

# Kineton Playgroup

## PARENT 'S HANDBOOK



..learning through play ... to give every child the best start..

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## Introduction

Welcome to the parent's handbook for Kineton Playgroup.

We felt that it would be really beneficial for new (and current) parents to have a place where you can find an answer to any questions you might have about life at Playgroup - from settling in sessions to transition to school. Please feel free to make any suggestions about information you think we may have left out, so it can be added into the next edition!

*"You will find information in speech marks, written in blue, throughout the handbook which contain top tips from past and current parents that we think you will find useful - real and personal experiences and hopefully great advice. Again please feel free to suggest any of your own."*

Inevitably you may still have questions that you would like answered in more detail so please feel free to speak to any member of staff- they are all very knowledgeable and very approachable.

We are a charity, independent of the school and non profit making. We are run by a Management Board which is like Governors of a school. Without a Management Board in place, Playgroup cannot operate.

We have volunteers who help us with fundraising activities. The money raised is spent on activities and resources for the children.



## **Settling in at Playgroup sessions**

All children are different and settle at Playgroup at different rates and in different ways. New children coming to Playgroup are offered at least one visit to a session with you. You know your child better than anyone, so please let us know if you think you only need a short visit, no visit, several sessions or a programme over a period of time. The only right way to start Playgroup sessions is the way that suits you and your child, and we can adapt the settling in process for you. You will both be introduced your child's key person at your first visit or session.

Sometimes children become unsettled during their time at Playgroup. This could be due to a change at home (eg birth of a baby brother or sister, death of a pet, moving house) or anticipating a future event (eg starting 'big school') or something that has happened at Playgroup (eg arguing with a friend). Please let us know if you have any worries and we will let you know if we notice any changes. Little and not-so-little things can have a big impact and the more we know the more we can help.

*"Settling in visits - more of a trauma for parent than child...they are being instantly absorbed into Playgroup life whilst you suddenly have a hand free for a couple of hours! For these sessions when you are getting used to being at home with 'minus one' have a little project planned for the time...one of those 'must do jobs', kitchen cupboards, clear out airing cupboard, attempt to tidy part of the shed or just enjoy a time to sit with a magazine and a coffee! You'll soon get used to it. However it can be a real struggle to drive to Stratford, Banbury etc, park, shop and get back for 11.30 after a 9.00 drop off - you've been warned!"*

## **Access to Playgroup**

Access to the Playgroup / school site is via one of three gated entrances (from St John's Road, Warwick Road or the Market Square). The Market Square gate is locked from 9.15am to 2.55pm and then from 5pm to ensure the security of all children on the site. The Warwick Road gate is locked from 9.15am to 3.10pm and then locked from about 4.30pm. In an emergency please contact us and we will give you access through this gate. In addition please make sure you shut all gates after you come through them, both on the school site and at the entries to Helen's Place.

## **Vehicles and parking on school site**

Unless you have a visitor's pass please do not drive onto or park on the school site after 8.30am or before 4.00pm. This is to ensure the safety of all children on the site. If you need a temporary pass for any reason please ask. If you do come by car, please park courteously on nearby roads; avoid King John's Road if possible, and do not use the residents' parking areas at King John's Mews.

## **Dogs**

Guide dogs, hearing dogs and other assist dogs (and dogs in training for these jobs) are welcome at any time. Please let us know if you will be visiting regularly in these cases so we can support any children with a fear of dogs. No other dogs are allowed on to the school site unless they are on a school or Playgroup related visit.

## The beginning and end of the day

At the beginning of a Playgroup session, please wait with your child in the entrance hall (or outside in good weather). Staff will let you into the cloakroom when it is safe. Staff will then open the door and welcome you and your child into the session when ready. Please sign in on the register. When collecting your child please wait in the cloakroom and staff will send your child out to you at the end of the session, when they see you. Again please sign the register so we have a record of you collecting your child. It is important that children join Playgroup sessions as close to the start times as possible. While we understand delays are sometimes inevitable, it can be upsetting for the individual child and to the session as a whole if children arrive or leave late without notice.

*"Don't worry if your child cries when you first leave them, you can pretty much guarantee that they will have stopped within a few minutes and will be happily playing in no time. The Playgroup staff are great at 'distraction' techniques and will contact you if required!"*

## Pushchairs

Please leave your pushchairs in the covered area outside the main door at Playgroup. Unfortunately we do not have enough space indoors for them. If you are a rota parent, your pushchair may be brought inside once the session is under way.

*"It can get hot and busy waiting for children in the cloakroom. Lunch boxes, art work and the children's going home folders are left outside for collection. It really helps to pick them up on the way out so you have both hands free when meeting your child, signing the register etc."*

## Signing Out

There are a lot of children coming and going at the beginning and end of the day. Unfortunately we do not have a great deal of space in the cloakroom area. Rather than ask parents to wait outside we have decided to allow parents to wait for children to be handed to them indoors. Due to the lack of space it is important to try to collect children and leave as quickly as possible. If you would like to speak to a member of staff in more detail please wait until all the children have been handed safely to their parents. Equally please make every effort to collect your child on time. Children can get very anxious and upset if they are not collected at the same time as their friends. If your delay takes us over our registered number we would have to turn away children enrolled for a later session. Additionally you may be charged £10.00 for every 15 minutes, or part of 15 minutes, you are late. If you are delayed for any reason it would be very helpful if you could telephone us to let us know. Ultimately we are required by Ofsted regulations to notify Social Services if no-one can be contacted to collect a child, so we can be advised what to do next. Please write the actual time you sign in and out next to your signature. This is vital from two points - the most important is that it helps us ensure the safety of your children. The second is that it ensures you receive correct invoices. If there is no signature, or no time, then it will be assumed that your child is either staying for the next session or that a late collection fee is due.

## **Key person**

You and your child will be introduced to your child's key person at your first visit or session. A 'key person' is the member of staff who will welcome your child to their early sessions and who can provide an important link between home and Playgroup for you and them. As far as possible this person will be at all your child's sessions. However as patterns of attendance change and vary, we work in key person teams so everyone has a back up too. All members of staff are available to speak to you and your child, and will get to know you over the time you are with us. All members of staff at sessions play and work with all the children, but your child's key person will make a special point of getting to know your child well.

## **Building up a picture of your child**

In order for us to really get to know your child and to help them make the most of the opportunities we can offer for enjoyable learning and development, the information you can tell us and which we tell you is really important. This starts with general information, such as the prospectus and handbook and then develops to be personal and specific to each child.

We keep a 'Learning Journal' for each child which records the excitements, events, achievements and triumphs of their time with us. This starts with the short summary we ask you to complete to tell us of your child's likes and dislikes. It can include photographs, copies of your child's work (eg early writing or pictures) and written observations. Each child is also asked what they would like to put in their folder - eg sometimes they want to take photographs of things they have made or of their friends. We have a supply of 'wow!' sheets to include anything from home too, such as a first bike ride without stabilisers.

*"Playgroup staff really are keen to hear any achievement your child makes - however small you feel it is - if it's important to them, it is important to the staff!"*

You can see these Learning Journals whenever you like. Please speak to us to let us know any important information at the beginning or end of sessions. Sometimes we may have our hands full (literally!) with small children, or you may wish to have a longer or more private time to talk. If that is the case please contact us to arrange an appointment.

Playgroup also runs regular more formal parent consultation meetings to discuss your child's progress, generally once a term, when you can make an appointment to look through the journal and discuss your child's development with us.

At the end of their time at Kineton Playgroup the Learning Journal is used to complete a Transfer Profile which goes to your child's primary school. Reception class teachers may also ask to look at the Learning Journal itself. At the end of this time the Learning Journal goes home to you, and we hope it forms a valuable keepsake of this time in your child's life.

## **What your child should wear**

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothes that allow them to get involved in all the activities offered. Preferably, clothes that are easily washed and ones that it would not matter if they ended up with paint etc on! In the winter, they should come to Playgroup with suitable warm and waterproof outdoor clothing, including wellies. In the summer, they should come to Playgroup with t-shirts that cover their shoulders and a sunhat. Layers that they can take off and put on themselves are really useful. Dressing up clothes are fine, if that is what your child wants to wear, provided they are playable in. Please be careful with trendy clothes - 3 and 4 year olds are not teenagers, some styles and some logos are not really appropriate. Footwear should be suitable for running around in, whilst minimising the risk of tripping over. Flip flops, crocs, backless shoes and heels are not suitable for the activities we do at Playgroup and should not be worn. There is a Playgroup uniform available to purchase. Please look at the notice board for further details and prices. All clothes and their items should be labelled with your child's name.

*"Name labels - you need to name everything ! I have used Cash's labels and also have found shoe labels useful. They all last well into Primary school so a purchase is not wasted. Also gets children used to finding and recognising their name!"*

We would recommend that your child does not wear jewellery, particularly necklaces and long or hooped ear-rings to Playgroup as they can present a health and safety issue. Staff suggest that any necklaces brought in are put into the show basket so your child can show and talk about them with the rest of the children.

Inevitably children do have accidents, particularly if recently toilet trained, and with all the exciting distractions that Playgroup presents. It can be a good idea to provide your child with a change of clothes that can be hung on their peg. Playgroup do have their own labelled supply of clothes if needed. Please have a chat with a member of the Playgroup staff if your child is not yet toilet trained.

*"Try to encourage your child to wear Playgroup uniform. This ensures their own clothes don't come home covered in paint. If they don't want to wear a uniform then encourage them not to wear their best outfits. Washable paint never is !!!!*

## **Sunscreen**

When the weather does become warm enough, you are asked to apply sunscreen to your child before bringing them to Playgroup. If your child is staying all day, Playgroup staff can re-apply sunscreen. You will be asked to give your permission for them to do this, using the Playgroup sunscreen, or provide your own.

*"Sunscreen is always available at the Parent Information point by the office window if you forget to apply it before arriving at Playgroup."*

## Day to Day life at Playgroup

### Is it all about play??

Yes and no.....

It may seem that your child is just playing but all Kineton Playgroup staff ensure that the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) principles are followed. These are government standards for learning and development from 0-5 years. There are four themes that underpin daily life at Playgroup. As you will see, as with so many other areas of your child's life, these areas are all linked and overlap.

#### 1. A UNIQUE CHILD

"Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured."

Every child comes from a different background, develops at different rates and needs time to feel safe at Playgroup. Therefore this area will be the initial focus when your child starts at Playgroup. In practical terms all children are encouraged to settle into Playgroup by exploring their physical and social environment at their own rate. A key person will be allocated to get to know you and your child's individual needs (see section about key person).



#### 2. POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

"Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person."



At Playgroup there is a commitment to respecting all relationships and acknowledging children's feelings. For instance, friendships are fun for children but for many children making friends is not always that easy, and friendships change over time.

Staff at Playgroup always support children to play with others and are also aware of the effects outside influences can have such as, being tired, stressed or maybe having to try to communicate in

more than one language and the staff always have time to listen to and get to know your child and what is important to them. There is also always someone who will make time to listen to any parent concerns you may have about your child.

### 3. ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

"The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning."

At Playgroup all children are supported in a safe indoor and outdoor environment. The staff create a warm accepting place for the children to build their confidence so they can explore the indoor and outdoor spaces. To allow for this there is a door from inside to the outside that is always easy for children to go through. All children are encouraged to go outside in all weather with the freedom to explore and be physically active.



### 4. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

"Children develop in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected."

There are 6 areas of learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which are equally important and all are connected. Staff at Playgroup work hard to ensure that each child learns and develops with their own unique interests and abilities. For example in the area of Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy some children may find it easier to learn through indoor songs and games. Other children may use the outdoor play area to learn about distance and measures.

*"Looking at the playgroup website is a great way to keep up to date with recent photos and examples of what the children have been doing."*



## Letters and Sounds

Kineton Playgroup use the letters and sounds programme rooted in the EYFS' principles. This is a flexible programme that continues to the end of Key Stage 1 at school (year 2/ age 7). Playgroup focuses on the first part of this programme which aims to encourage your child's listening and speaking skills.

Initially, general listening skills are developed such as listening for sounds in Forest/Woodland School time, listening for different sounds on computer games or when playing musical instruments; towards listening to words in stories and nursery rhymes and listening to instructions. At the same time your child's vocabulary is being developed through new experiences during their play, eg putting your hands in a bowl of cold spaghetti highlights lots of new describing words "squishy, slimy" or learning the name of a new fruit at snack time "pomegranate, pineapple". Playgroup will also introduce the idea that words are made up of sounds and sounds can be represented by written letters, eg Whose name starts with a "mmm"? As your child gets ready for school, planned small group work provides the opportunity for listening and sound and letter work which is appropriate to your child's stage of development. The great thing is that your child will be learning all this through their play and therefore enjoying every minute!!

This section is only a snapshot of how Playgroup works hard behind the scenes to help your child develop and work towards their early learning goals set by the EYFS. If you would like to read the EYFS document in full details can be found at the end of this handbook.

## Trips away from Helen's Place

We try to incorporate as many different experiences as possible during a child's time with us. As well as varied activities and resources available at Helen's Place we are also registered to use the school site as part of our setting. This means using the school hall, the school playgrounds and field, and our Woodland School site. Within this area we maintain Ofsted recommended adult to child ratios.

We also like to visit Kineton village, either as short walks to do things of interest (eg look at the church, buy flowers) or as planned trips (eg to the library). We will always try to let you know in advance about these walks but we do not ask separate permission as this forms part of your parent contract that you will be asked to sign before your child starts at playgroup. You will be given all of this in your welcome pack that you receive with this handbook.

Occasionally we plan more adventurous trips for which we give you more details and ask for separate consent. Over the past few years we have taken the pre school year on a day trip by coach to Mary Arden's House and the younger group on a morning trip to the Jephson Gardens in Leamington Spa. In all these cases we carry out careful risk assessments and ensure we take basic safety equipment with us. On all trips outside the school grounds we have decided under our own policies to have a minimum ratio of one adult to two children. If we are planning a 'big' walk we may therefore ask for parent volunteers to help out. The children (and helpers) enjoy these visits immensely and see them as a huge and grown up treat.

## Lunches

Eating a packed lunch at Playgroup allows the children to establish good eating habits and attitudes towards food as well as being a social occasion to be enjoyed with their friends. We have a Food and Drink Policy, which you are welcome to read at anytime. At Playgroup we aim to support your child's nutritional well-being and promote healthy eating. Therefore all children are encouraged to bring a healthy lunch. When you arrive in the morning please put your child's lunch box in the lunchbox trolley. After lunch the trolley will be put outside the front door for collection.

Some useful notes:

- Lunchtime is only 45 minutes long so it worth remembering not to pack too much food and ensure that the children are able to open all packaging.
- Do not put sweets, chocolates or biscuits in your child's packed lunch. As well as not encouraging healthy eating, it will only make the other children (and staff) jealous!
- Please bring drinks in containers that can be refilled not in cartons as this can easily spill and cause distress for the children.
- It is a good idea to put a cool pack in the lunchbox, we have no facilities for refrigerated storage. Keep ingredients in the fridge at home until you are ready to leave. You could freeze a drink to put in the lunchbox and keep everything cool. We do add freezer blocks to the lunch box trolley.
- Bring your child's lunch in a lunch box or other suitable container labelled clearly with their name.
- Please do not include food with nuts in, even if your children are not allergic themselves. We do not allow children to share or swap food with one another so we can protect the children who do have food allergies, but some children can react to the smell of nuts.
- Crusts around sandwiches just lead to waste. If your child does not eat crusts just cut them off! This is a battle you will not win - it's better for children to eat a good lunch rather than a bite from the middle of a sandwich.

For anyone who is struggling for inspiration of what to put in their lunch boxes here are a few ideas on some healthy packed lunches:

- A sandwich with a healthy filling or a healthy carbohydrate alternative such as wraps, pitta, bagel, crackers, rice or pasta salad.
- Breadsticks and vegetable sticks with a dip
- One serving of dairy, eg yoghurt, fromage frais, cheese - please put in your own spoon.
- A piece of fruit
- A portion of dried fruit.

*"Lunchboxes - peel the satsumas as you put them in the lunchbox - saves lots of mess! Also, put a square of kitchen roll in the box so they can wipe their mouth and fingers as they need to and it gets them used to looking after themselves."*

## **Show and tell basket**

During each session there is some whole group time, following the register, where children are encouraged to share their news or something that they have brought from home and put into the show basket. Playgroup staff are really interested in what the children have to say about what they have brought in and it is a great way for the staff to learn about their interests away from Playgroup. It really doesn't matter if your child insists on bringing the same item in each time, it still allows their confidence to grow as they want to say more and more about it each time. Items range from their favourite toy / doll, a picture they have drawn, a photo or ticket from somewhere they have been or even a feather they found on the way to Playgroup! Bring small items that fit in the basket - larger items by appointment only please! Not everyone can have a turn every day, but please bring special items back again.

*"In the early days of Playgroup my son got upset at home as he didn't want to be left on his own at Playgroup. Focusing on what toy or book he could take to show and tell really helped him feel more secure about being left."*

*"Playgroup are always interested in anything ... the little bits of paper, badges and leaves ... they are all important to a 2, 3 or 4 year old! It is useful to put very small items in a labelled bag so they don't go missing."*

## **Outdoor learning at our Woodland School**

Woodland School, sometimes called Forest School, is a national initiative. Our Woodland School is based around a wooded outdoor space within the primary school grounds. Children visit once or twice a week in small groups to experience this, led by our experienced and qualified staff. It offers a range of experiences that increase independence, co-operation and team work. It generates feelings of freedom and both physical and mental well being. Please ask if you would like to come and see this session in action. Playgroup provide waterproof clothing to go over your child's own clothes, but it is advisable, particularly in the colder months, to provide your child with a warm coat, warm hat, gloves and a pair of wellington boots. This is an experience that takes place throughout the year - the changing of the seasons is one of the great things they can observe. You will be informed when your child will be going - please check the noticeboard.

*"Give your child two pairs of socks to put on when they are wearing wellies - they are waterproof but not very warm!"*

## **Wow sheets**

Playgroup staff recognise the importance of close home / Playgroup contact. They encourage parents and children to celebrate and share their successes and experiences at home as well as at Playgroup. Wow sheets, and similar types of notes, are designed to be completed at home and then displayed at Playgroup during show and tell, before being added to your child's Learning Journal. These celebrate things your child has achieved that they are proud of eg riding a bicycle without stabilisers,

learning to swim with armbands, writing their own name etc. Photos, certificates and other rewards are also great things for your child to share and really boost their self-esteem as well as building up a complete picture of their development. Playgroup can take copies or photos and return the original to you.

### **Transition to primary school**

Moving on to primary school happens before you know it! In Warwickshire your child can start primary school in reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. You will need to apply for a school place in the previous year - we will remind you of the dates as they come up. We have close links with many of the local primary schools and try to help children get ready for their move as much as we can. In the summer term before starting primary school we take children going to Kineton on several visits to the reception class at Kineton for them to get to know their future teachers and class room environment. Teachers from other schools are invited to meet their future pupils at Helen's Place. The schools themselves arrange induction programmes in the summer term.

We also take children to the primary school for lunch times during one week in the second half of the summer term. This can be 'hot dinners' (for which there is a small charge) or packed lunches.

In addition we have various activities during the year which, while fun in themselves, help children prepare for school in the future:

- visits to the Key Stage 1 adventure playground;
- story time, music and PE in the school hall;
- tennis and ball skills on the Key Stage 2 playground;
- rehearsing and performing a Christmas play in the school hall.

At the end of your child's time at Playgroup we are also required by Warwickshire County Council to prepare a 'Transfer Profile' to pass on to the school. You will be invited to read and comment on this document. It forms one of the bases to help your child's teacher get to know them when they start school.

*"Visiting primary school in preparation for starting big school really helps them to settle quickly when they start for real."*

### **Playgroup swimming**

Kineton Primary School kindly allow Playgroup to use the open air swimming pool in their grounds for an hour a week in the summer term. This is not part of a Playgroup session. Members of Playgroup staff do not take the children swimming but simply provide First Aid and safety supervision for you to take your own children. The pool is 90cm deep and heated, there are basic changing facilities and a toilet but no shower. You must be in the pool with your child at all times - a maximum of two children per adult. We ask for a donation (£1 per person is suggested) to pass on to the school as a contribution towards running costs. This is a lovely social activity to share with your children and other parents (or grandparents!), especially if the sun shines.

## Headlice

Headlice (the insects) and nits (the eggs) will be a fact of your child's life in education and community settings from pre-school to secondary school. This is the basic and graphic guide to nits and lice - and will probably make your head itch as you read it. We hope it is useful too.

Nits can be mistaken for grains of sand and lice look a little like ants. Nits stick to the hair shaft at the scalp; shiny white eggs are unhatched, grey/black eggs have already hatched. The colour of lice can vary, depending on your child's hair colour. Lice need warmth, quiet and blood to survive. They move from head to head on prolonged close contact. One adult louse can lay hundreds of eggs, usually at night. Favourite sites are at the back of the neck and around the ears. Lice feed by sucking blood, again usually at night. They will not harm your child, although can make skin conditions such as eczema worse. However the blood sucking will make your child's head itch, disturb their sleep and generally make them feel grumpy - or lousy!

If any nits or lice are spotted in a child's hair we will tell you, their parent, at the end of the session. We will also put up a general sign at Playgroup warning everyone to check their child's hair AND THEIR OWN HAIR. You can buy treatments over the counter - if you do this please speak to the pharmacist first to see which treatment is currently recommended locally. There are treatments available specifically for children who suffer from eczema or asthma. In any case you will need to wet comb the hair to remove all nits and lice, even if dead. It is helpful to develop a habit of checking hair once a week by wet combing.

'Wet combing' means going through the hair with a nit comb ('a fine tooth comb') from scalp to end, section by section. First wash the hair. Cover with conditioner and comb through with an ordinary comb. Then start again with a nit comb. Look at the comb and wipe it clean after each stroke. This should take about 5 to 10 minutes, depending on your child's hair and cooperation. If nothing is found, rinse out the conditioner and dry as normal. If you do find anything, rinse out and keep combing until you no longer find anything or until you are both fed up - a favourite DVD is a useful extra at this point. This should take half an hour or more. You will need to repeat this every couple of days for at least two weeks, until you keep finding nothing at all, to make sure you have caught all the babies. People can sometimes think their child has had repeat visits by lice but in fact have just missed one louse the first time round, which then repopulates the entire head.

Finally, remember an old wives' saying - 'if you break their legs they can't lay eggs' - make the life of a louse difficult by regular combing and brushing, and by wet combing once a week!

*"Headlice - a great book to have to hand is 'Topsy and Tim get Headlice', explains it all perfectly and set in a playgroup setting!"*

## **Keeping up to date**

Various methods are used to communicate information to parents, including notice boards which are updated weekly, regular newsletters and letters which are either passed on via the children's going home folder or are sent by e mail.

## **Getting Involved**

You are the most important influence in your child's life, therefore being involved in Playgroup can make a real difference to your child's experience there. The staff can link in what you've told them about your child to play based activities at Playgroup and vice versa you can find out what new experiences your child enjoys whilst they are here and build on them at home.

You can get involved in many ways, big or small. ....

## **Offering to be a rota helper**

Once your child has had a chance to settle into Playgroup (usually about a half a term), you will be given a slip to fill in to ask when you are available to help out for the following half term. This means being available one morning or afternoon a half term to be rota helper. If you have other commitments and have to specify a date to help out in order to organise childcare or leave from work please write this on your slip and it can be accommodated. If you are unable to help out please say so on your slip. A list of rota duties can be found in the Playgroup kitchen, it involves a mixture of kitchen jobs including making snacks for the children and also the chance to see your child during their play and registration time. This is a lovely opportunity to see how your child is growing, what they are learning and with whom they are building friendships.

You are welcome to bring younger siblings along when you are on rota, although they will remain your responsibility at all times. Please refer to the rota letters sent to you every half term for all rules and regulations whilst you are rota helper.

*"Being a rota helper helped my son settle into Playgroup as he saw me as part of Playgroup and always looked forward to the next time mummy was helping out"*

## **Management Board**

The Management Board is the equivalent of the Governing Body in a school. If you have a few hours a month spare and would like to get more involved in the overall running of Playgroup then please consider joining the board of the management committee. The Board meets once a month. This is a group of like minded people who act as directors of Kineton Playgroup Limited. The Board is ultimately responsible for managing Playgroup and after school club so it's important that we work well as a team to support both the staff and children in our care. There are serious issues to discuss and decisions to make as well as fund raising to co-ordinate. All Board members would agree that the meetings can be interesting and sometimes controversial but ultimately they prove to be a positive experience where we have

had the opportunity to meet new friends and gain skills and confidence to operate once more in a business environment.

New Board members, and volunteers to help at specific events, are always welcome - please come and talk to us if you are interested. If you're not sure who we are ask a member of staff or look for our photos next to the notice board in the cloakroom.

### **Playgroup Enterprise Activities (PEAs)**

PEAs focus on fundraising activities for Playgroup funds and are our equivalent of a school's PTA or Friends. Please ask at the office if you interested in getting involved. As well as joining PEAs, help is always welcome at individual events or in other ways.

*"If you have not got the time to commit to monthly meetings, volunteering to help behind the scenes at a fundraising event can be a great way to meet new people."*

### **Coming along to gardening/maintenance days**

About twice a year a gardening and/or maintenance day is advertised. These are fun days that you and your children can attend to ensure that Playgroup's buildings, gardens and woodland school area continue to be maintained to a high and safe standard for your children's day to day enjoyment. Coffee and biscuits are never far away!

### **Baking for fundraising events**

Throughout the year members of the board organize fundraising events, such as table top sales, new to you sales, quiz nights and Christmas Fayres. We often sell biscuits and cakes at these events so if you enjoy baking please offer a contribution.

### **Sewing**

If sewing is your skill, please let Carol know as Playgroup often need to repair dressing up clothes and/or make costumes for the Christmas play.

### **Adult and community learning**

From time to time we arrange courses of interest for parents and grandparents, such as First Aid or Early Numeracy or Literacy. In some cases we can provide crèche places for children in order for adults to attend these courses. Courses are dependent on accessing funding and availability of course tutors.

### **Liaison with other professionals**

Playgroup staff have close contact with a range of external professionals and agencies, including Speech and Language Therapists. If you have any concerns about your child's development, please chat to Carol - the manager, or another member of staff who will be able to advise you of any extra support that may be needed.

## **Other information**

We keep a lot of information about primary schools, out of school activities, holiday clubs, pre-school/ toddler groups, special activities, local events and generally useful information. This is available on the notice boards and at the various parent information points. Please help yourself to leaflets and cards. If you want to know something that you can't find, please ask.

## **Illness**

If your child becomes ill during a playgroup session we will keep them as happy and comfortable as we can (they often either cuddle up and fall asleep and / or vomit!) We will contact you to collect them as soon as you can. If we cannot get hold of you, we will try the emergency contact numbers you have given us. Please make sure we have up to date contact numbers. Children and staff who become ill from sickness or diarrhoea must not attend for a minimum period of 48 hours from the last episode of the illness - ie if sick at 7.30am on a Monday morning, not back until the Wednesday morning.

Ofsted and the Local Health Authority are notified of any infectious diseases which a qualified medical person considers notifiable such as measles. Parents are notified of both notifiable and any other infectious or contagious diseases or conditions like chicken pox on the notice board in the Playgroup cloakroom.

## **The safety of your child**

The safety and security of your child are of the utmost importance to us. There are a number of procedures in place to ensure their safety eg locking gates at entrances to the wider school premises and Playgroup garden, a monitored door with a security code at the main Playgroup entrance and exit, a signing in and out system for all children, and a password system allowing children to be collected only by a parent or other authorised person. In addition all staff and board members are subject to enhanced CRB checks. We work closely with external agencies that can support you and your child in different ways. Every child's wellbeing is paramount and we will uphold our responsibility and take action in your child's best interest if we have cause for concern.

## **Medication**

If your child has prescribed drugs these are stored in their original containers and kept in a locked medication cupboard. Parents must give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The administration is recorded accurately and parents sign the Medication Record Book to acknowledge the administration of a medicine. If the administration of prescribed medication requires medical knowledge, individual training is provided for the relevant member of staff by a health professional. Non-prescribed medicine such as Calpol will not be administered. We can also use prescribed emollient cream for eczema.

## **Allergies**

Please inform the Playgroup staff if your child has a particular food / dietary allergy so their needs can be met.

## **Accidents**

All members of playgroup staff have appropriate first aid training. If your child has a minor accident they will be looked after and you will be asked to read and sign the accident form when you collect your child. Your child's name will be highlighted on the signing out register. If your child falls ill or has a major accident and it becomes necessary to seek help, we will contact the emergency services. In that situation we will contact you immediately, but will always call an ambulance first.

## **Kineton Breakfast and After School Club**

Kineton Playgroup also run a breakfast and after school club at Helen's Place for children aged 3 to 11. Breakfast club runs from 8am until 9am. A selection of breakfast foods are available. After School Club runs from 3pm until 6pm (children can be booked in until 5pm or 6pm). A substantial snack is provided and many activities are available. There are a wide range of resources and activities including planned activities such as paper making and cooking. All sessions need to be booked in advance. For full details of the fee structure, please ask in the office.

## **Fees**

From the start of the term after their third birthday, your child is eligible for Nursery Education Funding (NEF) - term cut off dates are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August in each year. Funding for up to 15 hours (equivalent to 5 sessions) per week of registered regular morning or afternoon playgroup sessions for 38 weeks in the year may be claimed under the NEF scheme. You must pay for any other sessions yourself. Breakfast Club and KASC fees are not included in this funding and must be paid separately. Playgroup bills are issued at the start of every half term and fees are payable in advance. Fees may be paid weekly, monthly or half-termly, or by using a budget plan. Please notify us within 7 days of which option you would prefer. Make any cheques payable to Kineton Playgroup Ltd or pay direct to our bank account, HSBC sort code 40-43-19, account number 61799177, using your child's name as a reference. We would prefer direct payment where possible; the minimum payment by cheque is now £10.00. You can also pay in cash or by standing order. Payment by cheque or cash should be placed in an envelope marked clearly with the amount and your child's name, and then handed to the office. We also accept childcare vouchers, which are a tax efficient method available through your employer. Please ask for details.

If you are unable to afford full fees for any reason, temporarily or permanently, please don't just ignore the issue. Speak to the Manager immediately. Support with fees, and fee waives in some cases, are available.

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### **Additional Information:**

1. The Early Years Foundation Stage: setting the Standards for Learning, Development and Care for children from birth to five. (Ref: 00261-2008PCK-EN)
  2. Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics (Ref:00281-2007FLR-EN)
  3. It's child's play: Early Years Foundation Stage (Ref:00640-2008LEF-EN)
- (All of the above publications can be obtained from 'The department for Children, schools and Families' Tel: 0845 60 222 60 or via website [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications) or downloaded from [www.standards.dcf.gov.uk/eyfs](http://www.standards.dcf.gov.uk/eyfs)) or [www.direct.gov.uk/EYFS](http://www.direct.gov.uk/EYFS))



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**Kineton Playgroup Ltd is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.**