



WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOUR CHILD STARTS AT PRE-SCHOOL: FAQs

Settling in

This varies from child to child. Most children settle quickly but some take a little longer. Don't worry if your child cries when you leave them – and/or cries when you come to pick them up – this is common and will pass with time. It does not mean they have been crying all morning! If that were the case, we would ring you.

Behaviour

We have a full and detailed Behaviour Management Policy which is on our website and which we would urge you to read. But here are a few salient points:

- Small children often say unkind things to each other ("I'm not your friend" etc); and often behave in an inconsiderate way (snatching toys etc). In most cases this is normal behaviour and you should not worry too much about it. We use positive strategies for dealing with inconsiderate behaviour as detailed in our policy.
- Bullying in children under 5 is very rare. Children that young are not generally able to carry out a premeditated action to cause distress to another child.
- The behaviour of children at Child's Play is something we are proud of. But it is almost inevitable that at some point your child will be pushed or shoved by another child. This is normal behaviour in pre-school age children. We deal with such instances swiftly and appropriately so they do not become a problem and we let you know if your child has been involved in such an incident.

Making friends

It is normal for children to not even begin to form friendship groups until they are around 4 years old. Some may not do that until they are at school. It does not mean they are unhappy. Small children love being around other children – they watch and learn. Please do not be concerned if your child does not have a particular friend.

Illness

If this is the first time your child has been in a large group of children, they will pick up lots of coughs and colds etc. We have had very few cases of headlice or worms at Child's Play, but they are examples of things which can spread rapidly in groups of children. We always urge parents to keep unwell children at home to minimise the spread, but we cannot prevent it completely.

Toileting

We do not stipulate that children must be out of nappies when they start with us but we strongly encourage it. We have noticed an upwards drift in the age at which some children are being toilet trained and request that as a minimum parents should at least try to toilet train their children before they start pre-school (unless they are starting as a young two year old). If, however, your child is still in nappies when they start, we will agree a timetable for toilet training and will tell you every time we change a nappy and every time your child has had "an accident".

Dummies

There is a significant amount of evidence and advice about the damage dummies can cause to development, particularly speech development. They are not appropriate for pre-school age children and should not be brought in. If you would like help, advice or support in weaning your child off a dummy we would be happy to help.

Toys from home

We discourage children from bringing toys from home into pre-school (unless it's related to sound of the week) as they can get lost or broken and sometimes prevent the children from joining in properly as their hands aren't free.

Speaking to staff

We are all more than happy to speak with you about anything. Sometimes it's busy at drop off and pick up but that does not mean you can't speak to us. You can also ask for an appointment to come in at a more suitable time, or you can ring up or email us your questions. We would much rather you ask us – no matter how busy we seem – than have you unsure of something.

Snacks and lunches

You need to provide a water bottle each day; we provide a snack of carrot or cheese. Lunches should be balanced and healthy, but not so big that it takes them the whole session to eat it! Also, if you could provide food and containers which the children can manage themselves that would be helpful. Please can you make sure **everything is named**.

We also have a **"no nuts" policy**. So please make sure your lunches and snacks are nut free.