



**East Budleigh Village Hall, Wynards Road,
East Budleigh, Devon, EX9 7DU**

Tel: 01395 445825

www.littleotterspreschool.co.uk

Reg. Charity No. 1002116



Prospectus

Welcome to Little Otters Pre-School

Little Otters Pre-School focus is very much on **learning through play** whilst delivering the Early Year Foundation Stage curriculum. Our aims are:

- Learning through play
- Provide the children with a happy and positive time in safe and stimulating environment
- Give the children generous care and attention
- Allow the children to develop a wide range of attitudes and skills, through play, to enable them to become active learners
- Provide them with an opportunity to join with other children and adults to play and learn together
- Provide children with the necessary experiences to cope well at school

We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers to help the children learn and develop. We encourage you to have a sense of ownership of the Pre-School by becoming involved in the management to help shape the service we provide for your child. Little Otters also aims to be involved in the life and well-being of the local community. We are an inclusive setting and work to ensure that the provision meets the needs of each individual child, taking account of any special needs or disabilities that a child may have.

Little Otters Pre-School is a not-for-profit registered charity. The sessions are run by qualified staff and the Pre-School is managed by an elected committee of volunteers. Little Otters is situated in the East Budleigh Village Hall and adjoining grounds. The premises are accessible to wheelchair users.

What We Offer

	Times	Days	Cost / Fees
Morning Pre-School Session	9.15 – 11.45	Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri	(in line with government guidelines – please enquire for current fees)
Lunch Club	11.45 – 12.45	Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri	£3.00
Afternoon Pre-School Session	12.45 – 3.15	Mon and Fri	Same as morning session
Toddler Group	1.00 – 3.00	Thurs	£1.50 for 1st child and £1.00 for subsequent children

Pre-School Sessions are provided for children between the ages of 3 and 5 years.

Toddler Group is offered to families, carers, babies, toddlers and Pre-School age children.

All sessions are offered in term times only.

Lunch Club

Lunch Club provides an opportunity for the children and staff to eat together. The emphasis of the Lunch Club is on having fun and socialising, as well as preparing children for the school lunch routine. Children enrolled for the Lunch Club bring their lunch boxes to Pre-School. We encourage parents/carers to provide a healthy and nutritious lunch. Little Otters does not have the facilities to refrigerate lunch boxes during the morning session so this should be taken into account when packing lunch boxes.

Who We Are

Little Otters Pre-School is registered by Ofsted for the provision of day care and is registered to have a maximum of 26 children in a session. It is also insured by the Pre-School Learning Alliance and gains guidance and support from a number of local and national organisations including Trio, Early Years Advisors and Devon Learning and Development Partnership.

Little Otters Pre-School aims to have a high ratio of adults to children in the setting. We aim wherever possible to ensure a ratio of 1 adult to 5 children for Pre-School sessions as we believe this ratio means we can provide more time and attention for each child and allows children to explore and be adventurous in greater safety. This ratio is achieved with the help of volunteer rota helpers. At each session there is a minimum of 2 staff, consisting of a fully qualified leader and at least half the other staff on duty are qualified in line with Ofsted requirements. At least one member of staff is first aid trained. All staff are police checked under the Children's Act 1989.

The names and experience of the staff employed are:

Job Title	Name	Qualifications and Experience
Pre-School Leader	Michelle Chudley	Diploma in Pre-School Practice 7 years at Little Otters Currently studying for a Foundation Degree in Early Years
Pre-School Play Assistants	Paula Caplan	Diploma in Pre-school Practice 10 years at Little Otters
	Mary Dennis	B-Tec Childhood Studies SENCO Early Language Lead Practitioner 3 years at Little Otters
	Traci Wartnaby	Degree in Foundation Stage 11 years experience in Pre-School settings 18 months at Little Otters
	Sam Pettit	Qualified Teacher 18 months at Little Otters
Play Assistant	Simone Gilbert	2 year at Little Otters, previous experience includes being a mum
Pre-School Play Assistant and Little Otters Toddler Group Leader Book Keeper	Fran Mills	NVQ 3 and 4 in Childcare, Communication, Language and Development Currently studying for Level 5 NVQ 4 Management Currently studying for Level 5 6 years at Little Otters

In addition to the qualifications in early years care and development that our staff may already have, all staff take part in further training to help them keep up to date with changes in early years care and education.

Key Workers

At Little Otters the staff operate a key worker system. Any member of staff may make observations for a child's achievement records when they notice children's growth in a particular area, but in addition, each child will be allocated a member of staff who will take a particular interest in them and their progress. This key worker will also be the person who parents/carers are most likely to talk with on a regular basis especially as your child settles in at Pre-School. Whilst having an on-going dialogue with you all year round, the child's key worker will also prepare progress reports twice a year to give parents an idea of how their child is developing in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. They will offer a one to one appointment with you to discuss the report further should you desire one.

Working Together With You

Little Otters Pre-School believes that children benefit when parents and Pre-Schools work together in partnership. The Pre-School aims to support parents as their children's first and most important educators and to involve parents in the life of the Pre-School and their children's education. There are many ways in which parents can take part to make Pre-School a welcoming place for both children and parents.

- We believe in an ongoing dialogue with parents to improve our knowledge of the needs, activities, interest and development of their children.
- Little Otters encourages parents/carers to play an active part in Pre-School sessions by becoming volunteer rota helpers.
- We welcome the contributions of parents in whatever form this may take and encourage parents to bring their own skills, knowledge and interest to the activities of the group.
- We encourage parents to play an active part in the management of the Pre-School by volunteering to become Committee members.
- Little Otters participates in community activities and visits and we invite parents to take part in these activities and events that are organised by the Pre-School.

We hope that Little Otters will be a place to meet and build friendships with other parents.

Becoming a Volunteer Rota Helper

Little Otters would like to encourage all parents/carers to join our helpers' rota. Most parents who do not have other commitments do this as an occasional contribution to aid the smooth running of sessions. This is a fun way of being involved in what the children are doing at Pre-School, and a valuable extra adult involvement for the children. Each half-term all parents/carers are asked if they are able to be a rota helper and can choose specific days/dates to come in. Rota helpers may bring younger siblings with them if necessary. Rota helpers will be asked to read the guidance for rota helpers, safety rules and confidentiality policy before they help for the first time.

Becoming a Committee Member

Little Otters Pre-School is managed by a Committee of volunteers, mostly made up of parents of current Pre-School children. The Pre-School could not operate without the Committee, so parental involvement in Little Otters Committee is essential. Being a member of Little Otters Committee is also a great way of being part of your child's early years education. We are always on the lookout for new parents to join the Committee because as children grow up and move on, so do our Committee Members. Please get in touch with the Committee as soon as your child starts at Little Otters so you can get involved straight away. Members of the Committee are elected by the parents of the children who attend the Pre-School and these elections take place at the Committee Annual General Meeting held in February each year.

Committee Members may also be co-opted during the year before standing for election at the next AGM. The Committee is responsible for:

- Managing the Pre-School finances
- Employing and managing the staff
- Ensuring that the Pre-School has and works to appropriate policies
- Making sure the Pre-School works in partnership with parents/carers.
- Follows Ofsted Guidelines

If you would like to know more about becoming a Committee Member, please contact the Committee Chair, Jo Liddle on 01395 446102 or speak to any Committee Member (a list of Committee Members is available in the Pre-School lobby).

Pre-School Sessions and the Provision of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

Little Otters Pre-School children will have various opportunities and experiences to prepare them and support them in the smooth transition to school. The activities provided are designed to ensure that the children develop in all areas set out by the Department for Education and Skills in what is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The curriculum divides the childrens' **learning and development into six areas** and for each area it sets out the early learning goals and "stepping stones" that children may move through when developing to achieve these goals. The ways in which we aim to deliver the curriculum are illustrated on the following diagram.

The Pre-School keeps a record of achievement for each child which contains observations made by staff together with examples of the child's work. Parents are encouraged to come in and look at their child's folder and work with staff to identify their child's interests and needs. The child's folder is confidential and remains the property of the parent/carer when the child leaves Pre-School.

How Little Otters Helps Children Learn and Develop

- 6 Areas of Learning and Development**
- ◇ Personal, social and emotional
 - ◇ Communication, language & literacy
 - ◇ Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
 - ◇ Knowledge & understanding of the world
 - ◇ Physical development
 - ◇ Creative development

Communication, language & literacy



Learning sounds of letters, recognising names

Stories & books

Story-telling, puppet shows, story sacks


Phonics

Linking sounds

Show & tell

Rhyming & songs

Personal, social & emotional



Themed discussions

Visits/visitors

Dressing up

Turn-taking

Games

Counting – using the environment around

Patterns, jigsaws

Comparative learning – big, small, in, out

Construction

Water play

Number recognition

Junk model making

Large motor skills

Climbing frame

Bikes

Top start

Movement & dance

Threading, balancing

Small world play

Cutting & sticking

Play dough

Sand, water

Crafts – pens, painting, decorating, patterns

Music, singing

Junk modelling

Exploration & investigation – mini beast, tadpoles, planting seeds, growing things

Visitors, eg: new babies, different transport

Visits to places of local interest


Learning about different cultures & traditions

Cooking

ICT – programmable toys, electrical toys

Role play

Knowledge and understanding of the world



Learning about different cultures & traditions

Visits to places of local interest

Visitors, eg: new babies, different transport

Creative development



Music, singing

Junk modelling

Exploration & investigation – mini beast, tadpoles, planting seeds, growing things

Visitors, eg: new babies, different transport

Visits to places of local interest

Learning about different cultures & traditions

Cooking

ICT – programmable toys, electrical toys

Role play

Sand, water

Play dough

Cutting & sticking

Small world play

Threading, balancing

Small world play

Cutting & sticking

Play dough

Sand, water

Crafts – pens, painting, decorating, patterns

Music, singing

Junk modelling

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Cooking

ICT – programmable toys, electrical toys

Role play

Physical development



Large motor skills

Climbing frame

Bikes

Top start

Movement & dance

Threading, balancing

Small world play

Cutting & sticking

Play dough

Sand, water

Crafts – pens, painting, decorating, patterns

Music, singing

Junk modelling

Exploration & investigation – mini beast, tadpoles, planting seeds, growing things

Visitors, eg: new babies, different transport

Visits to places of local interest

Learning about different cultures & traditions

Cooking

ICT – programmable toys, electrical toys

Role play

Problem solving, reasoning & literacy



Counting – using the environment around

Patterns, jigsaws

Comparative learning – big, small, in, out

Construction

Water play

Number recognition

Junk model making

Large motor skills

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ICT – programmable toys, electrical toys

Role play

The Pre-School Daily Routine

The Pre-School session is structured to have a daily routine.

Parents/carers are asked to remain in the lobby until staff open the door at 9.15.

- During the first 10 to 15 minutes, the Pre-School setting is arranged to allow children to select from a range of activities, some of which may be adult led. It allows the children to settle and initiate what they would like to do. At approximately 9.30 the children are asked to sit down for the register. This takes approximately 10 minutes and includes a welcome song as well as telling the children what activities are available to them.
- Children are then encouraged to choose to participate in the various activities provided.
- From 9.45 – 10.45 the Pre-School operates a rolling snack time in the form of a café. The café style snack time aims to work towards achieving Ofsted's "continuous play" initiative, where the children are not made to pack away toys to have snack but can choose to take a break from play when they are ready. Children take it in turns to visit the café and chose a healthy snack and drink. Social eating helps children learn about healthy eating and promotes independence though making choices and serving food and drink for themselves. Sometimes the children take part in cooking as an activity and will eat the results at snack time.
- After snack time, depending on numbers of children in the session, the children may split up into groups to take part in indoor and outdoor activities. These are often group activities which may be adult led. The Pre-School aims to run some activity outdoors everyday unless the weather really does not permit it.
- Children then gather together again and take part in "show and tell" and may then end the session in a group activity such as singing or stories.
- Parents/carers are asked to wait in the lobby until staff open the door at the end of the session.
- We supervise the children and invite the parents to come in and collect them. There is always a staff member at the front door to ensure that children leave with the appropriate adult.
- Each half-term, the sessions are "themed" and focus on a particular topic, for example "All about Me" or "Transport". Activities, outings and even food may be based loosely on this topic. These topics are communicated to parents/carers in the half-termly Little Otters Newsletters and are displayed on the notice board in the lobby.

What to Bring

Little Otters Pre-School provides protective aprons for messy activities, however, children should come to Pre-School in clothes in which you are prepared to let them get dirty. Spare clothes are kept at Pre-School in case of water play or toileting accidents but it is helpful if parents bring a bag with a change of clothing for such eventualities. In winter, coats and wellies are useful for outdoor play. In summer, it is essential to provide your child with a sunhat, and to bring them with sunscreen **already applied**.

Absence

If for any reason your child is absent from Pre-School, an absence form (available at Pre-School) should be completed on their return (or in advance if for a planned absence due to a holiday etc.). Little Otters are required to obtain this information to audit attendance of Government funded sessions.

Sickness

If your child is unwell with diahorrea and/or vomiting the policy is to allow 48 hours after the last incident of illness before they return to Pre-School. Please refer to our Spotty Dog policy for further information on sickness and illness.

Policies

In line with Ofsted requirements, Little Otters Pre-School has a number of policies and procedures that aim to ensure that the service provided by the Pre-School is enjoyable and of a high quality. Policies are prepared by the Committee working together with staff and are reviewed on a regular basis. Copies of all policies are displayed in the file kept in the lobby at Pre-School, for parents/carers to read and can be provided when your child starts at Little Otters.

Links with Local Schools

Children attending Little Otters go on to attend primary schools in several different local towns and villages (including Newton Poppleford, East Budleigh, Otterton, Budleigh Salterton and Exmouth). As the majority of our children attend from East Budleigh and Otterton, we do maintain a particularly close relationship with these local primary schools (Drake's at East Budleigh and Otterton School). Visits are arranged to let the children experience school life and we hope this helps the children to feel more comfortable with the transition to the school environment when the time comes. It should be noted however, that attendance at Little Otters in no way guarantees a place at any of these primary schools.

Pre-School Fees

Fees are payable for all sessions until your child becomes eligible for early years education funding (EYEF). The fees are currently in line with Government guidelines. In Devon children are entitled to EYEF by the Government from the term after their third birthday.

Those paying fees will be invoiced at the start of each half term. Note that Lunch Club fees are not covered by EYEF.

When your child starts Pre-School you will be asked to complete a Children's Information Form. We are also required to view your child's original birth certificate and a copy will be sent to the Local Education Authority (LEA) along with the Children's Information Form. When your child becomes eligible for funding, the Pre-School will ask you to sign a simple form at the beginning of each term to confirm how many sessions you require.

In line with the EYEF guidelines, if you wish to decrease the number of sessions per week your child attends during the term you will be required to reimburse the EYEF for those sessions for the entire term, unless you are transferring the funding to another provider. You may also be asked to repay funding should your child regularly be absent from Pre-School. Four weeks' term-time notice should be given if the number of non-funded Pre-School sessions required decreases, or if a child is to leave the group. Failure to give adequate notice may lead to parents/carers being billed during the required four week notice period regardless of attendance.

Starting at Little Otters

Little Otters is registered for the care of children over three, so children may begin attending unaccompanied after their third birthday. Before this they must be accompanied.

New children are offered two free introductory sessions, which may be taken from a month before their third birthday, during which they attend with a parent/carer, so that they can get to know the Pre-School environment. This also gives the staff a chance to meet them and discuss any needs. Some parents/carers prefer to continue to accompany their child for part of the session until they feel happy with being left; we aim to be flexible and allowances are made for each child's settling in period. After filling in your application form, to arrange your introductory sessions, please phone Fran Mills on 01395 568732 or speak to Michelle, the Pre-School leader at the village hall.

Further Information About the Pre-School

The Pre-School chair is Jo Liddle. She can be contacted on 01395 446102 and would be very happy to answer any queries you may have. To enrol for Little Otters Pre-School please either pass a completed application form to the Pre-School Leader, or post it to Fran Mills at Sandycross Farmhouse, Yettington, East Budleigh EX9 7BW (01395 568732).