



# Sutton Outdoor Preschool Information Pack September 2024



This pack contains key information for parents wishing to register their child with Sutton Outdoor Preschool. Please contact us if you have any further questions or queries.

Sutton Outdoor Preschool, Sutton Park, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B73 6LH.

Telephone – 07460 324 244

Email – [liz@suttonoutdoorpreschool.co.uk](mailto:liz@suttonoutdoorpreschool.co.uk)

Website – [www.suttonoutdoorpreschool.com](http://www.suttonoutdoorpreschool.com)

# Welcome to Sutton Outdoor Preschool

We provide high quality care and education for children through an outdoor, natural learning environment and offer a warm welcome to each individual child and family. Meeting your child's individual needs is our priority and we will work with you in partnership to ensure we achieve this as they play and learn with nature.

This pack contains key information about our preschool, if you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Some of our policies are included in this pack, if you would like to read any of our policies in full, they are available on our website. If you would like to visit our preschool with a view to registering your child, please contact us to make an appointment.

We look forward to working with you and your child,

Yours sincerely,

*Liz Leddy*

Preschool Manager

## Our Team



**Preschool Founder and Manager: Liz**  
Qualified Teacher Status, BEd Honours Degree (Level 6), Advanced Diploma in Childcare and Education, NNEB Diploma (Level 3), NVQ Childcare and Education (Level 2), Qualified Paediatric First Aider, Designated Safeguarding Lead.



**Preschool Founder and Deputy: John**  
Forest School Leader (Level 3), Qualified Paediatric First Aider, Safeguarding Deputy.



**Early Years Educator: Claire**  
Early Years Educator (Level 3), NVQ Childcare and Education (Level 2), Qualified Paediatric First Aider, Behaviour Support.



**Early Years Educator: Ben**  
Early Years Educator (Level 3), BTEC First Diploma in Conservation, National Diploma in Environmental Management, Qualified Paediatric First Aider, SENDCo.

We also have several volunteer team members who provide additional support and experience. All are experienced, knowledgeable and have Enhanced DBS checks.

## Staffing and Ratios

All members of Sutton Outdoor Preschool Team have Enhanced Disclosure and Barring (DBS) checks and are experienced in working with children. The Manager is present at all sessions. Staff are trained in early years childcare/teaching and /or Forest School and all are qualified First Aiders. We operate on a ratio of 1 adult: 4 children. **In the unlikely event that we do not have enough staff to maintain ratios we will contact you to cancel the session.**

## Starting Preschool

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. We offer two initial “settling-in” sessions of an hour each, this gives us the opportunity to get to know you and your child and begin to build positive relationships (this cost is included in your Registration Fee). Some children settle quickly, others require more time - in which case we may suggest continuing with shorter sessions for a few weeks, gradually extending to a full day. We will work with you to decide how best to settle your child and staff will be guided by and support you with this.

For more information, please see our Settling-in and Transition Policy (available on our website and on request).

## Key Person

As we are a small preschool, all the adults will be part of your child's experience, however your child will be assigned a member of staff as their 'key person'. You will be introduced to your child's key person at your first session; they will be responsible for supporting your child, sharing information with you about your child's learning and supporting any concerns you may have or specific needs as they arise.

## Learning and Development

At Sutton Outdoor Preschool we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework to ensure we provide children with a broad range of knowledge, skills and experiences. All of our learning is nature-led and play-based – we encourage the children to develop their own ideas, think critically and creatively and become motivated by their own learning. We also provide adult-led learning opportunities – all children are encouraged but not obliged to participate in these. They may be based on specific interests expressed by the child or designed to develop specific skills; they may reflect the seasons or the weather. We provide a range of open-ended resources which children can access and make full use of the natural resources found in our woodland environment.

For more information, please see our Learning and Development Policy (available on our website and on request).

## Assessment

Assessment is carried out through observation and discussion; it is non-obtrusive, informal and on-going. We use this to document your child's progress, identify next steps to move their learning on and to help us plan further learning opportunities. We share this information with you electronically using a secure software application to form a digital **Learning Journal**. We also ask you to contribute to this by sharing information about what your child enjoys doing at home – this helps form the bigger picture of your child's learning experience. You will receive more information on this once the registration process is complete.

For more information, please see our Learning Journals Policy (available on our website and on request).

# Routines

Although “every day is different”, we recognise that having set routines enables children to become more confident and independent. Some of our routines are also in place to keep us safe while we learn.

**Arrival** – prior to children’s arrival, Staff will have safety checked the area. Children participate in a daily Safety Walk which includes carrying out their own risk assessment and “walking the boundary”. We discuss any risks which the children identify, as well as the risk benefits and ways we can reduce the risk for the safety of ourselves and our friends.

**Setting Up** – children help set up basecamp for the day, selecting resources and equipment such as hammocks, slack lines, mud kitchen, swings and shelters. Children are supported to make joint decisions and choices, take on responsibilities and have ownership of the area.

**Free-flow Activities** we have a wide range of open-ended activities available every day, as well as activities presented by the natural setting – climbing, balancing, den building, bug hunts, exploring and investigating... Children may choose to direct their own learning, following their own interests or they may opt to take part in an adult led activity. We support and guide the children, using our observations to shape the learning experience for each child. All adult-led activities are linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, are cross-curricular and develop a variety of skills.

**Mid-morning snack** - we gather together, wash our hands and enjoy a healthy snack while we reflect on the morning so far and often share a story. Children are required to bring their own snack from home and a drink. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day.

**Adventures** – at some point in the day we go for an adventure - to explore other areas within the park and take advantage of the new learning opportunities this provides. The children decide where they would like to go based on what they would like to see or do – each day is different. We plan the route using our map, highlights often include - visiting the ducks, rolling down Big Hill, exploring Climbing Woods or looking for bugs in the Swishy-Swashy Grass (more information be found on this under *Outings* on page 10).

**Lunch** - we eat together; lunch is viewed as a social event, an opportunity to talk to the children about their interests and for each child to develop positive relationships with staff and peers. Children are required to bring a packed lunch from home (see page 7 for details). Some children prefer a bit of quiet time after lunch, perhaps listening to a story or two. They may choose to rest in one of our hammocks - we have blankets and sleeping bags if it is cold. Other children may choose to continue free-flow activities. We may play games on the field or learn to use forest tools safely.

**Reflection Time** – children are encouraged to help clear away the site at the end of the day. We leave the woodland as we found it and remove all trace we were ever there. We reflect on the day – what we have enjoyed, what we have learnt and what we would like to do next time.

The health and safety of the children and adults is paramount at all times. We continue to risk assess throughout the session. Children learn to manage risks rather than remove them - a skill for life.

# Parental Involvement

There are many ways you can support your child's learning at Sutton Outdoor Preschool including -

- sharing knowledge of your child's needs, activities and interests with staff through discussion or via the digital Learning Journal;
- talking to your child about their day, what they have done or what they have enjoyed;
- encouraging your child to become more independent at home, for example providing opportunity for them to practice dressing themselves;
- sharing your own interests with the children;
- ensuring your child is dressed appropriately (see kit list within this pack);
- participate in community activities and events organised by the preschool;
- building friendships with other parents at the preschool.

As a parent/carer, you are welcome to visit us at any time, as we have an open-door policy.

## Term Dates

We are open during Birmingham term dates. The term dates for 2024/25 are

- Autumn Term: Monday 2 September 2024 – Friday 20 December 2024  
Half Term: Monday 28 October to Friday 1 November 2024
- Spring Term: Monday 6 January 2025 – Friday 11 April 2025  
Half Term: Monday 17 February 2025 to Friday 21 February 2025
- Summer Term: Monday 28 April 2025 – Friday 18 July 2025  
Half Term: Monday 26 May 2025 to Friday 30 May 2025

More information on Birmingham Term Dates can be found here -

[www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20014/schools\\_and\\_learning/685/school\\_term\\_dates](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20014/schools_and_learning/685/school_term_dates)

## Session Times

Children attend sessions from 9am to 3pm. "New starters" may attend shorter sessions as part of the Settling-In process (for approx. 4 weeks). We have no day minimum requirement.

## Fees

There is a **Registration Fee of £100** which includes a set of Didriksons waterproofs, online access to the Digital Learning Journal, a waterproof kit bag and two settling-in sessions.

The **daily fee is £45**. Some **funded places** are available if your child is eligible – a funded place uses 5 hours per day and can be combined with another setting. A charge is made for the extra hour and additional costs for services not included within the Funding (namely increased staffing, training, forest learning and skills – these costs are already included within the non-funded daily fee). The daily fee for a funded place is £20.

Fees are charged monthly and paid by bank transfer. Fees must still be paid if children are absent for a short period of time including holiday and illness. For your child to keep their place, you must pay the fees.

# Clothing

We provide a set of Didriksons waterproofs as part of the registration fee, which children must wear or bring to Sutton Outdoor Preschool each day. Children must be dressed appropriately for the weather and have at least two complete changes of clothes with them in the waterproof kit bag (provided).

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## WHAT TO WEAR/BRING IN SPRING/AUTUMN

- Didrikson's Waterproofs – wearing the dungarees over the coat makes toileting easier
- Comfortable trousers such as jogging bottoms or leggings
- A long sleeved t-shirt or thin jumper
- A fleecy zip up jacket
- Two pairs of socks – a thin pair of cotton socks topped with a thick wool/thermal/fluffy pair of socks
- Wellies or sturdy closed toe waterproof boots (which you don't mind getting wet and muddy)
- 2 complete outfit changes including pants and socks (more if toilet training or particularly fond of mud)

## WHAT TO WEAR/BRING IN SUMMER

- Didrikson's Waterproofs – help provide an extra protection when climbing (plus we still get wet days)!
- Comfortable trousers such as jogging bottoms or leggings, children can wear shorts
- A t-shirt or thin jumper
- A fleecy zip up jacket (just in case)
- One pair of socks
- Wellies or waterproof boots (for adventures), plus spare pair of pumps/trainers to wear in basecamp
- A sun hat (also good on rainy days for keeping the drips out of eyes)
- 2 complete outfit changes including pants and socks (more if toilet training or particularly fond of mud)
- Sun cream

## WHAT TO WEAR/BRING IN WINTER

- Warm Coat – the Didrikson coat is waterproof but not insulated so a warm coat underneath is essential
- Didrikson's Waterproofs – these make toileting easier than an “all-in-one”.
- Children need to be **double/triple layered** under waterproofs during the winter months -
  - thermal base layer – thermal leggings and long sleeved tops are available from many high street shops including Primark, H&M, B&M, Aldi, Lidl, Tesco, Asda, etc.
  - mid layer – thick leggings/jogging bottoms and fleece/long sleeve jumper. Avoid tops with hoods if possible as they are difficult to put up over a hat and if left down they bulk out the back of the waterproof coat reducing the reach that the waterproof hood has over the child's head.
  - top layer – fleece or woollen jumper or jacket. Ski clothing is good for warmth but remember it is not always waterproof.
- Neck warmer or buff (these are better than scarves)
- Warm hat which covers the ears
- Gloves – we find the “magic one size stretch gloves” best. Plus lots of spares so we can change them once wet or layer up if it is particularly cold. Mittens are good as an extra layer on top.
- 2 or 3 pairs of socks – thick wool/thermal/fluffy pair of socks (you may need to buy a size up in wellies).
- Snow boots or sturdy warm outdoor boots – available at shops such as Decathlon, Go Outdoors, Mountain Warehouse, Sports Direct. *Ski footwear is warm but be aware that the material above the waterproof base of the snow boot is not necessarily waterproof.* Children will be wearing extra socks so it may be worth considering buying footwear that is ½ a size or a full size bigger.
- *At least 2* complete outfit changes for layering (base, mid and top), spare socks, pants, gloves, hat.

### **Children who do not have appropriate clothing will not be able to attend the session.**

Talk to your child's key person if you have any problems sourcing clothing or you would like advice or support. The more layers and changes your child has in their kit bag the better - it should look as if they are going away for a week!

# Food and Drink

The children are required to bring a healthy packed lunch from home, including a drink and mid-morning snacks. When choosing foods please remember the children will be outdoors and “on the go” all day so it is important they have enough energy to fuel them (see below for ideas).

Parents are responsible for providing food their child will eat and the utensils required. In warm weather parents may want to include a cool pack in the lunch box, on cooler days a thermos flask will keep foods warm. We always have fresh drinking water available.

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**Drink** - non-fizzy in a refillable, plastic drinks bottle or flask. We recommend water, other ideas include -

- Squash or cordial – use low/no sugar, or try adding fruit to water for an exciting alternative
- Warm juice – try adding a touch of cinnamon, nutmeg or all spice to apple juice
- Hot chocolate or warm milk (a warm drink on colder days is a special treat)
- Herb or fruit teas – these come in a huge variety of flavours and have no caffeine, many also have additional health benefits including lemon balm, fennel and peppermint teas.
- Hot smoothies - some are cold but have warming spices while others are made with hot milk or juice.

Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day.

**Mid-morning snacks** - ideally something to boost energy levels such as –

- Fresh fruit – whole or sliced and stored in plastic tub
- Oatcakes, rice cakes, crackers or crispbreads perhaps with cubed or sliced cheese
- Pitta, ciabatta and other types of bread which can be sliced up and ready to eat
- Vegetable sticks such as carrot, celery and strips of red, green or yellow peppers or sugar snap peas
- Cereal bars, biscuits, snack bars or similar

**Packed Lunch** – the possibilities and combinations are endless but here are some suggestions...

- Baguette/ bagel/ wrap/ sliced/ wholegrain/ bread roll/ pitta pocket... with salad and favourite filling
- Tortilla wrap, Roti, Chapattis or plain naan with lentil daal
- Pasta salad (eaten cold), leftover pasta Bolognese or pasta bake stored hot in a flask
- Beans/spaghetti hoops in a thermos (some children bring cold toast for dipping)
- Soup/vegetable stew and a bread for dipping
- Couscous/ rice/ quinoa (eaten cold or stored hot in a flask) with added vegetables
- Cold cooked meat, fish, boiled egg, Quorn, houmous or bean salad for protein
- Baked potatoes wrapped in silver foil (edible hand warmers)

A quick google search will provide more ideas and recipes which are easy to prepare, tasty and nutritional.

At present we do not have any children at preschool with a nut allergy so we are happy for your child to bring nuts or food containing nuts such as nut butter spreads eg peanut butter, Nutella, or fruit and cereal (muesli) bars that contain nuts etc. We recognise that these foods will boost energy levels.

If you have any concerns or queries about this please speak to Liz.

Children are reminded and carefully supervised to minimise the act of food sharing with their friends. They are also taught good hygiene practices such as washing hands before eating to help reduce the risk of secondary contamination.

**Please let us know if your child has any food allergies or special dietary requirements.**

## **Arrival and Departure**

On arrival at preschool, you and your child will be met by a member of staff. Staff complete a register. There will be a hand-over conversation – this is a good time to talk to your key person about your child's morning so far, or to make an appointment if you wish to discuss any concerns.

You must let us know if someone else is collecting your child on your behalf. You will need to let us know this in advance and provide us with their name. You will also need to ensure they know the password you provided on the Contact Form. They will need to introduce themselves on arrival and provide the password. We will not permit a child to leave the premises unaccompanied or unsupervised.

For more information please see our Security Policy and Child Release Policy (available on our website and on request).

## **Late Collection or Failure to Collect**

You must notify us as soon as possible if you will be late to collect your child – this helps reduce the stress on the child. You may incur a late charge.

If after closing time your child has not been collected and we have not had any message from you, we will make every attempt to contact you on all the numbers you have provided, including the Emergency Contact numbers. Our policy states that if after one hour, all reasonable attempts to contact parent/carers have failed then the preschool manager will contact the relevant social services departments as per our Safeguarding Procedure.

For more information please see our Non-Collection of Children Policy (available on our website and on request).

## **Administering Medication**

We can only administer medication which has been prescribed to your child. Medication containing Aspirin will only be given if it has been prescribed by a doctor. The medication must be in the original packaging and state your child's name and dose clearly on the container. You will need to complete our Medication Form with a member of staff before we can administer any medication.

When medication is administered at preschool, it will be recorded on the form. On collecting your child, you will be asked to read and sign to acknowledge the details recorded on the Medication Form. Ideally all medicines should be administered by the child's parents.

If your child has regular medication – for example an inhaler for asthma you must ensure it is handed over to a member of staff and collected at the end of the day. A separate form will be completed for this purpose. If your child does not have their regular medication with them, they will be unable to attend the session.

If your child has more complex medical needs we will work closely with you and health professionals involved in your child's care to ensure we meet their needs fully.

For more information please see our Administration Of Medicine Policy (available on our website and on request).



## **Sickness**

Sutton Outdoor Preschool promotes the good health, including oral health, of children in our care. We recognise that both staff and children are vulnerable to infections/illness and do not expect children to attend if they are not well enough to do so. We reserve the right to refuse entry to any child or family who, in the opinion of the Manager/Deputy, are not well enough to attend or pose a risk of infection to other children. If a child becomes unwell during a session, we will contact you to collect them. In the case of a serious accident or illness occurring then you will be contacted immediately as well as any medical assistance required. Your child must only return to preschool once they are well enough to do so.

For more information, including details of exclusion periods, please see our Sickness and Emergency Treatment Policy (available on our website and on request).

## **Accidents**

First aid is always administered by a qualified first aider, who will decide the most appropriate course of action. A written accident report is provided for parent/carer on collection. If you would like to discuss an incident in more detail please speak to a member of staff.

If your child has an existing injury on arrival at Preschool, please mention this to your child's key person. Staff may record this in the Incident Book.

For more information, please see our Accident and Incidents Policy (available on our website and on request).

## **Toileting**

Children in nappies are changed regularly in our changing tent. We recommend nappies instead of pull-ups as these are easier to change without having to undress the child (and expose them to the cold for too long). Parents/carers provide their own supply of nappies, wipes or cotton wool for their child; we are happy to use cotton or disposable nappies.

Toilet trained children use our portable toilet contained in a toilet tent. We encourage the children to be as independent as possible while still providing supervision and support.

Warm water and soap are provided for hand washing alongside individual hand towels for drying.

For more information please see our Toileting and Nappy Change Policy and Hygiene Policy (available on our website and on request).

## **Additional Needs**

We welcome all children at Sutton Outdoor Preschool and view their individual needs and requirements as unique. We have lots of experience of working with children who have additional needs, whether these are behavioural, speech and language related or diagnosed conditions. We are practised at working with outside agencies to ensure you and your child receive the best support available.

For more information please see our Special Educational Needs/Disability Policy (available on our website and on request).

## Safety Information

Safety is very important to us and we have a number of procedures in place to ensure Sutton Outdoor Preschool is a safe and healthy place for our children, parents, staff, visitors and volunteers. We have already mentioned the risk assessments which take place throughout the day both by our staff and with the children's participation. Our risk assessments take into account the risks of an outdoor site, the activities and learning opportunities we offer, seasonal conditions and changes to the weather.

For more information please see our Risk Assessment Policy (available on our website and on request).

At Preschool children will have the opportunity to use a variety of small hand tools including vegetable peelers, hand drill and bow saws. Children will always be taught how to use each tool safely and will always have 1:1 supervision when using tools. Tools will be maintained and checked, cleaned and stored in a secure box at the end of each session to ensure they remain safe to use.

For more information please see our Working with Tools Policy (available on our website and on request).

Our Preschool sessions take place outside in all weathers. If strong winds are forecast we may move to open ground to avoid the risk of falling branches; if it rains we put up shelters; if it's cold we do lots of physical activities to keep warm and active; when it's hot we play in the shade. We continue to monitor the weather and adapt our learning opportunities accordingly. **In exceptional circumstances, if hazardous weather is forecast, we may have to contact you to cancel or cut short our session for the safety of all participants.**

We have procedures in place to enable us to evacuate an area quickly in an emergency. Accidents and injuries are dealt with by trained first aiders following set procedure. We also have a procedure in place in the event of a child going missing from the setting. At all times the children's safety and welfare is our key priority.

For more information, please see our Emergency Procedure and Missing Child Policies (available on our website and on request).

## Outings

Although our sessions always start and end from "basecamp", we also access other areas within Sutton Park in order to extend the learning opportunities available; we refer to these as outings, although the children call them "adventures". All outings have been risk assessed and consideration given to ratios and individual needs of the children taking part. All outings will be conducted on foot. We have a set procedure for outings to ensure the safety of all participants. **We require permission for your child to participate in outings within the park.** Please ensure you complete the consent form or speak to us if you have any concerns about this.

For more information please see our Outings and Visits Policy and Procedure (available on our website and on request).

## Safeguarding

Sutton Outdoor Preschool fully recognises its responsibilities for safeguarding and child protection. We know that children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Sutton Outdoor Preschool provides a natural learning environment which is safe and stimulating and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

- We work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life. Children have the right to be treated with respect, be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.
- We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. In our preschool we strive to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and we promote acceptance and tolerance of other beliefs and cultures.

**The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Sutton Outdoor Preschool is the manager, Liz Leddy.**

If you have a concern that a child is being harmed, is at risk of harm, or any child makes a disclosure to you, you must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. If the concern relates to a member of staff, you must report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

If the concern relates to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, you must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) directly on 0121 675 1669.

For more information please refer to our Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedure (available on our website and on request).

## Information and Records

We are legally required to record information relating to the children using the preschool. Information may be shared with other professional agencies involved as applicable and is stored securely, either at the setting or off premises (following guidelines from the Information Commissioner's Office).

For more information please refer to our policies relating to Data Protection, Information Sharing and Confidentiality (available on our website and on request).

## Photographs and Video Recordings

We use photographs and videos daily as a means of recording the children's experiences and developmental progress and share these images with you through the digital Learning Journals. Images may also be used for publicity and promotion purposes including on our website and Facebook page with your permission. Please ensure you complete the consent form or speak to us if you have any concerns about this.

For more information please see our Use of Mobile Phone, Cameras and Other Recording Devices Policy (available on our website and on request).

## Mobile Phones

We have a strict policy regarding mobile phones, cameras and other recording devices in line with our Safeguarding Policy and ask that should parents/carers wish to take photographs or video at the setting please ensure only your child is included in the image.

For more information please see our Use of Mobile Phone, Cameras and Other Recording Devices Policy (available on our website and on request).

## Concerns and Complaints

We believe that Sutton Outdoor Preschool provides good care and education for all our children, and that management and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents and carers. However, if you have any concerns we hope you will be able to discuss these with us so we can resolve issues through discussion and mutual understanding.

If you feel the concern is not dealt with effectively, you can make a formal complaint following our Complaints Procedure which is detailed in our Concerns and Complaints Policy (available on our website and on request).

You may also contact Ofsted directly if you feel we are not meeting the EYFS requirements or if you wish to report anything relating to your child's childcare.

**Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD. Telephone: 0300 123 123**

Our Ofsted Setting Reference Number is: EY557636

## Preschool Policies

Sutton Outdoor Preschool has detailed policies and procedures in place, which are available to all on our website and on request at the Preschool. Please ask the Manager if you wish to have any policies emailed to you. Our policies help us to make sure that the service we provide is of a high quality and that being a member of our Preschool is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each and every child. We encourage you to read and familiarise yourself with our policies and procedures.

If you have any further questions regarding the preschool or the information contained here, please don't hesitate to contact Liz Leddy (Manager) who will be happy to help.