



**SHILLINGTON LOWER
PRE-SCHOOL**

**Welcome to
Pixies Class**

Information for Parents

2022-2023

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Staff

Mrs Helen Gibson, Pixies Class Leader

Miss Cassie Meredith, Keyworker, Pixies Class

Mrs Sarah Simkins, Keyworker, Pixies Class

Session Times

Morning session - Monday – Friday - 9.00 am until 12 noon

Afternoon session – 12.00pm – 3.15pm (bringing in lunch or ordering a school dinner from the school)

Full day – 9.00am – 3.15pm

Hours will be reviewed termly

Registration

Before starting in Pixies Class, you are encouraged to come and see the Lower School and pre-school setting with your child. No charge will be made for these visits. These visits are a valuable introduction to the pre-school for both you and your child and are very useful in finding out more about your child and to understand how they may best settle in at Pixies Class. All children are different, and no-one knows your child as well as you do.

Children can start in Pixies Class from 2 years and 9 months old, but this will depend upon the individual child and availability of places. Not all children will be able to settle into pre-school and some, especially very young children, may benefit from more time at home. We can always try again at a later date as a few weeks can make all the difference.

Parents wishing their child to attend Pixies Class need to register with the school office. An



application form needs to be completed and a parent's National Insurance number, child's birth certificate and proof of address are required to register your child. It will then be acknowledged that you have registered an interest - it is NOT an acceptance of a place in Pixies Class.

Admissions

Children are admitted three times a year at the beginning of each term. Places may be offered at other times if they are available.

We have a maximum of 20 places per session. However, if any 2-year-olds attend a session the maximum number of children will be 16 due to statutory adult to child ratios. These are:

- one adult to every 8 children aged 3 or 4, and
- one adult to every 4 children aged 2.

There will be places for a maximum of 4 x 2-year-olds at each session.

Funded places are available for 3–4-year-olds to a total of 15 hours per week (or 30 hours if eligible). Funding for 3 and 4 year olds starts the term after their 3rd birthday.

Funding is also available for 2 year olds subject to eligibility and completion of a funding form at;

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/12/childcare/115/help_with_childcare_costs

Additional sessions can be paid for where places are available and in agreement with the school. Funding is available for 30 hours a week if criteria is met. For details of eligibility and to claim go to <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

A waiting list will be maintained. For further details, please refer to our Pixies Class (Pre-School) Admissions Policy which is available on the school's website.

Home visits may be made to families prior to their first day to allow both the child and staff to get to know each other. We welcome visits to Pixies class and the main school to meet the staff, see the setting and ask any questions you may have.

Pixies Class operates a staggered entry policy where children start pre-school after the main school has re-opened. Parent involvement is encouraged during the early stages, and this helps alleviate any apprehensions a child may have.



Fees

If your child is not eligible for a government funded place, or requires additional hours, you will be invoiced at the start of each half term outlining your funding and payable hours. The current fees are £5.50/hour for 3-4 year olds and £7.50/hour for 2-year-olds. The fees will be reviewed by the Shillington Lower School Governing Board on 1st April each year.

If fees remain unpaid by the due date each half term (usually within 2 weeks of receiving your invoice), your child will be unable to continue to attend until the fees are paid in full.

All booked sessions will be charged regardless of attendance.

Half a term's notice is required of any intention to leave or decrease the number of sessions.

Early Years Curriculum

The DfE Early Years Foundation Stage Framework states that "Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe, and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up." In order to fulfil this goal, we are required to adhere to the statutory DfE EYFS Framework.

The EYFS Framework is based upon four principles

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and developing

Areas of learning and developing



There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter---connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. Within these three areas, the prime areas, are:

- communication and language;
- physical development; and
- personal, social, and emotional development.

In accordance with the statutory EYFS Framework, we must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world; and
- expressive arts and design

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The EYFS also includes the characteristics of effective teaching and learning. Activities are planned with these in mind. They highlight the importance of a child's attitude to learning and their ability to play, explore and think critically about the world around them. The three characteristics are;

- Playing and Exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- Active Learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- Creating and Thinking Critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Positive relationships

We recognise parents are the child's first and foremost educators and we work to develop strong links with them by:

- Inviting parents to visit the setting with their child before they start.
- Carrying out home visits if it is thought appropriate.
- Encouraging parents to settle their child during the first half term and stagger the children in so staff have a better opportunity to get to know each child.
- Issuing regular newsletters.

Vision and Values

The vision of Shillington Lower School is:

Value everyone, Value every chance, Value everyday

We are a Values-Based Education school. Every month we explore a different value e.g., tolerance, unity, hope, respect, honesty. These values are promoted throughout life at Shillington Lower. We encourage parents to talk about our values at home.

Aims – Pixies Class

- To provide a safe and challenging, stimulating, caring, and sharing environment that is sensitive to the needs of all children.
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant, and creative curriculum that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development beyond Pixies Class.
- To use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs and helping each child to progress.
- To enable choice and decision making, fostering independence and self-confidence.

- Work in partnership with parents and carers and value their contributions ensuring that all children, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, religion, home language, family background, learning abilities, gender or ability have the opportunity to reach their potential.
- To provide opportunities whereby children experience a challenging and enjoyable programme of learning and development.
- To provide experiences for all children, whatever their needs.

Safeguarding

We are committed to the safety of all our pupils and make positive steps to ensure we actively promote and adhere to safeguarding principles and policies.

Copies of school policies are available on the school website or from the school office.



Transition to the Main School

Parents and carers need to be aware that attending Pixies Class does not automatically guarantee admission into Shillington Lower School. You need to apply for a place for your child into the main school through Central Bedfordshire Council admissions. This can normally be done during the autumn term in the year before they are due to start school. We have an annual open morning in school to enable you to tour the school for years Reception to Year 4.

We have arrangements in place to make the transition from Pixies to Reception class as seamless as possible.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Absences

It is not a legal requirement for children to attend pre-school, but we do ask that you inform us of any planned absences. Unfortunately, we cannot provide any refund for paid for sessions if they are missed.

What do I do if my child is sick?

If your child is absent from Pixies Class because of illness, let us know by phone [01462 711637](tel:01462711637) as soon as possible, preferably by 9.30 a.m. on their first day of absence.

Where a child is absent because of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, s/he cannot return to Pixies Class until 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting/diarrhoea.



Getting to School

Walking

We actively encourage parents to walk their child to school. Not only is this good exercise, it also reduces the number of vehicles on the road.

Bicycles & Scooters

We welcome and encourage children to cycle or scooter to school but would ask that parents/carers accompany their child who cycle/scooter to school. We have bicycle racks available inside the front gate although we do not accept responsibility for bicycles left at school.

Car Parking

If you need to drive, then only park in the car park at the top of Greenfields. Using the roads near to the school creates a hazard and a potential for injury and accident.

Break time Snacks

A healthy snack of fruit or vegetables and milk or water will be offered to the children during their first session of the day. If your child attends a full day session, please provide a healthy snack (fruit or vegetable) for their second session of the day.

Water Bottles

To encourage children to drink water during the session, they should bring in a named water bottle. Bottles can also be purchased from the school office.

School meals

Children staying all day can order a school meal which costs £2.30 per day. Our school meals are prepared, cooked, and served on the premises by our in-house catering team. We constantly strive to source and provide the highest quality of ingredients available. Menus are served each term on a three-week basis, which means children have a chance to try out a variety of new foods, as well as dishes from other parts of the world, such as chicken tikka, enchiladas, and pizza. All parents will receive a copy of the menu plan, so they can see what is on offer each week.

Whilst certain allergies and special diets can be catered for, we would recommend that parents discuss their child's specific requirements with Mrs Kelly Cross (our Medical Co-ordinator).

Packed Lunch

If you prefer you can provide your child with a packed lunch. All containers must be unbreakable and clearly marked with child's name. We provide all children with a drink; therefore, you do not need to include a drink in your child's packed lunch.

We request that children do not have any nuts in their lunchbox including peanut butter or chocolate spread which may contain nuts.

We do not require school meals to be ordered in advance, your child can let us know in the morning if they require a hot meal or if they have brought a packed lunch with them.

Toileting

To help your child use the toilet please make sure they are wearing things that are not difficult to get out of. We will help your child and encourage them to use the toilet on their own when they are ready. We know accidents do happen so please send your child in with a change of clothes in a named bag.

If your child is wearing a nappy, we have procedures in place for your child's personal care and can discuss these with you on your visit.



Valuables and Toys

We ask that children do not bring money, jewellery, or toys (unless requested) into school. Staff and Central Bedfordshire County Council cannot be held responsible for the loss of, or damage to, personal property.



Uniform

We want children in Pixies Class children to feel part of the main school and encourage that they wear a red sweatshirt with or without the school logo. They can choose what to wear on the bottom, including regular school uniform if they wish. Our uniform supplier for is My Clothing and can be purchased online at; <https://myclothing.com/pre-school/21093.school>

Long hair must be tied back and out of the way. Appropriate, comfortable, and practical footwear should be worn. Wellies are very useful should we venture outside – please send these in to leave in Pixies Class.

Jewellery

For health and safety reasons, only stud earrings may be worn. Again, for safety, rings, bracelets, chains, and necklaces should be left at home.

Communication with Staff

The staff and governors hope that all the time your child spends with us will be happy and purposeful. However, if you have any concerns regarding your child or any aspect of Pixies class life, please discuss these with the staff, in the first instance.

The majority of issues can be resolved in this way but if a parent/carer feels dissatisfied by the outcome of the discussion or unable to discuss the issue with the Pixies class staff, an appointment should be made to talk to Mrs Young the Head of School. If parents feel these discussions have not resolved the issue satisfactorily, they should submit a formal, written complaint to the Headteacher. If following further action and discussion parents feel the issue is unresolved, they may inform the Head teacher and submit a formal written complaint to the Chair of Governors.

Health Matters

Accidents and Sickness whilst at School

If a child has a serious accident while at school every effort will be made to inform parents immediately and, if necessary, arrangements will be made to take the child to hospital. Minor cuts and bruises will be dealt with in school and several members of staff are trained in first aid. If a child becomes unwell



during the school day, parents/carers will be notified and asked to collect the child.

The local authority's recommended procedure for first aid is to simply wash and, if necessary, cover cuts and grazes. It is vital for parents to keep the school informed of any changes in medical conditions and emergency contact telephone numbers.

Medical Information

Children with medical conditions/chronic illnesses are supported and their care is managed sensitively. If a child has a serious or recurring medical problem, please inform the school. For example, parents of children with asthma are asked to supply full information concerning the extent of the asthma and to ensure that a usable inhaler is always available for use in school hours. Inhalers will be kept at pre-school so that they can be used as and when needed.

Parents are responsible for keeping the "First Aid Pupil Record" sheet up to date and for ensuring inhalers are in date. Any changes must be given to the pre-school staff in writing.

School needs to be informed if your child suffers from allergic reaction of any sort. For this reason, Shillington Lower School is a NUT FREE ZONE, so please make sure your child does not bring anything containing nuts to eat.

Medicine

Where medicine is prescribed three times daily, parents/carers are requested to administer this at home directly before school, directly after school and at bedtime. Where medicine is prescribed four times a day, the school will administer this in school provided a disclaimer form is signed giving us permission to do so, and precise instructions concerning dosage, times etc. Prescribed medicines and tablets must be given to a member of the pre-school staff for safe keeping. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to collect medicines at the end of their child's session. Please see our Supporting pupils with Medical Conditions Policy on our website at <http://www.shillingtonstondon.co.uk/web/policies/553519>

Suntan Lotions/Sun Hats

Where possible, please apply sun cream before your child attends school. However, should you wish your child to apply his/her own lotion, please

ensure it is kept in your child's bag and clearly marked with your child's name, staff will support this. We would strongly recommend that all children wear sun hats during hot weather spells. Please ensure hats are named.

Personal Details

When your child joins Pixies Class you will be asked to complete a personal details form. This is so that we know how to contact you, who you authorise to collect your child if you are unable to do so, any special needs your child has including allergies etc. It is important that you keep this form up to date as it is the document we refer to if we need to contact you urgently.

Photograph Authority

From time to time, we take photographs of the pupils and use these within the school (including the website) as well as outside the school environment (e.g., local press, Parish magazine). To do this we need your permission.

We have an online learning journal. You will be able to log onto your child's learning journal via the 'Seesaw' app and see what they get up to throughout the day.



We do allow parents to take photographs at events within school e.g., sports day. However, any photographs taken are for personal use only and are not to be published on any social network sites e.g., Facebook. We take such actions very seriously for safeguarding reasons.

School Policies

Individual Needs (Special Educational Needs) Policy

Our Special Educational Needs Policy follows the assessment stages in the National Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. We aim to work closely with parents from the early identification stage of any child experiencing learning difficulties and to respond sensitively to differences in learning abilities. Our sessions are planned to provide activities which are at the appropriate level for our children.

Positive Behaviour and Rewards Policies

Our children are considerate, polite, and excellently behaved, and enjoy school greatly. Children are expected to behave well and treat everyone with the same respect. We promote good behaviour and attitudes to learning by recognising, drawing attention to and rewarding it. Within the partnership between school and parents, we will work together to ensure that there is a zero tolerance to bullying.

Diversity, Equality and Community Cohesion

We see all learners and potential learners as of equal value: whether or not they are disabled; whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status; whichever their gender. This ethic extends to our wider school community and applies to both adults and children.

Providing equal opportunities does not always mean providing the same but involves making reasonable adjustments to enable individuals to access the opportunities available. Children are taught to respect all people equally, and adults' model this in their behaviour and interactions.

