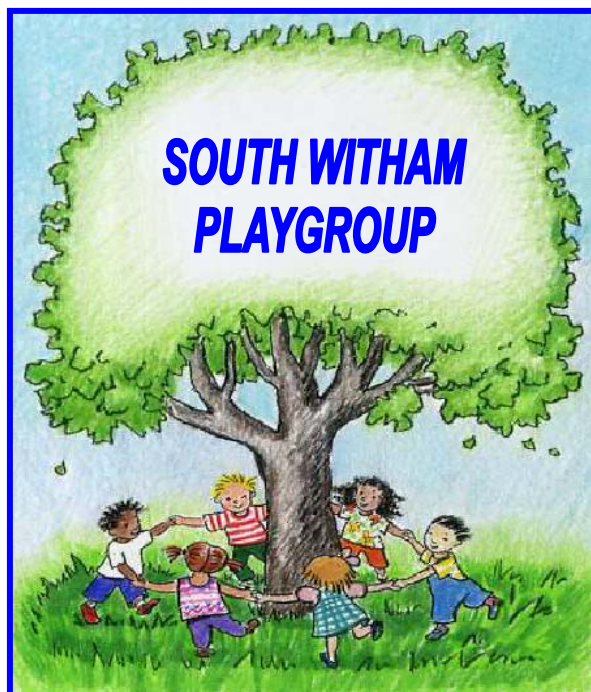


# South Witham Playgroup



## PROSPECTUS

2007/2008

### **South Witham Village Playgroup**

Water Lane  
South Witham  
Grantham, Lincolnshire  
NG33 5PH  
Tel. No. 07840 598 203

# WELCOME

## Introduction

Welcome to our Playgroup. We are a rural based Playgroup that has been established in our village for approximately 22 years and has been situated in the local Primary School for the past 18 years. This has proved very successful. Although we are completely independently from South Witham Community Primary School, we do work closely with them and have often been invited to join in some of their activities. We have also found, that when many of our children move into the school to start full time education, because they are already familiar with the surroundings and the school staff, they settle in quicker than the children coming into school for the first time.

## South Witham Village Playgroup Aims To:

- Provide high quality care and education for children primarily below statutory school age;
- Work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop;
- Add to the life and well-being of its local community; and
- Offer children and their parents a service, which promotes equality and values diversity.

As a member of South Witham Village Playgroup, your child:

- Is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- Is given generous care and attention, because of our high ratio of adults to children;
- Has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
- Is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
- Has a personal keyworker who makes sure your child makes satisfying progress;
- Is in a Playgroup which sees you as a partner in helping your child to learn and develop; and
- Is in a Playgroup in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

## Opening Times

The Playgroup is open during school term time only.

We are closed during school holidays, dates of which you will be notified of in advance.

We are open 5 days each week.

Our opening times are as follows:

<b>Mon and Wed</b>	<b>9.00 - 11.45am</b>
<b>Mon and Wed</b>	<b>12.30 - 3.00pm</b>
<b>Tues, Thurs, Fri</b>	<b>9.00 - 12.00pm</b>

Please note that the afternoon sessions held on Monday and Wednesday are for the older children, who will be going into school the following September.

We provide care and education for young children between the ages of 2 years and 4 years 11 months.

## **Fees**

The fees are **£7.50 per session**.

The fees are reviewed annually and parents are informed of any changes. They can be paid monthly/weekly/daily/half-termly/termly in advance. Fees must still be paid if your child is absent at any time. If your child has to be absent for a long period please talk to Carole Knight - Playgroup Leader or the Committee Chairperson. In order for your child to keep her/his place at the playgroup, you must pay the fees. Our policy on arrears is tough. If you miss payments on three consecutive sessions, you may lose your child's place. If, however, you have a genuine reason or difficulty in paying, then please do not hesitate to speak to either Carole Knight - Playgroup Leader or the Playgroup Treasurer, who will deal with the situation in the strictest confidence.

We currently receive funding for free educational places (Nursery Vouchers) for all three and four year olds. This is paid direct to the Playgroup the term after the child has turned three years of age. Speak to Carole Knight for further information

## **The staff that work at South Witham Village Playgroup are:**

**Carole Knight - Playgroup Leader**  
**Marie Mitchell – Playgroup assistant**  
**Judith Grindley - Playgroup Assistant**

## **The Playgroup's Timetable and Routines**

South Witham Village Playgroup believes that care and education are equally important in the experience, which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the Playgroup session are provided in ways that:

- Help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the Playgroup;
- Ensure the safety of each child;
- Help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
- Provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

## **The Session**

The Playgroup organises its sessions so that the children can choose from - and work at - a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led, small and large group activities that introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others. Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. The children have the opportunity - and are encouraged - to take part in outdoor child-chosen and adult-led activities, as well as those provided in the indoor playroom/s.

## **The Curriculum Provided by South Witham Village Playgroup**

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by South Witham Village Playgroup helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are right for their age and stage of development.

For children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, the Playgroup provides a curriculum for the foundation stage of education. This curriculum is set out in a document, published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the Department for Education and Skills, and called Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Playgroup follows this guidance.

The guidance divides children's learning and development into six areas:

- Personal, social and emotional development;
- Communication, language and literacy development;
- Mathematical development;
- Knowledge and understanding of the world;
- Physical development; and
- Creative development.

For each area, the guidance sets out early learning goals. These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of the reception year of their education.

For each early learning goal, the guidance sets out stepping stones, which describe the stages through which children are likely to pass as they move to achievement of the goal. Playgroup uses the early learning goals and their stepping stones to help us to trace each child's progress and to enable us to provide the right activities to help all of the children move towards achievement of the early learning goals.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This area of children's development covers:

- Having a positive approach to learning and finding out about the world around them;
- Having confidence in themselves and their ability to do things, and valuing their own achievements;
- Being able to get on, work and make friendships with other people, both children and adults;
- Becoming aware of - and being able to keep to - the rules which we all need to help us to look after ourselves, other people and our environment;
- Being able to dress and undress themselves, and look after their personal hygiene needs; and
- Being able to expect to have their ways of doing things respected and to respect other people's ways of doing things.

### **Communication Language and Literacy:**

This area of children's development covers:

- Being able to use conversation with one other person, in small groups and in large groups to talk with and listen to others;
- Adding to their vocabulary by learning the meaning of - and being able to use - new words;
- Being able to use words to describe their experiences;
- Getting to know the sounds and letters which make up the words we use;
- Listening to - and talking about - stories;
- Knowing how to handle books and that they can be a source of stories and information;
- Knowing the purposes for which we use writing; and
- Making their own attempts at writing.

### **Mathematical Development**

This area of children's development covers:

- Building up ideas about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- Building up ideas about patterns, the shape of objects and parts of objects, and the amount of space taken up by objects;
- Starting to understand that numbers help us to answer questions about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- Building up ideas about how to use counting to find out how many; and

- Being introduced to finding the result of adding more or taking away from the amount, we already have.

### **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

This area of children's development covers:

- Finding out about the natural world and how it works;
- Finding out about the made world and how it works;
- Learning how to choose - and use - the right tool for a task;
- Learning about computers, how to use them and what they can help us to do;
- Starting to put together ideas about past and present and the links between them;
- Beginning to learn about their locality and its special features; and
- Learning about their own and other cultures.

### **Physical Development**

This area of children's development covers:

- Gaining control over the large movements which we can make with our arms, legs and bodies, so that they can run, jump, hop, skip, roll, climb, balance and lift;
- Gaining control over the small movements we can make with our arms, wrists and hands, so that they can pick up and use objects, tools and materials; and
- Learning about the importance of - and how to look after - their bodies.

### **Creative Development**

This area of children's development covers:

- Using paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play to express their ideas and feelings; and
- Becoming interested in the way that paint, materials, music, dance, words, stories and role-play can be used to express ideas and feelings.

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children think. South Witham Village Playgroup uses the early learning goals and their stepping stones to plan and provide a range of play activities, which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the early learning goals and stepping-stones has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

### **Working Together For Your Children**

Playgroup has a high ratio of adults to children in the setting. This helps us to:

- Give time and attention to each child;
- Talk with the children about their interests and activities;
- Help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and
- Allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.

### **How Parents Take Part In The Playgroup**

As a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance, South Witham Village Playgroup recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as co-workers with you in providing care and education for your child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the Playgroup a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff;
- Helping at sessions of the Playgroup;
- Sharing their own special interests with the children;
- Helping to provide, make and look after the equipment and materials used in the children's play activities;
- Being part of the management of the Playgroup;
- Taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the Playgroup;
- Joining in community activities in which the Playgroup takes part; and
- Building friendships with other parents in the Playgroup.

### **Keyworker**

The Playgroup has a keyworker system. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she is particularly responsible. Your child's keyworker will be the person who works with you to make sure that what the Playgroup provides is right for your child's particular needs and interests. You will be informed who your child's keyworker will be, when your child starts Playgroup. The keyworker will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the Playgroup, she will help your child to benefit from the Playgroup activities.

### **Records of Achievement**

The Playgroup keeps a record of achievement for each child. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement are one of the ways in which Playgroup and parents work in partnership. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Your child's keyworker will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the keyworker to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the keyworker will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage,

### **Learning Opportunities for Adults**

As well as gaining qualifications in early years care and education, the Playgroup staff takes part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early year's care and education. The Playgroup also keeps itself up-to-date with best practice in early years care and education through the Pre-school Learning Alliance's magazine Under Five and publications produced by the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The current copy of Under Five is available for you to read.

### **Snacks**

The Playgroup makes snack times a social time at which children and adults eat together. We provide the children with a variety of healthy and nutritious foods. Do tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met.

### **Policies**

Copies of the Playgroup policies are available to all Parents. Just ask the Playgroup Leader to see them or look for a set of Policies on the Notice Board.

The Playgroup policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the Playgroup is a high quality one and that being a member of the Playgroup is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

The staff and The Committee of the Playgroup work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the Playgroup to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

### **Special Needs**

As part of the Playgroup's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs, which a child may have.

The Playgroup works to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2000). The pre-school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is **Carole Knight – Playgroup Leader**

### **The Management Of Playgroup**

A parent management committee - whose members are elected by the parents of the children who attend the Playgroup - manages the Playgroup. The elections take place at the Playgroup's Annual General Meeting, which is held each year in September.

The Committee is responsible for:

- Managing the Playgroup's finances;
- Employing and managing the staff;
- Making sure that the Playgroup has - and works to - policies which help it to provide a high quality service; and
- Making sure that the Playgroup works in partnership with the children's parents.

The Annual General Meeting is open to the parents of all of the children who attend the Playgroup. It is their forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's activities.

A list of the current members of the Committee is displayed on the Playgroup's notice board.

## **Starting at South Witham Village Playgroup**

### **The First Days**

We want your child to feel happy and safe at the Playgroup. To make sure that this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the Playgroup. The Playgroup has a policy about helping children to settle into the pre-school: a copy is available on request.

### **Clothing**

The Playgroup provides protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities.

In order to feel free to explore and experiment with all kinds of materials including messy ones, it is best to send your child dressed in clothes, which are easily washable and not too new. Please send your child with a pair of plimsolls, which can be left in a bag we supply and left on your child's coat peg. These are used for PE and outdoor apparatus and when the weather is bad, the children can change out of wellingtons and boots.

We do accept children who are not permanently dry, but we must insist that they come in either towelling training pants or disposable pull-ups. This is so that the child can easily be changed if necessary. It is also a good idea to send a couple of spare disposables and/or

at least two spare pairs of pants/knickers, as well as a spare set of clothes as accidents do happen. These again can be left in a bag on the child's coat peg.

The Playgroup encourages children to gain the skills, which help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off - and putting on - outdoor clothes. Clothing which is easy for them to manage will help them to do this.

### **Jewellery**

We must insist that children do not wear jewellery such as necklaces, rings or dangling earrings (studs are acceptable) to Playgroup. Not only is there a danger of them being caught in equipment and clothing, other children can pull on them, breaking the item or worse still, injuring the child who is wearing it. **Playgroup will not be held responsible for any loss or damage and the staff may remove the item(s) from the child if deemed necessary and return them to the parent/carer at the end of the session.**

### **Life-Saving Medication**

Playgroup staff will administer life-saving medication (such as EPIPEN or INHALERS), **only** on written instructions of the child's parent/carer. Each dose will be recorded, countersigned by another member of staff and shown to the parent/carer when they come to collect the child at the end of the session.

### **Recording of Existing Injuries or Marks**

It is an Ofsted requirement that Playgroup records any injuries or marks that the child has sustained prior to arriving at Playgroup, including grazes, bruises, cuts etc. Parent(s)/Carers should inform a member of staff of any such marks/injuries, which will then be recorded and the parent/carer will be asked to sign the record.

### **Complaints Procedure**

If you have any problems or complaints that cannot be dealt with by discussion with the Playgroup Leader, then contact the Committee Chairperson. If the issue has still not been resolved, then you can contact **OFSTED MIDLAND REGION, BUILDING C, CUMBERLAND PLACE, PARK ROW, NOTTINGHAM, NG1 6HT** on **0845 6014771**, who will endeavour to help.

### **Bullying**

Bullying comes in many forms - physical, verbal, discrimination on grounds of race, religion or gender - none of which are tolerated in within our Playgroup. Our Behaviour Policy is available for parents to see.

**South Witham Village Playgroup** hopes that you and your child enjoy being members of our Playgroup and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.