

*"It's been such a pleasure to see my daughter grow in confidence and make new friends at Puddleducks."
(Parent)*

*"I've met lots of new people, learned loads of new things and really felt part of the village community"
(Committee member).*

Puddleducks Pre-School Welcome Booklet



*"Children are very well-behaved. They display both high levels of involvement and well-being, demonstrating strong attachments and a strong sense of belonging. Staff have both high and realistic expectations of children. They know the children very well and are able to differentiate their teaching methods accordingly.
(Ofsted)*

*"We were reading a book about feelings and talking about things that make us happy. One little girl, with a huge smile on her face, said, 'I know! Going to Puddleducks!'".
(Parent helper)*

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www.facebook.com/overpuddleducks



Welcome

Thank you for expressing an interest in Puddleducks Pre-School. This booklet introduces you to Puddleducks and is intended to give you all the information you will need to decide whether it is right for your child. The best way to judge this is to pay us a visit, so when you have looked through this booklet please contact us for more information or to arrange a visit.

About Puddleducks Pre-school

Puddleducks Pre-School is a committee-run charity pre-school group. It provides flexible care and early education for children aged between 2 years 6 months and school age. Puddleducks is housed in the purpose-built pre-school rooms at Over Community Centre, right at the heart of the village.

Puddleducks is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA) and as such, has adopted the constitution of the PLA. We aim to encourage all aspects of a child's development to give each child a secure foundation on which to build future learning, as well as contributing to the enjoyment of their early childhood.

In 2014, Puddleducks was inspected by Ofsted (the Office for Standards in Education) and was described as either 'outstanding' or 'good' in all areas of our provision. This is a hard standard to meet and demonstrates the hard work our staff put in to make Puddleducks such a success.

Our aims at Puddleducks Pre-School

1. High-quality care and learning opportunities by experienced and qualified staff, who undertake continuing training programmes to ensure best practice and a wide knowledge of the issues that surround childcare and early education.
2. A balanced curriculum, based on the Early Years Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum.
3. A safe, stimulating and welcoming environment, with areas which enable children to be active both indoors and outside, as well as times to relax and be quiet.
4. Equal opportunities for all children, working hard to meet each child's individual needs.
5. Clear policies and procedures to maintain standards, ensuring the safety and well-being of the children at all times.
6. The opportunity for parents and carers to be involved as much as they wish throughout a child's development during the pre-school years.



The running of Puddleducks Pre-school

Puddleducks is a community pre-school, run by an elected committee of parents in consultation with staff. The committee members are all volunteers, and are responsible for reviewing policies, procedures, practice, and for the employment of the staff. This is a responsible but very rewarding position, helping parents to be directly involved in making decisions about their children's pre-school.

All parents are encouraged to join the committee and attend committee meetings. Every year the committee holds its AGM, which parents are also welcome to attend. Committee members or staff will be happy to discuss with you how you can get involved.

Staff

Our committed, experienced and highly-trained staff make Puddleducks a special place.

Play Leader Mandy Butt

Deputy Play Leaders Rachel Skelson and Joanne Sibthorpe

Senior Play Assistant Claire Leggott

Play Assistant Emma Baker.

Mandy holds a Children's Care Learning & Development (CCLD) NVQ Level 3, is a Special Education Needs Coordinator, Child Protection Coordinator, Common Assessment Framework Coordinator and qualified first aider. Rachel holds a CCLD NVQ at Level 3, is a Child Protection Coordinator, Equalities Named Coordinator and qualified first aider who has also been trained in Behavioural management and Looked after Child Coordinator. Joanne has a National Nursery Examining Board qualification at level 3 and an Introductory Certificate in Management. Joanne is also a Child Protection Coordinator, Equalities Named Coordinator and qualified first aider. Claire Leggott holds Level 3 Certificate in supporting teaching and learning in schools (RQF) and Qualified First aider.

Key persons

Puddleducks uses a key person system whereby each child is assigned a particular member of staff who will monitor and record their progress throughout their time at pre-school.

Children are assessed according to the Early Years Foundation Stage, and we continue to assess and record their progress via staff observation, photographic evidence and the child's own work. Each learning and development record is regularly updated by the key worker and these are available to view at all times. There are two parent consultation evenings per year, where parents and carers can discuss their child's progress with their key person.



A day in the life of a Puddleducks Pre-schooler

Young children learn best through play, real-life experiences and good conversation. This is what we aim to provide at Puddleducks. We think that children flourish in an ordered environment where everyone knows what is expected of them. The children are free to develop their play and learning, pursuing what interests them most, with the minimum of adult direction. We try to help the children develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

When the children arrive at puddleducks, they hang their coats up and register themselves by finding their name and putting it in the register box. They are free to choose their own activity, but are encouraged through the session to try the activities set out around the seven areas of learning.

We provide a varied programme of experiences and activities that encourage the children's development through play. They use natural materials such as sand, water and clay. They may paint, draw or make prints. We also introduce them to model-making, cooking and other craft activities. The book corner is equipped with comfortable cushions, and lots of books which are changed regularly and well-used. We also provide children with a choice of construction equipment, dressing-up and role-play activities. Letters and sounds and Rising 5 activities are brought into every days planning.

Outdoor play is as important as indoor play, and all the children are offered the choice of outdoor play throughout the session. We have a purpose-built outdoor play area with an all weather canopy , a sandpit, ride-on toys, a climbing frame, Mud kitchen, a play house and even some gardening equipment. We have a range of equipment to meet the individual needs of children at different stages of development.

Most of the time, children take their work home with them, so that proud parents can display it! We also like to display some of their work at Puddleducks and put them in the children's special art folders, which gives the children a real sense of achievement.

A healthy snack bar is available during each session, prepared by the staff and children, where the children can enjoy a drink of milk or water, a selection of fruit and vegetables, and a chat with their friends. We ask parents to provide a piece of fruit to each session to be shared at the snack bar. If a child has special dietary requirements we ensure that appropriate food or drink is provided.

The morning/afternoon activities are rounded off with circle time where adults lead the children in reading a story and singing songs and rhymes. These are often separated in older/younger children groups enabling to have group activities around their own needs and development. We ask that children are collected promptly at their end of the session.



Tuesday afternoons are rising 5 sessions and Wednesday afternoons are forest school.

Learning at Puddleducks

We put the emphasis on learning through play to make each stage of a child's development as enjoyable as possible.

As a government-funded pre-school, we use the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This is appropriate for the learning of pre-school children and helps to prepare them for the National Curriculum, which begins at Year 1 in primary school.

The EYFS is based on four principles:

1. A Unique Child: Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
2. Positive Relationships: children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
3. Enabling Environments: The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
4. Learning and Development: Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

Opening hours and fees

Puddleducks offers sessions Mondays to Friday from 9am to 3pm, children can do 9am-12pm, 9am-1pm, 12pm-3pm, 1pm-3pm or all day. We do ask that children attend a minimum of 4 hours per week, this enables us to maintain continuity in the curriculum and, in our experience, helps children to be more settled at the pre-school. While we make every effort to ensure that we meet parents' requirements for the days their children attend, we will only be able to confirm available sessions the half term before your child is due to start with us.

We have lunch from 12 until 1, and we ask that if children are staying at Puddleducks during this time, they bring a healthy packed lunch. As children get older, this is a good way of introducing them to staying at school for lunch.



Registration fee

In line with many other pre-schools, Puddleducks charge a one-off registration fee of £10. This fee is non-returnable. It helps us to cover the cost of the administration involved in registering each child, and also pays for a smart book bag for your child to bring to Puddleducks.

Fees

Puddleducks charges a competitive £4.00 an hour for each child aged three or over and £4.25 an hour for each two year old.

Fees are payable in advance half-termly. Unfortunately, we are unable to refund fees if your child is absent from a session. Fees are reviewed on an annual basis and parents/carers are given notice of any change a minimum of one month prior to the change.

Government vouchers

All children aged 3 and over are entitled to 15 free hours of early years education a week for 38 weeks a year. Your child will be eligible the term following their third birthday until they reach the statutory school age. In addition, two year olds may be eligible for a funded place if their parent(s) claims any benefit. Please speak to a member of staff for more information. We offer 30 free hours government-funding for children aged 3 and over who are entitled.

Term times

Puddleducks follows the pattern of the Over County Primary School terms, however, we typically open on school training days.

Childcare vouchers and payment plans

We are happy to accept childcare vouchers and to offer payment plans as required, please speak to a member of staff for more information.

Policies and procedures

Clothing

It is important that children can participate fully in all activities at Puddleducks, so we ask parents to send their child in suitable clothing and footwear. They need clothes that will let them take part in indoor and outdoor play, and enable them to take themselves to the toilet, if they are able to do so. Outdoor play is very important for young children so during wet weather, we ask parents to bring dry footwear for their child to change into, and during cold weather, children need gloves, and a warm



hat. In hot weather, they need a sunhat. If sun protection cream is needed, we ask parents to apply this before each session (a minimum factor of 15 is recommended). All items should be clearly named. For health and safety reasons, we advise that children do not wear flip-flops.

We understand that children vary in the age they give up wearing nappies, and we support parents in toilet training.

Personal items

We understand that some children will feel more secure with a favourite toy or comforter, especially as they start pre-school. However, we do ask that if child needs to bring a special toy, he or she only brings one, and that it is clearly named. We discourage toy weapons, such as guns or swords. Toys which may be considered suitable for one child could be a hazard or upsetting for another.

Safety

We are very safety-conscious and each morning we carry out a risk assessment of our setting. This includes checking the door-locks and the temperature of the water; ensuring that all power sockets are covered; and that the outside play area is free from hazardous items. Any accidents that do occur, despite our best efforts to avoid them, are recorded in writing and parents are shown the record.

Collection

We have an Authorised Collection list which should be filled in before child starts at Puddleducks. Parents are asked to fill in a form giving names of all the people parents may allow to collect their child (for example, parents, childminder, grandparents). We require the signature of each of these people. We will not let a child leave Puddleducks without parents' authorisation.

Confidentiality

We will keep information parents give us about their child and family confidential.

Illness

So that we maintain a healthy environment at Puddleducks, we ask that parents keep any child who has an infection at home. We require that any child who has had diarrhoea or sickness does not attend Puddleducks for at least **48 hours after** their symptoms have stopped. Any other illness must be completely cleared before the child can return to Puddleducks. If a child requires any medication to be administered at Puddleducks, it is essential that staff are provided with clear and specific written authorisation to do this. All medication should come in its labelled box or bottle. We will record the doses we give a child. Parents will be asked to fill in our medication book and sign it, witnessed by 2 staff members.



Beyond Puddleducks

We have a good relationship with Over County Primary School. Reception class teachers visit Puddleducks, and we also arrange for older children to visit the school. We bring in Rising Five activities every day and make the transition to School as easy as possible.

Equalities Policy

Puddleducks is committed to equality of opportunity for all children and families and we take positive action to eliminate discrimination in all areas of our work.

We recognise that many different types of family groups love and care successfully for children. We aim to offer support to all families.

We aim to help children to grow up understanding and enjoying differences between people, and showing respect for people who are different from themselves. Our staff are aware of the need to reflect cultural diversity in planning activities. We have a diverse range of resources which reflect positively different backgrounds and cultures.

Our Equalities Co-ordinator; Jo Sibthorpe and Rachel Skelson who are happy to discuss our equalities policy more fully with parents. Parents are always welcome to see a copy of the full equalities policy.

Special Educational Needs

Puddleducks adheres to the DfES Code of Practice on special educational needs and also to the guidelines supplied to the private and voluntary providers of pre-school education. The needs and progress of children who have special educational needs are monitored by our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and the child's keyperson. We work closely with the parents of all children in the group to draw upon parents' knowledge and expertise in planning provision for individual children.

If it is felt that a child's needs cannot be met in the pre-school without additional personnel and/or equipment, funding will be sought to ensure that provision is appropriate to the child's needs. We work in liaison with relevant professionals and agencies outside the group in order to meet children's specific needs.

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators Mandy Butt and Sharon Shepherd who are happy to discuss our special educational needs policy more fully with parents. Parents are always welcome to see a copy of the full special educational needs policy.

Child protection / Staying Safe

If we have any concerns that a child who attends Puddleducks is being harmed, we have a duty to report what we observe to the social services department. Parents are always welcome to see a copy



of the full child protection policy. Our Child Protection Co-ordinator is Rachel Skelson , Mandy Butt and Jo Sibthorpe.

Payment of fees

It is Puddleducks policy to pursue all unpaid fees. If you are having difficulty paying fees, please talk Mandy, Rachel or Jo. It may be possible to arrange to pay by instalments.

Here are some useful contacts:

PayPlan: This service has no hidden charges or management fees so every penny goes towards to paying off consumers' debts as quickly as possible. Call 0845 085 4298 or visit www.payplan.com

National Debt Helpline: Expert advice and a free self-help pack. Call 0800 808 4000 Or visit www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Citizens' Advice Bureau: Advice Charity. Look in your local phone book or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Consumer Credit Counselling Service: Charity funded by the financial services industry, specialising in debt management plans. Call 0800 138 1111 or visit www.cccs.co.uk

Community Legal Advice Service (CLS): provides assistance with legal problems. Visit the CLS website on www.justask.org.uk

Complaints

To help the pre-school run smoothly, all parents are welcome to talk to members of staff about any worries or concerns they may have. Any formal complaints should be brought to the attention of the Play Leader and Deputy leaders. A meeting with the parents or carer would then follow to discuss the nature of the complaint. The Play Leader and management committee would then work with the person or people concerned to resolve the complaint to the best of our abilities. Parents have the right to contact Ofsted if they feel a complaint is unresolved, on 0300 123 1231.

Absence

If a child is absent from a session of Puddleducks at which they are expected and no phone call has been received from the parents or carer by 10am informing us of their absence, then a courtesy call will be made by Puddleducks to confirm the child's absence. This policy, which is in line with many other pre-schools and schools, has been adopted to ensure the safety of children.

Communicating with parents

Parents and carers are a vital part of Puddleducks. The staff and committee work hard to maintain regular and clear communication with parents, in a number of ways, including:

- A newsletter every half term
- The noticeboard, situation just outside the main entrance to Puddleducks
- A parent consultation evening twice a year



- A suggestions book, held at Puddleducks
- And staff and committee members are always happy to talk to parents about any issues or concerns they wish to raise.
- General day to day talk

How can parents and carers get involved?

As their children make a start in education at pre-school, many parents and carers naturally want to be involved, and at Puddleducks we encourage this. This can take many practical forms, such as washing aprons or toys, doing a Tesco shop every now and then, volunteering to help with fund-raising activities, or taking on a committee role. Or perhaps a parent who has a special skill such as playing an instrument may share their interest with us in the group.

Parent Stay and play

Research shows that children learn better when their parents are involved in their education, especially in the early years. We ask that a parent or carer of each child comes to help out at Puddleducks one or two sessions per half term. At the beginning of each term, parents are asked to sign up to the parent help rota for the times they are available to help at Puddleducks. This helps us to exceed our Ofsted ratio of children to adults during sessions, so each child gets more adult time. It also helps parents and carers to see what their children are doing at pre-school so that they can talk about their day. Mums, Dads, carers and grandparents are all welcome as helpers. Other children being cared for by the helper are also welcome. Helpers may be asked to do the following things:

- Set up and clear away activities
- Assist the children in activities
- Do some washing up
- Sing loudly when required
- Read stories
- Assist staff in other ways.
- Have fun!

We try to make Puddleducks an enjoyable place to be for parents as well as children. We organise regular events to provide resources for Puddleducks and welcome parental support. These are great fun for all and in the past have included a Mothers' Day tea party, sponsored Easter egg hunt, Olympic Fun Day, BBQ and Christmas shopping fairs. They offer parents the chance to get to know one another too.



What to do now

If you think that Puddleducks sounds like the right place for your child, or you have more questions to ask, please contact our Registrar, Mandy Butt or Rachel Skelson on 07866 096825 or via email – overpuddleduckspreschool@gmail.com to arrange a visit.

If you feel ready to apply for a place, please complete the form on the next page and return it to the setting with your non-refundable £10 registration fee.

We look forward to meeting you!



Application to Over Puddleducks Pre-School
To be completed by the child's parent or guardian

Completion of this form will mean your child is added to our waiting list, you will be contacted the half term before your child is able to start with available days/times.

Name of child.....

Date of birth.....

Name(s) and address(es) of parents.....

.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Daytime contact number.....

Email Address:

I would like my child to start at Over Puddleducks Pre-School

- as soon as possible
- at (age of child).

I have enclosed a £10 registration fee, payable to Over Puddleducks Pre-School. I understand that this fee is non-refundable.

Should I find that I no longer need this place, I will inform the pre-school as soon as possible.

Signature of parent.....

Date

For completion by Over Puddleducks Pre-school
Confirmation of days/times

Childs name

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	