**Minster Lovell Playgroup**

**Prospectus 2023-2024**



Minster Lovell Playgroup, St. Kenelm’s School Grounds, Wenrisc Drive,

Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxfordshire. OX29 0SP

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**Our Mission Statement**

Minster Lovell Playgroup is a community Playgroup where parents and carers can confidently leave their children secure in the knowledge that they will receive the highest standards of care and early years education. As a community based, voluntary managed setting, we depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going.

The ethos underpinning all we do is ‘learning through play’. We offer children a stimulating environment where their individuality is respected and valued. We promote all areas of the children’s learning and development, and work towards them becoming confident and independent both in their self-care and approach to learning in preparation for their transition to Reception class. We do this by providing play activities appropriate for their stage of development in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We welcome all children whatever their individual needs may be. All children have the right to be educated and to develop their full potential. We believe that having an inclusive policy benefits all children, and positively reflects the diversity of our society.

We listen to and work closely with families to meet the needs of all children and believe that ‘parents are children’s first and most enduring educators.’

Membership of the setting carries expectations on parents for their support and commitment.

**Welcome to Minster Lovell Playgroup**

Minster Lovell Playgroup is a charity organisation managed by a committee of volunteer parents (Reg No: 1133956). We are members of the Early Years Alliance and are supported by the Oxfordshire County Council Early Years team. All members of staff are committed to continuous professional development and attend training courses where necessary.

**Staff**

We pride ourselves on our committed team of staff. Playgroup employs four members of staff:

 **Supervisor –** Vicki Wright has a B.A. Honours Degree in Education and a Montessori Nursery Foundation Teacher training Diploma. She is very experienced, having run a nursery in Oxford for

10 years and has been managing the setting since 2006.

**Deputy Supervisor** –Andrea Fayers has a Level 2 in Childcare, Learning and Development and has worked at Playgroup for over 10 years.

**Assistant -** Danielle Edmunds has a Cache Level 3 NVQ Certificate in Playwork

**Assistant –** Claire Hipkin is very experienced, having worked at Playgroup for a number of years. She is the SENCO and Language Lead in the setting.

All staff hold current Paediatric First Aid certificates, have attended Safeguarding Children training and have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Vicki, Andrea and the chairperson have completed the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead training) for Safeguarding Children and Vicki is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Andrea is the deputy DSL.

It is our policy to seek training which enhances our ability to work with children and we are committed to attending courses for continual professional development.

If staff are absent, we will endeavour to find cover. In the unlikely event that all members of staff are unable to attend, or we are unable to cover the ratios, parents would be notified and Playgroup would be closed.

Our ratio of staff to children

 1:8 for 3 to 5 year olds

 1:4 for 2 to 3 year olds

Playgroup has the support of a volunteer parent committee. This committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM is open to parents of all the children who attend the setting. It is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year’s activities and shaping the coming year’s plan. The committee meets regularly and is vital to Playgroup’s smooth running. Please speak to Vicki if you are interested in being on the committee or would like to know more about it and what it involves. We value your help.

**General**

Minster Lovell Playgroup was established in the Village Hall in 1974. It is now situated in a portable building in the grounds of St. Kenelm’s School.

**Opening Times**

Playgroup is open from 9am until 12 noon on Monday and Friday and from 9am until 3 pm on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during school term times. The Playgroup cannot accept responsibility for the safety of children outside these hours due to our insurance cover. Each child must attend a minimum of two sessions per week.

**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. Our setting uses the practice guidance Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to plan and provide a range of play 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 an activity. In all activities, information from the practice guidance to EYFS has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

The EYFS is based on four important themes and principles. These are:

* A unique child
* Positive relationships
* Enabling environments
* Learning and development

The EYFS aims to ensure that children:

* Have good health
* Are happy
* Feel safe
* Are successful

If you would like to know more about the EYFS, please ask a member of staff or look at the Department for Education website ([www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)) and follow the ‘Early learning and childcare’ link and look at the Early Years Foundation Stage.

A copy of our latest Ofsted report is available via the link on our website (minsterlovellplaygroup.co.uk) or can be viewed at [www.Ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

**Age**

Playgroup accept children (between 2 and a half and 5 years) from the start of the September, January and April terms until the end of the school year before they have their fifth birthday

(ie the end of July before they begin Reception year).

Most children leave in July before starting their Reception year at school, although a few move to school nurseries before this date.

From the term after their third birthday, children are eligible for up to 15 hours per week. Funding is available for some 2 year olds. The term after they are three, all children receive 15 hours free childcare and some are eligible for 30 hours free childcare, please see Vicki for more information and eligibility or check the links on our website via this link: [Minster Lovell Playgroups News & Events page](https://www.minsterlovellplaygroup.co.uk/news__events)

**Fees**

When funding is not received, then Fees apply. A bill will be issued half-termly and payment must be made by the date shown on the envelope. A child’s place is allocated for the complete term. Please note that any absences must be paid for and there will be no refund for missed sessions. At least one month’s notice must be given prior to your child leaving or payment of such notice (see Policy on our website [Minster Lovell Playgroup Documents](https://www.minsterlovellplaygroup.co.uk/documents)). Please speak to Vicki if you require a payment plan setting up which will be at the discretion of the Committee.

**Applications**

We encourage prospective families to visit Playgroup. If you feel we are the right place for you and your child, please complete an application form which will then secure your child’s place with a refundable deposit of £20. Vicki will telephone you the term prior to your child starting to arrange a visit for you and your child.

**Daily Routine**

Through careful planning and use of displays, the staff seek to ensure that all children are motivated and interested to learn.

We organise our sessions 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 new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others. These include early maths, science, speaking and listening, reading and writing, outside play, role play and construction.

Our daily routine is as follows:

9.00am – 9.20am Children arrive, are welcomed then asked to sit on chairs and respond to the daily register. They are then shown their names, which they may or may not recognise, and hang them on our ‘tree’.

 The children will sometimes then take part in circle time where they might listen to a story or talk about the seasons, weather or their news from home

9.20am – 11.30am Children are free to choose activities from the prepared classroom or take part in outdoor play.

 The prime areas of learning are:

* Personal, Social and Emotional development
* Communication and Language
* Physical development

The specific areas of learning are:

* Literacy
* Mathematics
* Understanding the World
* Expressive Arts and Design

Children play independently or follow adult led activities.

When the weather permits, we do have free flow play whereby the children are free to go outside and come back in when they choose.
Children experience all areas of learning outside.
We have a well resourced playhouse, scooters, trikes, prams, sand, balls etc, a climbing frame with slide, as well as a tepee. We fully recognise the importance of outside play and all the learning opportunities it presents.
We have an area where we grow plants, with plenty of pots around that have edible, sensory and flowers in. Children are encouraged to help with the planting, watering, picking of produce. We also have a “bug hotel” which children can investigate.

From 10am on Snack time – we are very committed to promoting a healthy lifestyle. Children are asked to wash their hands before sitting for snack. They enjoy a variety of fruit, always including apple and banana, with milk or water at snack time. Please advise us if your child has any allergy/dietary problems or needs. There is fresh water available at all times

11.30am approx. Tidy up time – All children are encouraged to tidy up and then sit on the rug for circle time.

11.35am – 12.00 Circle time – There is usually a story but there may be ring games, songs and discussions about our project too.

12 noon Home time for those that attend morning session only. After collecting work from their drawers, children wait until their parents/carers arrive and they are called to go home.

 As added security, there are usually two members of staff to ensure children are safe until they are with their parents/carers.

**Daily routine contd…**

12 noon – 12.45pm Lunchtime, children bring their own packed lunches and staff will sit with them to eat.

12.45pm – 2.45pm Free play either indoors or outside, awe and wonder walks around our village, trips to the park and play equipment

2.45pm – 3pm Tidy up time, story/discussion time followed by home time.

**Starting at Playgroup**

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, the staff

will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into Playgroup. We have a policy about helping children to settle into Playgroup which can be found on our website.

Parents are welcome into Playgroup at any time but please let us know when you intend to do this. Helping out is very informal and there will be guidance if needed. You will not be expected to help out when your child first starts at Playgroup. It is advisable to wait until your child has been with us for half a term. Helping at the session 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.

If you have a particular skill, occupation or interest you would like to share with the children please let a member of staff know – this may be playing a musical instrument, gardening, sewing, cooking, crafting, driving a tractor or fire engine. ‘playing’ – for example – a nurse, chef, shop assistant or mechanic in the role play area, or sharing aspects of another language or culture.

We are always happy and willing to discuss your child’s progress and development. 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 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 support development.

All parents are given free access to the child’s “Learning Journey” scrapbook about their child. Each child is allocated a key person when they start at Playgroup. Your child’s key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what we provide is right for your child’s particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, she/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child’s time at the setting enabling them to feel secure at Playgroup. She/he will help your child to benefit from the setting’s activities. The key person will also put together your child’s ‘learning journey’ documenting their activities and achievements.

Please feel free to discuss any concerns with Playgroup staff. We are very keen to continue to develop our positive relationship with parents. If, for any reason, you have any complaint, in the first instance please speak to Vicki or the Committee Chairperson. We have a complaints procedure which can be seen on our website.

Parents can make a complaint to Ofsted should they wish at the following: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or 0300 123 1231.

We value feedback from parents and hold parent/teacher events as well as informal opportunities to discuss your child’s progress. We distribute a questionnaire every year to obtain parent’s views.

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education of their child.

**Starting at School**

In preparation for starting school, we include visits into St. Kenelm’s to meet school staff and children so that they are familiar with the building, grounds and some faces by September. We have very close links with St. Kenelm’s and the children visit regularly.

When possible, for those children who will be moving to other schools, we like to encourage visitors from those places.

**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 are protected against the likelihood of abuse in our settings and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents 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. See Safeguarding Policy on our website [Minster Lovell Playgroup Documents](https://www.minsterlovellplaygroup.co.uk/documents)

**Useful telephone numbers:**If you have an immediate safeguarding concern where a child is deemed at risk or has potentially suffered significant harm, then the MASH team should be contacted immediately.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0345 0507666

**Security**

For security reasons, a pick-up permission form, (included with the Prospectus), must be completed. If, for any reason, you will not be collecting your child from Playgroup, a member of staff **must** be informed. We understand that sometimes emergencies may happen during the session and we would, on those occasions, be grateful if you could telephone us to let us know who will be collecting your child. If that person isn’t listed on your consent form then we will ask you to give them a password which we know. When it is time to pick your child up, we will not let them leave without being told the correct password. We also have a book where you can give your permission for anyone, other than those stated on your previous permission form, to collect your child in an emergency. This must have your signature.

**Behaviour Management**

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning without fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. We promote positive behaviour with praise and encouragement. Please take time to read our Behaviour Management policy which is available on our website. None of the staff will use physical punishment on any child. We will try to modify children’s unacceptable behaviour by explaining to the child why their behaviour is not acceptable and stating the reasons. We will take into account the age and stage of development of the child and will always be fair. Parents will be informed at the end of the session if unacceptable behaviour persists, and between us we will discuss the best way to deal with it.

**Equal Opportunities**

We believe that the group’s activities should be open to all children and families and to all adults committed to their education and care. We aim to ensure that all who wish to work in, or volunteer to help with, our Playgroup have an equal chance to do so. All the Playgroup staff treat all children with equal concern and give attention to meet their specific individual needs with regard to their religious persuasion, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic backgrounds as well as gender or disability. Please note that Playgroup has a no smoking policy.

**Personal Care**

We encourage the children to become independent in their personal care – managing their own clothing and following good hygiene procedures when using the toilet and washing hands. We are happy to reinforce toilet training routines you are following at home. If your child is in nappies or pull-ups, please let your child’s key worker or Vicki know and send a bag in containing changes of clothes, nappies, wipes and nappy sacks.

**Clothing**

Please do not send your child in best clothes as these only inhibit play and can cause upset if they get dirty. Please ensure sweatshirts and coats, shoes/slippers etc. are clearly named. Slippers/plimsolls can be worn inside, especially during the winter months when shoes and boots may be dirty. We would prefer shoes that are slip on, zip or velcro as children are unable to manage laces by themselves. Please note that flip-flops are not suitable footwear even in hot weather as these severely restrict outside play and can be a trip hazard for young children. Named pegs are provided for coats and bags in the Cloakroom. Each child has use of paper towels in the toilet area.

Jewellery is not recommended for Playgroup with the exception of small stud earrings. We will not be responsible for injury, loss or damage.

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities. 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**

Any child that has an infectious illness should be kept away from Playgroup for the given incubation period. Playgroup should be notified so that other parents can be informed. PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO PLAYGROUP UNTIL THEY HAVE HAD 48 HOURS CLEAR OF VOMITING AND DIARROHEA.

We are happy to administer any medication your child may require as long as we have written authority form yourself. Should your child become ill during a Playgroup session you will be contacted and asked to collect your child. Any bumps and grazes will be recorded in our accident/incident book and a member of staff will talk to you about it, you will then be asked to sign our book as confirmation.

Parents must advise us if your child is going to be absent from their session for any reason in order for us to complete the daily register. We believe that good attendance promotes good outcomes for children and it is now our policy to phone parents/carers whose child is absent without notice. We have a Holiday Form which you can fill out for holiday absence.
Why good attendance is important: [Importance of Good Attendance](https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/early-years-childcare/e276-16eygoodattendanceposter.pdf)

**Toys**

We would prefer it if toys were not brought into Playgroup. However, we do appreciate that certain items may be used as a comforter to help an unsettled child. We may ask at times for children to bring in relevant items relating to our topic work.

If children bring in toys from home, then we ask them to put them in the Home Box for the duration of the session. This helps to ensure that they don’t get lost or misplaced and cause distress to the child. These toys are then given out before home time.

**Policies**

Copies of the setting’s policies and procedures are available for you to see in the setting or via our website.

These policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the setting is a high quality one and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

The staff and parents of the setting work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

**Keeping you informed**

For news and events please check our website or look at our Facebook page which is used to share information as well as via email and face to face. Please remember to look at these. Newsletters are also issued usually once a term.
[Minster Lovell Playgroup | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/Minster-Lovell-Playgroup-183226325091380)

An annual outing during the summer term is organised as well as various events during the year.

Please support our various fund-raising events. Playgroup cannot run without your support.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our setting and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.

Minster Lovell Playgroup Committee and Staff