



Registered Charity Number 1155711
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Dear Parents and Carers,

Pre-School re-opens on Monday 7th September! Welcome back to all our returning children and families and a very warm welcome to our new children and families joining pre-school for the first time this year! We plan to make this a fun packed year for you all!



Our COVID-19 Policy and Procedures have been prepared following the latest government guidance - issued on 20 July 2020. The new policy and procedures have been prepared to reduce the risk of infection whilst at pre-school. We are happy to send a copy of the policy to any families who wish to read it, please just let us know. A copy of the policy is in our Parent Information Folder, together with all our other policies and procedures.



We have put together an information video which we hope you will watch and share with your child ahead of their start date or return to Pre-School. This should help everyone to understand what the expectations are and how we intend to apply our new COVID-19 Policy and Procedures. We will send you a link for this tomorrow.

As parents and carers, there are a few things that you can do to help us.

How can you help.

- ✚ Please do not send your child to Pre-School if they have symptoms of infectious illness, particularly a high temperature, new continuous cough, a change, or loss in sense of taste or smell.
- ✚ Only one adult should accompany your child at drop off and collection.
- ✚ Please observe social distancing guidance and make use of the social distancing markers. If you have to wait, please do not congregate in front of our entrance doors to allow others to arrive or leave the building safely.
- ✚ Please be aware that Club Vale are now sharing use of the building, so they may need to move past you when taking children over to the main school or bringing children back in the afternoon. Please allow them to do this safely!
- ✚ Please avoid waiting on site for longer than necessary at pick up and drop off times.

- ✚ Be prepared to leave your child with a member of staff at the external entrance of our building.
- ✚ It would really help us if you could talk to your child positively about the drop off procedures and say goodbye with a smile, even if they become a little sad. Please be assured that we always provide lots of comfort and distraction when children become upset. You can always give us a call for an update.
- ✚ If your child becomes very distressed and you cannot leave; it would really help us if you could move to the garden gate where somebody will meet you.
- ✚ Please make every effort to avoid entering the building (a member of staff will let you know if you need to enter the building).
- ✚ If you need to enter the building, be prepared with your facemask, and use the hand sanitiser in reception.
- ✚ Children will not require a personal bag, or spare clothes unless they are using nappies or have recently started potty training. If they need a bag, please ensure it is as small as possible, as our peg space is extremely limited!
- ✚ To reduce the risk of contamination, please do not put open packets of wipes or nappy sacks in your child's bag. The pre-school will supply of baby wipes but if you would prefer us to use your own, please bring in a new pack which we will name and keep at pre-school. Please do provide nappies!
- ✚ Please make sure all your child's clothing, food bags/boxes and any other items are named.
- ✚ Please ensure that you do not bring any unnecessary personal belongings for your child, or any toys from home.
- ✚ Please send your child to pre-school with a prepared healthy snack in a plastic box which is stored in an insulated bag with a cool pack. A healthy snack might include - breadsticks, rice cakes, apple, pear, banana, dried fruit, cut grapes, berries, cheese. Please do not include any food or cereal bars that contain nuts, as we have children with allergies.
- ✚ If your child is attending Lunch Club, please send your child to pre-school with a healthy lunch in a plastic box which is stored in an insulated bag with a cool pack. If your child is staying for Lunch Club or all day, he/she only needs to bring one insulated bag, but it must contain two boxes of food. Please do not provide food that requires heating, as we are unable to do this.
- ✚ Please ensure we have up to date contact details for you.
- ✚ Be prepared to collect your child if he/she becomes ill at pre-school.
- ✚ Please do not give your child medicines containing paracetamol without informing a member of staff.
- ✚ Please be aware that we are no longer able to let parents/carers or members of the public into the building to use the toilets in the reception area. In addition, parents/carers must not enter the children's toilets in Pre-School.
- ✚ Please can parents communicate, as far as possible, using email or phone calls.

- ✚ Please be aware that there is no parking on the school site for any parent/carer, unless with prior permission in an emergency. The car parks belong to the main school and parents/carers with a blue badge can make an application to the main school office for permission to park.

Start times

Families with children who are also starting infant or junior school may already have staggered start times to adhere to. We are offering flexibility to avoid families waiting on the school site. For our 'morning' children, the Pre-School entrance will be manned between **08:45am and 09:15am** to allow for flexible drop off between these times. Please let us know if you need to drop your child off outside of these times.

Food and drink – Important change regarding snack time at pre-school!

Please ensure that your child's food is stored inside an insulated bag with an ice pack. The purpose of this measure is to ensure that the food boxes inside are kept free from contamination. Further, we do not have sufficient room in the Pre-School fridge to accommodate food boxes. Therefore, food will be stored on our trolley for the duration of the session.

Children attending morning or afternoon sessions only should bring a snack from home in a small insulated bag with a cool pack. Children attending in the morning and staying all day or for lunch club should bring an insulated bag with two boxes – one for their snack and one for their lunch.

Children do not need water bottles or drinks in reusable containers. We will offer a choice of water or milk using a clean cup.

Please ensure that all food items are fully prepared (cut up) and ready for your child to eat.

Until the threat of Covid has passed, we will not be asking families for donations of fruit for the snack table.

Settling in for new starters

Most of our new starters are joining us for afternoon sessions, however, some of this information applies to new starters to our morning sessions too!

If your child is joining afternoon sessions, you will have already received a letter confirming your child's individual start date and the days they are attending. Whilst we re-open on Monday 7th September, not all children will start this week. Please check your letter for your child's start date.

We understand that children may need to hold onto a special blanket, toy, or dummy to help them feel secure when they are away from their families. Although we ask you to avoid bringing in personal belongings; if your child needs to hold onto something when they first start Pre-School that is fine and we would not encourage you to attempt to take it away. Please bring a zip up bag so that we can gradually encourage the children to store their comfort objects safely away during the session.

For the first few weeks we do not expect new starters to leave parents at the main entrance. However, if you feel that your child is happy to leave you then we will support this. We are not expecting miracles!

Drop off procedures for new starters.

We will be operating flexible drop off with the door manned from **12:15 – 1pm**. We will let you into the room in groups of two.

- ✚ Please wear a facemask
- ✚ Please use hand sanitiser which will be available in the reception area.
- ✚ Please do not bring lots of personal belongings, you will not be able to bring them into the room.
- ✚ Please be aware that you must not use your mobile phone in the building or garden, including to take photographs.
- ✚ Please help your child to find his/her name card which will be on the table in the reception area.
- ✚ Please help your child to find a peg to hang their name card on.
- ✚ If possible, please say goodbye to your child and leave him/her with a member of staff once their name card is on the peg.

We understand that leaving your child can be difficult and we will work with you, please talk to a member of staff if you need to. We want this experience to go well for everyone.

Please share the information video with your child to help him/her become familiar and begin to develop an understanding of what will happen.

Often when children start Pre-School, they become upset, either straight away or after a few days or weeks. A common reason children struggle is because they do not understand that you (their trusted and loved adult) will return. Therefore, it can really help if you prepare your child by letting him/her know that you will leave but that you will come back. You could say, mummy/daddy will go, you will play with the toys/in the garden, you will have your snack, you will have a story or sing, then mummy/daddy will come back. At Pre-School we use individual picture cards which illustrate what will happen next. You could do this by making drawings of the sequence.

Tapestry Online Learning Journals

Our practitioners use an online learning journey, known as Tapestry, to record your child's individual progress. We record an average of one observation for your child for each week of any given term, for those children who attend every day. However, as children are all individuals, you may find that some weeks you may see more than one observation, whilst other weeks there are no observations recorded.

As you know your child best, we would welcome your input to Tapestry. The sort of information we would like to see would reflect the interests and learning of your child during their play and interactions outside of pre-school. This enables our practitioners to gain a broader view of your child and develops our ability to support their learning and wellbeing whilst at pre-school.

Please note that Tapestry is your child's individual learning journey and should be used to record information about your child only. Occasionally, other children may appear in photographs linked your child's profile. Please respect the privacy of other children and families

by refraining from downloading photographs to share on social media or any other digital platform.

Please do not use Tapestry to correspond with the pre-school as we cannot respond via this platform. We hope that you will enjoy using Tapestry as much as we do!

Absence

Please ensure that you inform us (preferably before 08.45) if your child is unable to attend Pre-School. If we have not heard from you by 9.15am (morning children) or 12.45pm (afternoon children) then we are legally obliged to contact you and find out where your child is. This obviously takes time out of session, so please do try to remember to call or text us. All absences are recorded to comply with safeguarding regulations.

Buggy Park

We ask that if you are leaving buggies in the buggy park that you fold them up. Child scooters can only be left in the scooter parks (there is a scooter park at the end of the garden area, near the Ashley Road entrance or alternatively next to the site manager's house near to the Infant School). Please do not leave trikes or bikes, unless in the school bike rack. Buggies or pushchairs cannot be brought into the building. Any items left in the buggy park or on the school site are left at your own risk.

Internet Banking is Available When Making Payments to Pre-School

The Pre-School can accept payments made by BACS (internet banking) for fees/contributions/lunch club etc. The details for payments are as follows:

Account Name:	St Martin's Pre-School CIO
Sort Code:	40-52-40
Account Number:	00024891
Reference:	Please use your child's name to reference the payment

Whilst bank transfer is preferred, payments can continue to be made to the Pre-School via childcare vouchers and cheques; please make cheques payable to 'St Martin's Pre-School CIO'. It is not necessary to write separate cheques for different payments, they can all be lumped together providing a breakdown is written on the back of the cheque.

Free Entitlement Funding for Two, Three and Four-Year Olds

Your child will be eligible for funding from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. Nancy will issue you with the relevant form to complete each term. Please remember that a new declaration must be signed each term for all children who are eligible for funding. There are always tight deadlines to meet when submitting our funding applications, so please return your signed declaration forms to Nancy straight away. Some families may also

be entitled to Free Early Education for their two-year-old. More information on this can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/free-early-education>

Birthdays

We are often asked how we celebrate children's birthdays at Pre-School!

We have a large (pretend) cake with real candles, which the children love! We all join to sing Happy Birthday to the birthday child, followed by counting and blowing out the candles. The birthday child receives a card and small gift from Pre-School, which is presented to them by a friend.

Parents sometimes ask if they should bring in cakes or sweets for their child to share with the other children. This is not necessary and can prove difficult as we have several children with allergies who cannot have cakes or sweets. We also have some parents who do not like their child to have cakes or sweets, which has caused a few problems in previous years.

And finally

We realise that there is a lot of information on this newsletter! If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know.

We look forward to seeing you 😊

St Martin's Pre-School Team