The Old Infant School,
Main Street Great Longstone,
 DE45 1TZ
 01629 640 842
 www.greatlongstonepreschool.org.uk

Dear New Starter

**Welcome**! We are delighted your child is joining our pre-school. Here is some information about us and how we work which we hope will help to settle your child in.

**Our Staff**
Our preschool leader is Cheryl Littlewood and her deputy is Amber Slack. Paula Greenhalgh also works as a qualified practitioner alongside Cheryl and Amber. Our staff are all qualified to Level 3 or above and hold paediatric first aid certificates.

**Starting Off**
Sometimes children take a while to settle at pre-school and parents are welcome to stay for as long as it takes for your child to feel happy and secure when left. Some children like to bring a soft toy or blanket which helps to settle them and your child is welcome to do the same but please could we ask that you try to limit it to one item!

It would be great if your child were able to go to the toilet unaided as it takes up precious play and learning time for all children when staff are occupied changing children, but please do not worry if your child is still in nappies. We ask that a change of clothing is supplied for your child in case of an accident. It is also a good idea for the children to wear simple clothing which they can handle themselves e.g. trousers with elastic waistbands rather than fiddly buttons etc.

Please come in for a visit/visits to pre-school before your child starts. This is so that you and your child can become familiar with the preschool. It would be really helpful if you could bring the following when you come to visit: (1) A completed Registration Form. (2) Your child’s birth certificate or other ID (we need to see the original and just need to note down the reference number as proof of this). (3) The questionnaire about your child’s preferences and how much help they need. In addition, if you are eligible for funding, please complete the FE1 form (chat to our treasurer if you’d like any help with this).

Your child will be assigned a ‘key person’ for the duration of their time here. This key person will help your child to become settled, happy and safe, will be responsible for your child’s care, development and learning and will take careful note of your child’s progress and share this with you. This person will usually be your main point of contact at pre-school, but you are welcome to talk to any member of staff about your child at any time. You should be given the name of your child’s key person on their first day – please speak to Cheryl if this is not the case.

**Sessions and Times**
The regular pre-school opening hours are from 9am – 12pm Monday to Friday. Depending on the level of demand we also run afternoon sessions until 3pm. Currently, these afternoon sessions run Monday – Friday. There may also be a service of a 3.20pm finish (for £2.50 per day) each day, subject to demand.
Please see our website or speak to any staff member for the current day(s). The maximum number of children at each session is currently 12 and this limit is due to the size of the building / space available and staffing.
We always have a minimum of two members of staff but will have at least one member of staff to four children in the 2y-3y age group and one member of staff to eight children in the over 3y age group.

**Absence**
Please contact the pre-school if your child will not be attending a session because of illness, holidays or otherwise. Upon their return to pre-school, we will ask you to sign for the days of absence; this record-keeping is a matter of best practice but also, for funded children, a requirement for us to be able to claim their funding.

**Collection**
We ask you to be punctual in collecting your child. If for some unforeseen circumstance you know you are going to be late, please contact the pre-school as soon as you are able. Please bear in mind that your child will only be allowed to leave the setting with the named adults on your registration form.

**Fees (2021/22)**
Our fees are £4.25 per hour for all children and for all sessions (i.e. including lunch clubs and/or afternoon sessions). A 3.20pm finish is an extra £2.50 per day you use the service.
If eligible for funding\*, you can use this to cover any sessions. You will receive an invoice from the Treasurer at the start of each term for the full term and payment can be made by BACs transfer or cheque (in either one or two instalments), or by childcare vouchers.

 *\* all children are eligible for up to 15h funding from the start of the term following their third birthday. Children from working families may be eligible for a further 15h funding (ie 30h in total). Some children from lower income families may be eligible for funding from the age of 2y.
Please check on our website for more information including links to how to apply where applicable.*

**Weather and Clothing**
Attendance does involve participation in a number of potentially messy activities, so we strongly advise that children wear washable clothes. Aprons are provided but accidents with paint or glue can occur! Often, we go outside for walks or to play in our garden when accessible, so please could you send your child with appropriate clothing and footwear. In the warmer months, please could you ensure that your child has a hat or cap and that sun lotion has been applied prior to arrival at pre-school. During the winter, we find it helps if your child has a pair of slippers or pumps they could wear inside and it would be great if you could leave these at pre-school.

Should the pre-school have to close due to bad weather, a text message will be sent to let parents know as soon as the decision is made. Please make sure you give your mobile number on the registration form so that we can do this.

**Our Curriculum**
We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework within our preschool. Amongst other things, the EYFS framework sets out the seven areas of learning and development which guide how staff plan the play and activities within preschool. We plan our curriculum around the Development Matters document which was updated in September 2021.

The three ‘prime’ areas for learning and development are: Communication & language, Physical Development; and Personal, Social and Emotional Development. These will then allow development in the four areas of: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World; and Expressive Arts and design.

**Health Matters**
We provide a variety of healthy snacks and water or milk for mid-morning break but please let us know of any special dietary requirements. We ask for a small **voluntary** contribution of 25p per session towards these snacks. This amount will be shown on your invoice, but you will be given totals with and without the snack money included so that you can choose whether or not to pay.

If your child needs to be given any medication during session times, please inform the pre-school leader and complete permission forms detailing the dosage to be administered. Medicines will not usually be administered unless they have been prescribed for your child by a doctor, dentist, nurse or pharmacist.

If your child has a heavy cold, has been sick during the night, has an upset stomach (diarrhoea) or has any transmittable disease, we ask that you keep him or her at home until they are no longer contagious and until at least 48hours after any episode of sickness / diarrhoea. This is to try to prevent the spread of illness to others. If your child is unwell during a session you will be called to collect them.

**Policies**
Please familiarise yourself with our policies and procedures. There are copies of all the policies in pre-school and you are welcome to come in and read them. Or please let us know if you’d like a copy of any policies to be emailed to you.

**Working as a Team**
Great Longstone Pre-School has been a registered charity for 30 years and we could not run without the help of parents/carers.

We hold a few events throughout the year such as fundraisers, sports day, the nativity play and cakes sales where we’d love parents to come along and get involved. And any efforts towards fundraising will always be greatly appreciated!

The pre-school is run by a committee of volunteers who are responsible for everything from employing and paying the staff and ensuring that we comply with the EYFS framework, to leasing and maintaining the building. The committee meets three times per year (usually in the pub!) and everyone is welcome at these meetings (staff, committee members and parents/carers) so please look out for details of when the next meeting will be held. Should you wish to join the committee, they’d be delighted to welcome you on board and you do not need to take on a specific role or volunteer for lots of work (unless you want to!).

Please remember to look at the noticeboard and our website on a regular basis and do follow us on Facebook. Each day, we put up a summary on the noticeboard telling you what the children are going to be doing and in which areas of learning and development we are focusing on.
We also post regular updates on our Facebook page. We will also use the noticeboard to put up other useful information and the minutes from the committee meetings. We would always welcome your input / feedback on how we are doing; please do get in touch.

**We look forward to a very successful partnership**

The Great Longstone Pre-School Team

**Useful Contact Details**
Great Longstone Pre-School: 01629 640 842 (pre school hours only)
 email@greatlongstonepreschool.org.uk

**Committee**Martin Balshaw (Chair)
Greg Robinson (Treasurer)
Julia Morgans (Secretary)
Kate McGoverne
Anna Gregory