

Welcome to Brookside pre-school



**Gatley Scout Hut, Gatley Hill off Church Road,
Gatley, SK8 4EY**

Tel: 0161 491 5531 or 07762087821

E-mail: info@brooksidepreschool.co.uk

Charity No. 1035696, Ofsted No. 307121



Dear Parents, Carers and Families,

On behalf of all the staff at Brookside pre-school I would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your child.

Starting pre-school is a very exciting and important stage in your child's life and we hope that your child will enjoy their time with us. Please be assured that all the staff here want the very best for your child and we understand that to enable them to reach their full potential, they must feel happy, valued, safe and secure and this is always our aim.

Starting pre-school can be an anxious time for both children and their parents/carers. I would like to reassure you that this is completely understandable and that we will do our utmost to make this transition as easy as possible for you and your child. The staff here at Brookside pre-school are very experienced in helping children settle. We will ensure that we know all about your child's interests and care needs before they are left in our care. Every child is unique, they will each adjust to this new environment in their own way. If we feel that your child is having difficulty settling with us, we will contact you and between us work out how best to help them make this adjustment. Working in partnership with parents and carers is very important to us and provides the best outcomes for your child.

Brookside warmly welcomes children from a diverse background with a range of additional needs. If you feel that your child will require additional support for special educational needs, disability or medical needs please discuss this with the management team prior to your child's start date. This information is required to ensure that we can cater for your child's needs and plan any adaptations to our environment or practice. Should you have any queries, concerns or information you feel may be relevant, please do not hesitate to speak to myself or a member of our team.

We are very much looking forward to getting to know you and your child.

Kind Regards,

Michelle Hughes
Brookside Pre-school Manager, and on behalf of the pre-school Team

MEMBERS OF STAFF AT BROOKSIDE PRE-SCHOOL

Manager – Michelle Hughes
BA (hons) Early Childhood Studies
Btec National Diploma Early Childhood Studies
Level 3 Forest School Leader

Deputy Manager: Leanne Moriarty
NVQ Level 3 Children's and Young People's Workforce
Level 4 Early Years advanced Teaching
Level 3 Forest School Leader

Pre-school Practitioner: Emma Forbes
NVQ Level 3 Home Based childcare
Level 3 Forest School Leader

Pre-school Practitioner: Holly McDonald (Maternity leave from March 2024)
BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies

Pre-school Practitioner: Saima Afzal (Maternity cover from March 2024)
NVQ Level 2 Childcare
BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies – currently studying

Pre-school Assistant: Kate Lowe
Preschool ballet teacher

Pre-school Assistant: Kat Turnbull
NVQ Level 3 – Playwork & Early Years

Pre-school Assistant: Leoni Fielding
Level 2 teaching assistant

BROOKSIDE PRE-SCHOOL OPENING HOURS AND FEES

Brookside is a pre-school for children from the age of 2 years old up to when they start Reception at school (4yrs old). We follow Stockport MBC term times and provide care over 38 weeks per year.

Our session options are as follows:

Morning: 9am to 12pm	(£18 per session) (3 hrs per session)
Afternoon: 12:15pm to 3:15pm	(£18 per session) (3 hrs per session)
All Day (extended): 9am to 3:15pm	(£37.50 per session) (6.15 hrs per session)
All Day (funded): 9am to 3:00pm	(£36 per session) (6 hrs per session)
Breakfast Club: 8:30am to 9am	(£5 per day)

Please note ** if you choose for your child to attend an Extended full day and you use government funding you may be charged £1.50 for the extra 15 minutes per day depending on how many hours your child attends per week.

Snack and consumables fees are **£1 per half session** which will be included in your invoice each half term. A child attending a full day session will be charged for a morning and afternoon snack. Snack fees are voluntary, if you feel that you are unable to pay for snack then please discuss this with the manager.

We do not provide lunch, therefore, children who will be attending preschool all day must bring their own packed lunch.

** Please note fees are reviewed annually, any changes will be communicated to parents and will usually take effect from April**

EARLY YEARS FUNDING

We allow children to use Government funding towards the cost of preschool fees.

You can check your eligibility via www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

All eligible children become eligible for 15 hours of free childcare per week at the start of the term after their third birthday. These funding dates are set by the Department for Education as follows:

A child born between:	is eligible for a free place from:
1 April and 31 August	1 September following their third birthday
1 September and 31 December	1 January following their third birthday
1 January and 31 March	1 April following their third birthday

Please contact the pre-school if you would like some assistance in claiming your early years entitlement funding.

PRIVATE/FEE PAYING

If your child attends pre-school and does not qualify for early years funding as set out above, you will need to pay fees for their sessions. The sessional and full day fees at the pre-school are set out on page 3.

Parents/carers' are given an invoice at the beginning of each half-term with a breakdown of fees for the half term ahead. Fees are due to be paid in full within 2 weeks of the invoice date however, parents can discuss with the manager if they would like to arrange a payment plan. All invoices must be paid in full before the end of each half term.

- The Manager reserves the right to refuse the child's attendance until outstanding fees are paid.
- Preferred method of payment is through bank transfer (clearly referenced with your child's full name/ initial and surname. Small amounts of fees such as snack money can be paid in cash.
- Any unpaid fees at the End of each half-term may incur a 10% interest charge.
- Fees and snack charges are payable regardless of children's absence for sickness or holidays.
- Unfortunately, we are unable swap children's days for another to make up for absence due to our booking patterns and ratios.
- One off additional sessions can be booked at the managers discretion subject to availability, Parents will be invoiced accordingly.
- Brookside Pre-school accepts a range of Tax-free childcare vouchers. If you would like to use vouchers, please ask the management team for more information.

SNACKS AND LUNCHES

At Brookside Pre-School, we ask parents/carers to contribute towards our snack time fund, the cost is £1 per 3-hour session which will be invoiced at the start of each half-term.

We aim to offer a wide variety of snacks and encourage children to try new and healthy foods. Our snack menu includes:

Cereals such as Weetabix or Cheerios.

Wholemeal toast, muffins, crumpets, pancakes

Natural yogurt

Breadsticks, rice cakes, crackers

As well as a selection of seasonal fresh fruit/veg and a choice of water or milk to drink.

*Water is freely available to all children during the session.

To support children's independence skills and enjoyment of a social snack time with others, we encourage children to be actively included in preparing and serving their own snack.

Children with allergies will be offered a similar alternative for example Dairy free milk/yogurts.

We do not provide lunch for children. Therefore, we ask parents to send children who are attending all day sessions, a healthy packed lunch and a drink. Please ensure that lunch boxes/bags are clearly labelled with your child's name.

We promote healthy eating and as such, we request that parents also support this by sending a healthy well-balanced packed lunch for their child.

According to NHS choices a balanced lunchbox should contain:

Starchy foods like bread, rice, potatoes or pasta

Protein foods like meat, fish, eggs or beans

A dairy item, like cheese or yogurt

Vegetables or salad and a portion of fruit
For lunchbox ideas, please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes>

Please note:

- Grapes must be cut in half lengthways to minimise the risk of choking
- Sweets and chocolate bars are not permitted due to the lack of nutritional value
- You may send a carton/container of sugar free juice with your child's lunch
- we cannot heat food. However, you are welcome to send warm in a thermos flask/container.
- Children are not permitted to swap or share their food due to specific dietary requirements of some children.
- We request that parents/carers **do not provide NUTS** or nut contents in their child's lunch due to the high risk of nut allergies amongst young children. This includes foods such as Nutella spread and peanut butter.

If you require additional information about healthy eating, the following websites might be of use:

www.nutrition.org.uk

www.eatwell.gov.uk

www.foodafactoflife.org.uk

CURRICULUM

At Brookside children are offered a range of rich learning experiences which is very much led by the children's interests, nature and the outdoor environment. Our children benefit from a good balance of free-play, group learning and some adult-led play-based activities. We are very passionate about ensuring that children have a happy and fun introduction to their education and our focus is to build strong, resilient children who are confident and eager to explore and learn.

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. It is the aim of Brookside pre-school to extend children's development by providing high quality care and stimulating learning opportunities which meet and support children's current age and stage of development. We recognise the importance of giving children time to explore, experiment and embed their knowledge and skills before moving forward with next steps in learning.

The curriculum, which we follow, is The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Guidelines (DFES 2024); this is a play-based curriculum for children from birth to age five. There are 7 areas that are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are tailored to your child's needs and follow their interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside. Children typically develop the 3 prime areas first. These are:

Communication and language

Physical development

Personal, social and emotional development

These prime areas are the foundations to support your child's healthy development and future learning. As children grow and become secure within the prime areas, they will be supported in developing skills in 4 specific areas. These are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the world

Expressive arts and design

Further information about the EYFS can be found in our website, or you can request a paper copy from the pre-school or via the gov.uk website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>)

We have a varied age range and level of need within our pre-school; however, our staff team are experienced in adapting learning opportunities to support children's individual needs. We strive to ensure that every child has the opportunity to fulfil their full potential. We recognise that our 2-year olds require a different type of learning to many of our 4-year olds, we target this with separate key group times. For example, our youngest children might listen to stories and whilst our older children play a simple number board game.

OUTINGS AND WALKS

Outdoor learning is a huge part of our learning ethos. Our children benefit from lots of adventures out in the woods and the local community. We ensure that children have suitable clothing to allow them to be outdoors in all weather conditions. As outdoor learning is such a large contribution to our learning ethos, we ask for all parents to give signed permission for their child to go out on spontaneous local walks. If you are not comfortable with your child being outdoors in all weather conditions and allowing them to go out on local walks, then it may be worth discussing this with the pre-school manager before considering if Brookside is the best choice of provision for your child. We aim to be inclusive of all children and would need all staff to attend outings to maintain our staff ratios.

We have vigilant safety procedures during our walks including-

- Children wearing high visibility vests
- Higher staff to child ratio
- Reins for younger children and group rein to be used near roads
- Risk assessments for local walks
- First aid kits are taken on walks
- Children are taught strict safety boundaries and procedures.

FOREST SCHOOL

We aim to offer all children an opportunity to be involved in our forest school sessions at some point during their time with us. We aim to offer children the opportunity to complete at least one 6-week block of Forest school sessions once they reach the age of 3 years old. Forest school will be offered to children in age order.

The aim of the forest school ethos is to support children's holistic development with a strong focus on their emotional development, health, and wellbeing. Forest school connects children with the natural environment, giving them the freedom to discover, play, explore and learn.

Forest school is not a one-off trip to the woods, forest school is a programme which allows children to develop over a period of time, practice and embed their knowledge/skills and build relationships with others.

KEY PERSON

The pre-school operates a Key Person system. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom they are particularly responsible. Your child's Key Person will work with you to make sure that the pre-school understands your children's interests and meets the learning and development needs of your child. When your child first starts at Brookside Pre-school, the Key Person will help you and your child become familiar with the setting and help your child to settle. The keyperson will take responsibility for tracking your child's development, planning learning opportunities to support your child's individual learning needs and will communicate with parents/carers about children's progress. Parents are welcome to chat and share any information regarding their child with their child's key person during drop off and collection times.

TRANSITION FROM HOME TO PRE-SCHOOL

We recognise that starting pre-school can be a difficult time for some children. It's important that this process is planned for and discussed with children and parents. We would like to encourage you to provide as much information about typical family life for you and your child as possible. This will help the staff at the pre-school understand and cater for the needs of your child, during their important settling in period. Your child will be allocated a Key Person who will be your first point of contact and will be the lead member of staff responsible for supporting your child's smooth transition into pre-school life.

SETTLING IN SESSIONS

Each child is unique and there is no set amount of time that children take to adapt to their new environment. We suggest settling in sessions which consist of:

- **One hour stay and play with Parents/Carers**
- **One hour session without Parents/Carers – usually on the child's first day.**

If your child is struggling to settle and not ready to start a full session just yet, you are welcome to leave them for a shorter period of time during their first week. This would be for example an hour within their usual booked session. ****please note - session fee's will not be reduced****

How can you help your child to settle?

We ask that when leaving your child, you say goodbye and let them know that you are leaving and will be coming back. We recommend that when leaving your child, you keep drop off and goodbyes short to avoid a build-up of anxiety for the child.

It is common for children to cry when being dropped off at pre-school and is completely normal for this to continue for many weeks. We appreciate that leaving your child whilst they are crying is upsetting but please be assured that they are usually settled within a few minutes of distraction through play and a supportive adult. We keep in touch with parents during the settling in period and are happy to call or text to re-assure you once your child has settled.

Children are welcome to bring along a comfort toy or blanket whilst they settle, we will later encourage them to put this away in their bag to ensure that their hands are free to explore and play.

Please feel free to keep in touch, especially during your child's first few weeks. We usually invite parents to WhatsApp where we can share updates or pass on general messages. You are welcome to call us if you need to discuss something. Please see our contact details:

Tel: 07762087821

SHARING INFORMATION & CHILDREN'S LEARNING JOURNIES

At Brookside pre-school we use the online learning journey system called *TAPESTRY* to document your child's learning and development while with us. All our staff, including your child's key person use a combination of photos and observations of your child at play to record and monitor their development and progress. These are stored in your child's online learning journey. Families are sent an email which will prompt them to set up a *TAPESTRY* login and password which allows access to your child's learning journey. The system also enables parents and carers to send messages directly to your child's key person and/or manager regarding your child's time at pre-school or significant events or achievements outside pre-school, such as swimming lessons or family holidays. Staff will link their observations to areas of learning and suggest how your child can be supported in their next stage of learning. It is beneficial for parents to read this so that children can be supported at home too and work towards the same goals. There is a great Tapestry App for iPhone and Android making it easier to access notifications and enabling parents to upload photographs straight from their phone/tablet on to Tapestry.

When you first join Tapestry please complete your child's 'All about me' section.

*****please note that we use Tapestry to communicate parent newsletters, messages and events, therefore, it is vital that parents use our Tapestry system. If you have difficulties accessing the internet or our online system, then please discuss this with the manager.**

Once children leave the setting Parents/carers can download, save or print their child's Tapestry Journal.

SAFETY & SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Creating a welcoming, caring and safe environment for all children using our services is of paramount importance to us at Brookside pre-school. We have a strong safeguarding culture with robust procedures and practice to ensure children are shielded against the likelihood of abuse. 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.

- We have Designated People responsible for overseeing child protection within the pre-school.

Designated Person: Leanne Moriarty

Deputy Designated Person: Michelle Hughes

We appropriately supervise staff, volunteers, and visitors to the pre-school

- We have a whistle blowing, and complaints procedure accessible for staff, parents/carers and carers to use as needed.
- We ensure there are always two members of staff on site when children are present.

- The management team are trained in 'safer recruitment' which ensures a vigilant recruitment process. All staff and volunteers are appropriately checked for their suitability to work with children and have an up-to-date DBS check.
- We have strong procedures to ensure that staff are visible during Nappy changing/toilet training

Staff will:

- Ensure that children are only collected by authorised adults.
- Be alert to changes in the child's behaviour, attitude, and personality, which may be cause for concern.
- Have regard for different safeguarding concerns including:

Neglect	Emotional Abuse
Physical Abuse	Sexual Abuse
- Report any concerns they have about a child or conduct of an adult to the setting's designated person for child protection.
- Record any accidents and injuries a child suffers in or out of the setting.

Parents and Carers are asked to:

- Tell staff when arriving at Pre-school about any injuries their child has had at home and complete an existing injury form.
- Inform staff in writing if an adult other than those already authorised is going to collect their child.
- Please note that we are only able to release children into the care of people aged 18 or over unless they are the parent or legal guardian.
- Inform staff if they have any concerns regarding their child's welfare.

Children will participate in activities regarding personal care and safety appropriate to their age and stage of development. This is encouraged by Every Child Matters outcome of "staying safe" as well as by the EYFS.

If a concern is raised depending on the nature of the concern and perceived risk to the child, concerns may be discussed with the parent. If the designated person and/or designated deputy feels this is not appropriate they may access support and guidance from other professionals as required.

Confidentiality will be maintained by involving staff members on a need-to-know basis.

Accident record sheets are kept in the pre-school. Any accidents are documented using the pre-school template forms and provided to parents/carers to review on collection of their child.

We have several safeguarding policies; the information above is a summary of the main elements of these. Parents/carers can access the Pre-school policies and procedures, including our safeguarding procedure via our website www.brooksidepreschool.co.uk

CHILDREN'S CARE NEEDS

Where a child requires medication (for example, for asthma), parents/carers must inform the pre-school. Parents/carers are asked to bring their child's medication to pre-school and, where necessary, train staff on how to administer their child's medication. The details of each child's medication, appropriate storage conditions, including frequency of dosage and quantity of dose will

be recorded on a pre-school medication form. Occasions when medicines are administered will be documented and signed by the parent and staff member.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES CO-ORDINATOR

Michelle Hughes is the pre-school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENCO) and Leanne Moriarty is the Deputy SENCO. Together they are responsible for working with children and their families, who might require assistance to support each individual child with any additional learning needs that they may have.

If your child is currently having specialist help, we will work with you and the relevant agencies to ensure that you and your child receive all the support we can offer. We are familiar with the workings of the special need's agencies; additional funding and we are used to doing work as laid out in individual education plans set out by the Department of Education.

At Brookside we celebrate children's unique abilities and differences, we support our children to learn about additional needs and how we can be supportive to others. We currently use basic sign language with all children and have a strong focus on promoting early language skills.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

At Brookside pre-school, we believe that children flourish best when their personal, social and emotional needs are met in an environment where there are clear and developmentally age-appropriate expectations. These positive behaviour expectations are reinforced through interactions with staff who are good role models and show children respect and value their individual personalities. The staff of the pre-school aim to support children to develop self-discipline and positive self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement. Positive, caring and polite behaviour are actively encouraged and praised at all times.

To create a positive environment, the children and staff follow simple rules.

- We treat everybody equally
- We understand right from wrong
- We understand the consequences of our actions.
- We listen to and respect other people's opinions and values
- We try to help other people
- We know that we are all special
- We understand and respect the roles of people who may help us
- We respect the culture and beliefs of others

Instances of unwanted behaviour are typically rare, this is particularly so as staff work with children to help them to understand what acceptable behaviour is, and what is not. If a child does behave inappropriately, staff will follow the setting's Positive Behaviour Management Policy to give children consistent support and help children can develop into happy, self-confident, and well-behaved individuals. Parents/carers will be actively involved in all matters relating to their child's behaviour.

TOILETING

Children do not need to be confident in toileting prior to starting Brookside Pre-School. Staff will always assist your child. However, we encourage the children to develop independence in this area when they are feeling more confident, and they can make their needs known.

If your child is not toilet trained, we do ask parents/carers provide nappies/pull-ups and baby wipes for their child's use. We recommend that you keep these in your child's bag and replenish daily. We support children's toilet training by working together with parents and mirroring what the child is doing at home. Parents must provide lots of spare clothing, underwear, and socks during toilet training as well as baby wipes.

We do our best to ensure that children are reminded and taken to the toilet frequently at Pre-school, however, please keep in mind that children may have more accidents at pre-school than at home due to many factors. We would therefore advise that you wait until your child is confident in communicating their need for the toilet/potty and is comfortable using it before introducing this at pre-school.

WHAT WILL MY CHILD WEAR FOR PRE-SCHOOL?

We encourage and recommend that children wear the following uniform;

- Jogging pants/leggings (Black/navy/grey)
- School pinafore dress (Black/navy/grey)
- Brookside logo polo shirt (royal blue – not navy)/ plain royal blue polo shirt
- Brookside logo sweatshirt/cardigan / plain royal blue sweatshirt/cardigan
- Rubber soled slippers or indoor pumps (children to change into these upon arrival)
- Blue school Summer dress

A uniform promotes a sense of identity for the children, as well as protects children's usual clothing from being damaged, We encourage children to wear aprons during messy play; however, they often still manage to get messy!



Our logo uniform is available through an online service. There is the option to purchase t-shirts, jumpers, cardigans, bags and coats. The link to purchase uniform is:

<https://myclothing.com/brookside-pre-school/24844.school>

(Please note, there are 2 colour choices for polo t-shirts – please only order ROYAL BLUE, the other option is for staff use only which is NAVY BLUE)

Children need to wear **indoor slippers** (rubber soled) or plimsoles which are to be kept at pre-school and changed into upon arrival at pre-school.

Children will wear wellies when going outdoors during winter months or rainy days. These need to be provided by parents and preferably kept at preschool.

During the summer months we ask that children have sensible shoes which they can wear when accessing the outdoors. Shoes or trainers with Velcro are ideal as they are easier for children to put them on independently. **Please do not send your child in shoes with laces, particularly**

Converse, Doc Martins or Timberland style boots as these are difficult to put on. Pre-school children are usually unable to tie laces and as I am sure you can imagine, tying 24 pairs of children's shoelaces at the end of the session is very time consuming!

WHAT WILL MY CHILD NEED TO BRING TO PRE-SCHOOL?

We recommend that you send the following items clearly marked with your child's name:

- A labelled bag with plenty of spare clothes for your child in case they get wet or soiled.
- Wellington boots to leave at pre-school to save bringing them each day
- A waterproof coat
- Waterproof trousers or an all-in-one waterproof suit – we highly recommend Lidl for these
- Packed lunch (in labelled lunch bag) if your child is doing an all-day session
- Nappies or pull ups (if needed)
- Baby wipes (including those who are toilet training)
- Any prescription medicine or inhalers your child might need

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Brookside pre-school recognises and values parents/carers as their child's most important educators. We place a strong emphasis on our parent and carer partnerships and feel that these form a foundation in supporting children's ongoing care, learning and development. There are many ways in which parents/carers can take part in the pre-school by:

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs activities, interests and progress with the staff.
- Supporting your child's enjoyment of books by reading or looking through our library books with them.
- Joining in community activities with your child, which is supported by Brookside Pre-School, such as Gatley Festival and other community events.
- Helping the pre-school deliver interesting activities to children by sharing your talents and time with us.
- Joining our "friends of Brookside preschool" parent group to assist with pre-school fundraising activities.

Brookside pre-school is a Registered Charity and is managed by a committee of volunteers. Many of our committee members are parents/carers of children who attend the pre-school. The Committee work very closely with the staff and are responsible for the overall management of the setting to ensure its smooth running. The Committee is the employer of staff and without it, the pre-school would not legally be allowed to open and take care of your child. Fundraising is a crucial part of our success. Therefore, we encourage you to please give as much time, energy and help to the pre-school and its events as you can spare. We also welcome parents to join our committee, if you are interested in joining our management committee, please speak to the Manager, Michelle Hughes, Deputy Manager, Leanne Moriarty, or our committee chairperson Elizabeth Bradbury.