore either individually or in a group with their friends. Our environment is as accessible as possible for all children. If access to the setting is found to treat disabled children or adults less favourably then we make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of those individuals.

Through session planning, we ensure that Early Learning Goals are covered as part of the Early Years Foundation stage - a government curriculum document. There is more information about this available online at

https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2014/08/EYFS_Parents_Guide-amended.pdf

Covid-19

As we try our very best to keep your children safe we have implemented a few rules around the pre-school, parents must:

Only enter and exit through our Dagmar Passage entrance

Maintain a 2m distance between each other

Parents must wear a mask during pickups and drop offs

Try and refrain - where possible - from coming to the pre-school with a buggy or scooter

New parents - when staying on premises - must wear a mask when settling their children

Mary's as a whole has increased the cleaning schedule within the centre, with a cleaner coming in halfway through the day - everyday - to disinfect all surfaces between the morning and afternoon sessions. We are also encouraging children to wash their hands more regularly.

If your child shows any symptoms of having a high temperature, we will ask that they stay away from the pre-school for a minimum of 48hrs, so you can get them tested. Within this time if there are other members of your household with a temperature your family must isolate for a minimum of 14 days and get a COVID test done. It is vital that you inform us of these occasions in order for us to keep both other children and families safe who use the setting, especially as there may be some who are vulnerable to illnesses.

For up-to-date information please check the government website at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

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Safeguarding children

We keep an accident/incident log to record all accidents/incidents on site. Please tell a member of staff about any bruising or injury your child may have, which has happened outside of the Pre-School. It is in your child's best interest that we are aware of those matters. If information is shared in an open and honest way between parents and staff, then many concerns can be quickly resolved. If we feel further information is needed we will speak to you and if unsatisfied, we are required to report it to Children's Social Care. This is not as an accusation, but for further clarification. We aim to provide a safe environment for all children and your co-operation on all aspects is important. For further information, you can access our safeguarding policies at www.marys.org.uk along with all our other policies. Islington Safeguarding Children's Board produces a range of leaflets advising parents and carers about safety issues. To download, view or print these leaflets, go to the Islington Safeguarding Children Board website

<https://www.islingtonscb.org.uk/Pages/Training.aspx>

Children's rights and entitlements including English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We promote children's right to be strong, resilient and listened to by creating an environment in our Pre-School that encourages children to develop a positive self image, which includes their heritage - arising from their colour and ethnicity, their languages spoken at home, their religious beliefs, cultural traditions and home background.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

We designate a member of staff to be the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) within the Pre-School. We believe all children have the right to learn together and so our inclusive admissions practice ensures equality of access and opportunity. We understand all children are unique and should have the opportunity to celebrate and value their own and others' endeavour. Therefore all our children will be given equal access to resources. We use a graduated response system to assess and respond to children's special educational needs. We ensure that you as parents are informed at all stages of the assessment, planning, provision and review. We will liaise with other professionals involved with your child, including transfer arrangements to other settings and schools. If you have any concerns regarding your child's development, please speak to your key person.

Bright Start Islington

Mary's is part of Islington Bright Start South.

Bright Start family support - part of Islington's Early Help services - provides outreach, individual assistance and signposting services for families with under fives in local neighbourhoods. Working in local children's centre, family support workers act as a bridge and resource for families who need help with accessing services. They also introduce families to their local children's centre activities.



For more information visit www.islington.gov.uk/brightstart call Family Information Service 020 7527 5959 email fis@islington.gov.uk

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Complaints - If you have a complaint about any aspect of the Mary's pre-school service then, in the first instance, please raise this with the manager or a member of staff. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be found then the complaint should be made in writing to the manager of the pre-school. Please ask for a copy of Mary's Complaints Policy which can be found on the preschool page of the Mary's website - marys.org.uk.

Important contacts:

When calling, please leave your name and contact details. If you are unable to get through and we shall get back to you as soon as we can.

Leeanne Prosper (Administrator)

Tel: 0207 704 2873

**Email: childrenbookings@marys.org.uk
for administration queries.**

Sharon Ellis (Childcare Services Manager)

Tel: 020 7 704 2873

**Email: childrenbookings@marys.org.uk
for the day to day running of the pre-school.**

We value our relationship with you, and aim to establish a partnership for the caring and educating of your children. For that partnership to flourish, it is vital that we maintain an open communication channel with each other - it is something we put a lot of effort into. Remember, we are here to help with any query. Our door is always open. Please visit our website and give us your feedback so we can ensure you are getting a quality service from us.

We look forward to a productive time together!

Mary's Pre-school Staff

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