



**Buttercups Community**

**Pre-school**

**Parent  
Information**

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### **1. Welcome**

Thank you for deciding to bring your child/children to Buttercups Community Pre-school. We look forward to working in partnership with you and your family as we start on their educational journey.

***'Buttercups believes that whilst our children are learning they should have the opportunity to blossom and shine and have a happy day every day'***

We welcome you to our Buttercups family, we are a caring community where children are treated as individuals, allowed to explore, be inquisitive, happy, and excited to learn and achieve. We provide a stimulating and safe environment and work in partnership with you, whilst respecting and listening to your needs

and suggestions and we continue to develop and excel at what we do.

## **2. Structure and Committee**

We are a small independent charity, currently operating from a purpose-built mobile building located in the grounds of the Meadow Primary School in Balsham. All the families who attend our setting become members of the charity and have a voice in how we operate and function.

We have a committee of parents and volunteers who appoint the staff and in conjunction with the staff, influence the direction and ethos of the Pre-school. The Committee help plan and organise fundraising events and activities. In the past we have held bingo evenings, Christmas fairs, cake stalls, raffles, and nearly new sales. The proceeds of these activities pay for the Children's Christmas party, graduation party and for trips to local farms and zoos.

The Committee meets every half term and new members are always welcome. The time commitment isn't onerous, and it is a good opportunity to meet other parents. Please come and support us, but if you can't join the Committee at the moment, please try and support our fundraising events, as any money we make is used for the benefit of the children who attend the Pre-school.

If you want to join our committee speak to a member of staff or our current Committee Chair – Charlotte Vallins who can be contacted on [buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com](mailto:buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com).

## **3. Staffing**

We have 2 full time members of the team, and the rest of our team work on a part time basis throughout the week. Different team members work on different days and your child/children will be allocated a key worker based on their pattern of attendance and the days our team work.

Our current staff are:

**Kirsty Salmons** – Pre-school Manager (Level 5). Kirsty has significant experience and worked in the setting for a number of years. She attends the setting every day (apart from one day a week where she is doing admin) and the main person to contact with any queries.

**Lauren Deeks** – Deputy (Level 3). Lauren has also worked at the setting for a number of years and works every day in the setting.

**Liz Smith** - Admissions, Administration, Finance and accounts. Liz works from home making sure all the paperwork is dealt with. Queries on funding, places and fees should be directed to her (butterscupadmissions@yahoo.com).

**Gillian Crowe** – Pre-school Practitioner (Level 3). Gill works on three days of the week and has significant experience of working with children.

**Sally Saunders** – Pre-School Practitioner (Level 3). Sally works three days a week and also works at the Meadow Out of School Club which is based in the same building.

**Donna Bray-Ladds** – Pre-School Practitioner (Currently studying towards Level 3). Donna works 3 days a week which also includes supporting children with S.E.N.

**Melanie Marshall** – Pre-School Practitioner (Currently studying towards Level 3). Donna works 3 days a week which also includes supporting children with S.E.N.

**Robyn Owen** – Pre-School Practitioner (Currently studying towards Level 3). Robyn works 4 days a week.

#### **4. The Pre-school Day**

Every day at Pre-school is different, but we try and follow a simple routine.

The children say goodbye to their grown-up at the play deck gate and come into the setting, collecting their name card on the way. They go straight to our corridor area and out their coats etc on their photographed peg. We then encourage the children to wash and dry their hands and then they are ready to explore the activities which are all set up for them.

Children are given the opportunity to take part in the craft activities set out on the tables, play in the role play area, play outside in the mud kitchen, play independently on the carpet or in the play trays. During this time children will be given the opportunity to have a healthy snack. We then use the school playground for outdoor play, before having group stories, or carpet time activities before lunch.

We all sit together for lunch and the team encourage the children to be as independent as possible with opening packets, pouring water etc. We have a basket in the middle of each table with

cups, a water jug, some fruit, cutlery and a child safe knife and chopping board). Lunch time is a great opportunity for developing their independence as their language skills. After lunch we have quiet time before so of the children leave us at 1pm.

In the afternoons the children spend more time outside and we have more craft and learning opportunities to take part in, as well as independent play.

Every day we share some photos of our day on our twitter feed. Please request to follow us as this is a closed account only for our parents: **@ButtercupsP1**

## **5. Parent mail**

To reduce the amount of paperwork we send home, most of our communications with parents are electronic, via parent mail.

We send out regular newsletters to inform you of events, information, illnesses, closures etc via parent mail. Please make sure that we have your most up to date e-mail address, so that you receive the information we send out. On average we send out 1 e-mail a week. and check that our e-mails are not going into your spam box. We use 2 e-mail addresses when sending out information: [buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com](mailto:buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com), or [buttercupsadmissions@yahoo.com](mailto:buttercupsadmissions@yahoo.com)

Please make sure you are receiving our e-mails and they are not going into your spam box. If you have any problems accessing or printing emails, please let us know and we will get you paper copies of documents.

## **6. Parent help and skills**

We gladly welcome parents into the setting to help and talk to us about their interesting jobs, hobbies or skills such as playing a musical instrument. In the past we have had parents come into the setting to tell the children about their work and show them what tools and equipment they use to do their jobs. We've had visits from Vets, Doctors, Dentists, Police Officers, and Firemen. We've also had Fire engines and Police cars come on site.

We've had people come and play instruments, sing, do yoga and dance and language classes. Unfortunately, we cannot welcome parents into the setting at the moment, but we will recommence these activities once it is safe to do so, so please let us know if you want to get involved in this way.

## **7. Bringing your child/children to the setting**

We operate from a mobile classroom located on the playground of the Meadow Primary School. Currently, the Pre-school can only be accessed from the back gate situated on School Lane (the gate furthest away from the Church and where the school bus waits).

### **Morning drop off**

Pre-School opens at 8.50am. Please come up onto the playground at wait by out building until a member of our team comes to the play deck gate. On the playground there will be yellow buckets for you to put your child's red book bag, boxes for lunch boxes and water bottles. We will then bring them into the building once everyone has arrived. The children then come in one at a time, giving you the opportunity to say goodbye at the gate and pass over any key information to the team member.

### **12pm drop off**

If you are dropping your child off for an afternoon session, please wait at the back gate off School Lane for us to come down and collect.

We completely understand that it very difficult to say goodbye to your child and watch them come into the building by themselves. We had to do this due to covid restrictions as parents were not allowed in the building and we found that the children settled better and that it made the drop-off time a lot calmer and feedback from parents was very positive. Therefore, after reflecting on this and speaking to parents we have decided to continue to settle children into the pre-school this way. We would never leave a child distressed and if we were unable to settle them, we would telephone you straight away. You can also telephone us at any time to check how your child is if you at all worried. If you have concerns about any of the above, please do contact Kirsty.

## **8. Collecting your child**

Our sessions end at 12pm, 1pm or 3pm and access to the setting will be via the same School gate, off School Lane. At 12pm and 1pm we will bring the children down to the back gate we will then allow the children, one at a time, to leave the site and come to you.

Please ensure prompt pick up, so that staff aren't detained unnecessarily at the gate and can return to care for the other children in the mobile.

At 3pm pick up, the Caretaker opens the gate at 3pm. Once opened you can walk up to the playground and we will release the children one at a time and highlight any issues, hand over medical forms etc.

Please note School have requested that children do not play on School play equipment during drop off and pick up, as this equipment is unsupervised during these times.

If you are going to be late, please contact the setting on 01223 894608.

## **9. Nominated Collectors**

We will only let Children leave the setting with people identified as nominated collectors on their application form. Due to safeguarding concerns, we are now requesting parents to provide photos of nominated collectors, so that we can be sure that a child is being collected by the correct person. If we are not sure of a person's identity we will always ask for confirmation, i.e., photographic ID, such as a passport or driving licence.

If someone other than yourself, or your nominated collector(s) will be picking up your child please let us know and we will ask you to sign a form/send an email to authorise this change and the collector must bring photo ID, to confirm who they are. If we haven't been given prior notification, then we will not release your child until we have contacted you by telephone to confirm who is collecting.

## **10. What to bring**

### **- Food and drinks**

We have two large plastic boxes that we use for the children to put their lunch boxes and water bottles in when they arrive at Pre-school.

**Water bottles** – all children should bring a **clearly named water bottle**, full of water. During the day we encourage children to use their water bottle and we refill the bottles when they are empty. We recommend that children bring water in their bottle and not squash or juice, as these aren't hydrating and can cause tooth decay.

**Lunch boxes** – children have lunch between 12 and 1pm and those staying for lunch need to bring an easily cleanable named lunch box. We encourage parents to pack healthy packed lunches for their children, for example, sandwiches, pasta or rice salad, fruit and vegetables, yogurt and healthy treats. We take allergies very seriously at Pre-school and we are a nut free zone. So please do not include nut butter sandwiches and products containing nuts, such as certain cereal bars and some pesto products.

Unfortunately, we aren't able to heat up food for children at lunch time.

**Please note: A lot of children have the same colour/pattern water bottle and lunch box, so please make sure that these are clearly named.**

**Snack time** – parents pay a contribution towards morning snack. We provide a wide range of items for the children to try including fruit and vegetables, carbohydrates (i.e., crackers, bread sticks, rice cakes and plain biscuits) and sometimes dairy products including cheese and yogurts. We welcome any suggestions from you, or your child about items we provide for snack. We use snack time as a learning experience and children learn to share, help each other, and use cutlery.

All children can have a drink of milk or water at snack time and fresh water is available throughout the day for the children to access.

Information and examples of healthy lunches can be found at: <https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2017/11/Healthy-packed-lunches-for-early-years-FACTSHEET.pdf>

Please ensure we know of any dietary needs/allergies ahead of your child joining us so that we can ensure they are provided with an alternative safe snack.

#### **- Clothes & uniform, bags, and indoor attire**

Each child is allocated a peg with their photograph where they can hang their belongings (i.e., spare clothes, nappies (if applicable) and coats). These pegs are located in the middle of the building next to the toilets and kitchen.

Please bring a spare set or two of clothes, particularly for children who are potty training, as accidents can happen. Children can also get dirty or wet during messy play activities.

We also recommend the children bring a jumper if they are just wearing a t-shirt, as we spend a lot of time outside and windows and doors are kept open throughout the day, to allow fresh air into the building.



We are encouraging the children to wear indoor shoes whilst in the classroom (slippers if they prefer) and then before we go into the garden we will change into outdoor shoes (wellies /old shoes preferably). This will prevent the floors and carpet area from getting muddy and messy.

Please try and label everything with your child's name, so lost items can be returned promptly.

Children can get quite messy at Pre-school, so we suggest that they come in old clothes, so that their best items are not damaged. Aprons are available in the setting for the children to use and we encourage children to wear them for messy activities, but paints and pen can still find their way on to clothes.

Children don't have to wear **uniform** at Pre-school, but a lot of parents like to get their children into a routine with this, so red Buttercups jumpers and polo shirts with our logo are available for purchase for the children. If you want to buy anything, please speak to a member of staff. We often have second hand items that can be purchased.

#### - **Outdoor clothes and wellingtons**

Buttercups try to go outdoors whatever the weather. So please make sure your child/children are properly equipped for the weather – warm clothes, waterproofs, gloves and hats for the winter, and sunhats and sun cream during the summer.

Please bring named wellingtons or old shoes for outdoor play, as the mud kitchen area can get very dirty, and the playground is often covered in puddles. We have a welly rack where wellies or outdoor shoes can be hung and left at the setting. At the moment, this will be located outside the building, so parents can put the wellies on the rack for their children.

#### - **Toys, comforters and bikes**

Lots of children try and bring their favourite toys with them into the setting, however we try and discourage this as there is a high risk of them getting lost or broken. When we operate our 'Captain of the Day' scheme children will be given the opportunity to bring in their favourite toy and a book.

We acknowledge that some children need comforters to help them settle; we ask that these are minimised if possible and if they are brought into the setting, we ask that they are named.

### **11. Toilet training and nappies**

Children who attend the setting are all at different stages in their toileting journey and we work in partnership with each family to help them achieve their goal.

We take children in nappies and children who are toilet trained. We have a separate procedure for dealing with nappies and potties.

We do not provide nappies and ask that parents of children wearing nappies bring in enough nappies for their child/children to get through their session. We do provide wipes and nappy bags, but parents can provide their own, if they prefer. Soiled nappies are disposed of by a waste/hygiene contractor.

For children toilet training we ask that a good supply of spare clothes is brought into the setting to help with any accidents that may occur and a plastic bag to put the soiled clothes into.

## **12. Children's book bags**

Each child will be given a red book bag when they join us. This is to be brought with them every day. Inside the bookbag will be a communication book which you can write in, and we will also write any notes to you, so please do check these every day. Your child can also put any of their artwork in to bring home and we may put letters etc inside.

## **13. Pre-school borrowing bags**

We have a number of bags which are full of activities for the children to try at home and bring back into the setting after they have used them. The bags are hung on our home learning shed which is located on the playground next to our steps. We also have a small library so that you can share our books. Please just sign the books in and out.

## **14. Absence/sickness**

If your child is going to be absent from Buttercups, because of sickness we ask that you ring us on **01223 894608**. Out of hours we can be contacted on the Buttercups mobile 07535 140709. You can e-mail us about planned absences for holidays and medical appointments etc on [buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com](mailto:buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com)..

If your child is ill it is useful to know about the nature of the illness so that we can monitor the other children in the setting for any symptoms and let other parents know. A list of infectious illnesses and recommended absence periods is available from Pre-school. If we have not heard from you by 9.30am then a member of the team will contact you to see why your child hasn't arrived for that session.

**If your child has been given Calpol in the morning, please do not bring them into the setting.** We do not provide Calpol and if a child is needing Calpol then they shouldn't be attending pre-school. High temperatures can be a symptom for other illness and illnesses can spread very quickly amongst small children. If your child is on any medication, please let us know. We have separate forms to complete to allow us to give medication to your child/children.

#### **15. Sickness and diarrhoea**

We have a 48hr policy for any sickness and/or diarrhoea. Please keep your child at home for 48hr from the last episode to reduce the risk of spreading the bug to others. If a child is sick or has diarrhoea whilst in the setting, we will telephone you to collect them, and they can return after 48hrs.

#### **16. Use of mobile phones and social media sites**

The vast majority of mobile phones have cameras and recording capabilities, so we have a mobile phone policy in place in the setting to protect the children in our care. This means that all staff and any visitors to the setting have to leave their phones in the office.

**The setting has its own twitter feed, that is private, and we only allow access to the site to the parents who request access.** Please email [buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com](mailto:buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com) to get access to the site. We post pictures and information about activities we have been doing. we post pictures of children but do not use any names.

As parents will not be able to access the mobile building, we will be posting more pictures of the activities we have been doing with the children on the twitter feed, so you can see what we have been up to.

Safeguarding and child protection are fundamental to our ethos, and we highlight below our approach to the use of social media.

'Buttercups Community Pre-school understands that social network sites are meant to be a fun environment for people to communicate through. Whilst Buttercups does not monitor social networking postings, please understand that we reserve the right to take appropriate action if we become aware of comments or photos that are directed at Buttercups or any staff members and are:

- inappropriate, i.e., profane, defamatory, disparaging, harassing, threatening, or obscene
- violate another's copyright or intellectual property

- deceptive, or misleading
- offensive graphically, or misleading.

Please note that Buttercups Preschool does not endorse any opinions not specifically posted by ourselves. Additionally, Buttercups is not responsible for the accuracy of the claims, information, advice, or comments posted by visitors of the sites.'

## **17. Safeguarding**

Safeguarding is paramount to all our activities and practices all parents are provided with a copy of our Safeguarding Policy when they apply for a place. This policy is updated annually and we follow procedures and reporting mechanisms set out by Cambridgeshire County Council.

Our Designated Persons for Child Protection and Safeguarding are Kirsty Salmons and Lauren Deeks. Please e-mail us if you want to know more information about this area or have any concerns about a child, or member of staff.

## **18. Fees and funding**

Pre-school fees and charges are reviewed and agreed annually by the Committee. Invoices are issued half termly and payment dates clearly stated. Fees can be paid in cash, cheque, childcare schemes and vouchers or by bank transfer. A separate fees policy is available and issued to parents.

The majority of our children are eligible for funding via the Government's 15 hour funded childcare scheme for applicable two-year olds and all three-year olds. Working parents of three-year olds can be eligible for 30 hours free childcare. Forms to claim for funded places will be issued to parents at the start of each term.

Please contact Liz at [buttercupadmissions@ayhoo.com](mailto:buttercupadmissions@ayhoo.com) for more information about fees and funding and visit the website: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) for more information.

## **19. Anything else and how to contact us**

You will probably still have questions after reading this, so please speak to a member of staff or e-mail us.

Usually, we are available for you to talk to us at drop off and pick up times. However, these times can be busy so try and make an

appointment for a complicated query or an issue that may take some time.

Each child will also be given a communication notebook, where we will be able to write messages and make you aware of anything that comes up. Please use this book to highlight any issues/questions or things we need to be aware of. These books should be kept in your child's bag and will be reviewed daily.

Our contact details are:

Classroom number: 01223 894608

Buttercups mobile (out of hours): 07535 140709

Buttercups e-mails: [buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com](mailto:buttercupspreschool@yahoo.com)

We look forward to welcoming you and your child/children into our setting and we hope that your child has a happy experience at Buttercups.

The Buttercups Team

Kirsty, Lauren, Liz, Gill, Donna, Melanie, Sally and Robyn