



Elstree School

Including all of the Pre-Prep Department and Early Years
Foundation Stage

Elstree Pre-Prep Parents' Handbook

Elstree Pre-Prep includes Nursery to Year 2. It is informally known as Home Farm.

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I. Mission Statement and Ethos

The aim of our Pre-Pre department is to provide a secure, stimulating and happy environment where the children can begin their education. We aim for the children to leave Elstree Pre-Prep inspired and enthused. We want their first encounters of learning to be full of excitement and joy, framing their approach to education for the years ahead. Our dedicated team of teachers plan learning experiences for the children so that they can learn, without necessarily realising they are doing so. We encourage each child to be excited to learn, to ask questions and to seek to find out more. We have high expectations for each child and aim to ensure that appropriate challenges across a wide curriculum base are set and reached. We aim to work closely with parents so that together we can develop in full each individual child's particular aptitudes and potential. It is our wish to establish confident, independent learners who see challenges as excitements. All of our teaching at Elstree Pre-Prep is underpinned by a strong Christian ethos.

2. Quotations from our last ISI Report March 2015

"In the EYFS, outcomes for the children are excellent."

"Staff have excellent relationships with children and very high expectations of what they can achieve, skilfully motivating them to learn and encouraging them to explore."

"The quality of the pupils' achievements and learning is excellent. Pupils of all ages achieve highly, both in academic and extra-curricular activities."

"As a result of the excellent individual care that they receive and the breadth of their individual experiences, by the time that pupils leave the school their standard of personal development is excellent."

"Pupils confident and friendly manner is a result of the excellent pastoral support that they receive."

"Pupils have a thoughtful appreciation of the world around them, a well-defined sense of right and wrong, and of fair play, and a willingness to take on responsibility."

"The school is well led and managed."

"Pupils sporting prowess is very strong. They enjoy being active and participating in the many opportunities to them, from football, rugby, hockey and cricket to sailing, shooting and riding."

"Pupils spiritual development is excellent. Pupils are happy, self-confident and eager to learn. Their sense of self-worth is demonstrated by their openness, their pride in their school and their willingness to make a positive contribution to school life."

"Teachers inject a great deal of enthusiasm into their lessons, so that pupils are highly motivated to do their best and achieve high standards in all that they do."

"The school has a thorough process to identify, screen and track pupils with a team of dedicated and specialist staff on hand to support everyone across the school."

"Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress through the school."

"The contribution of curricular and extra-curricular provision is excellent."

"From the time they join the school, excellent links are established with the parents, who feel fully involved in the life of the school."

Independent Schools Inspectorate Report, 2015

3. Introduction

This handbook is designed to help parents know more about Elstree Pre-Prep. We hope that you find it useful as a guide to procedures and routines. Please do read it and keep it available, as it will help you and your child to gain more from life at Elstree Pre-Prep. There is no doubt that you will gain most from the school if you all know what the expectations are.

4. Staff Responsibilities

Please do contact your child's **Class Teacher** if you have concerns over any aspect of your child's life at Elstree Pre-Prep; it is s/he who has direct responsibility for your child.

The **Head** of Elstree Pre-Prep is always available and should be contacted if you feel that your concerns have not been resolved.

0118 971 3296 (office) or email sgeorge@elstreeschool.org.uk or aholifield@elstreeschool.org.uk

5. General Information

Absences

If your child is absent from school then please notify the School by telephone between 8.00am and 8.30am on 0118 971 3296 or email sgeorge@elstreeschool.org.uk.

After School Activities

We currently offer French, tennis, art, netball, dance, judo and football to Years 1 and 2. Athletics replaces football in the Summer Term. Children in Reception can do Dance and join Athletics in the Summer Term. The clubs are taken by a peripatetic teacher and incur a charge. Elstree Hour is available to Year 2 children. This is a programme of various activities run by the Prep School staff, it is currently held on a few Wednesdays in the Summer Term. There is no charge for these sessions.

After School Club – Ducklings

This facility is available from 3.30pm to 6.00pm for Nursery to Year 2 children. This period of time after the school day aims to be a contrast to the learning environment, giving the children time to relax and choose for themselves in a supervised and caring place. They are given a snack and may be collected at any time before 6.00pm. Children may also join the After School Club after activities such as tennis, if requested. There is a charge for this facility. A Ducklings session will cost £10, or £3.50 if your child joins after s/he has finished a club at 4.30.

Please complete a Ducklings form to book places or contact the office. If you need to contact the Ducklings staff **between the hours of 3.30-6.00pm the numbers are 01189 713296 or 01189 713302.**

Arrival and Departure from School

Arrival and departure is via the main entrance. We provide an early morning club from 8.00am – 8.15am. Numbers are limited; please contact the school office if you wish your child to attend. Otherwise, please arrive no earlier than 8.15am. Parents are responsible for their

children until a Miss Holifield meets at the door at 8.15am. The bell is rung in the playground at 8.30am for the start of school day.

The School day ends at 3.30pm (11.30am for Nursery children doing the morning session only). If you wish your child to be collected by anyone other than yourself, please notify your child's Form Teacher. This is vital; we can never allow another adult to take your child without your consent.

Curriculum

The Elstree Pre-Prep curriculum will include the following areas of learning:

English	Mathematics	Science	History
Geography	Religious Studies	French	ICT
Physical Education	Music	Games	Art, DT
PSHEE	Swimming (summer term)		

Nursery and Reception follow the **Foundation Stage** curriculum which is broken down into three prime areas and four specific areas of learning (see appendix A)

Prime Areas

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific Areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Art and Design

Religious Education

Teaching is Christian based and all form groups take part in an act of daily worship. The emphasis in the school is based on the Bible and through this we encourage the children to have care and concern for others. It is the hope that the teaching is sensitive to children in the school who are of other faiths, or none, and that it is presented in such a way that no child is confused or offended. Grace is said before meals. Each day begins and ends with a simple prayer.

Daily Routine

The school timetable will be based on this outline:

8.15 – 8.30	Arrive
8.30	Bell/Registration
8.40	Lessons (Assembly Monday, Tuesday & Friday)
10.10-10.30	Break Year 1 & 2
11.00-11.30	Break Nursery & Reception
10.30-11.45	Lessons
11.50-12.30	Lunch
12.30-1.20	Break

1.20
3.30

Registration/Lessons
End of School Day

Dining Room

Lunch is provided for all full time pupils and the boys and girls are encouraged to eat well. They must try at least a small amount of each course as it is felt that this is an important part of their education. Meals are served on a traditional family basis with lunch tables being headed by a member of staff. Good manners are encouraged throughout. If your child has an allergy, then please put this information in writing. In the morning break the children have milk/water and fruit.

Fire Drills

Children are taken through a number of fire drills each term and made aware of all safety procedures.

Health

We follow the Public Health England (PHE) guidelines. Please refer to this on <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england> (Guidance on infection control in schools and other child care settings).

Medical Treatment

Should your child require medical treatment other than the normal "First Aid", you will be notified as soon as possible (once the incident has been dealt with). Please ensure that we have a contact number at all times. If you wish your child to continue a course of antibiotics during school hours or to receive other medical attention that is within the capabilities of the Elstree Pre-Prep staff e.g. inhalers, you must sign a consent form. These forms are kept in every classroom. The majority of the Elstree Pre-Prep staff have paediatric first aid training and there is a qualified nurse at the main school.

Parental Information

It is important that the staff know of anything happening at home that may affect your child/children, for example the death of a pet, moving house, news of a sick relative, or a parent being away. We act in loco parentis and it is vital that we know your arrangements about those looking after your child/children. It would help enormously if you would supply these details in writing particularly if both parents are away, ensuring we always have an emergency contact telephone number.

Parents' Meetings

All the staff at Elstree Pre-Prep share your desire for your child to make as much progress as possible. All children are different; they develop at different rates and in different areas. Please try not to compare your child's progress with others; it is not a race. The education they receive now sets the foundation for the rest of their lives.

You are most welcome to discuss your child's progress with any member of staff after school or by special arrangement. There are book reviews in the Autumn and Lent terms when your child will show you his or her own work. In addition there are formal Parents' Evenings each term. Details of dates of these are in the school calendar and on the intranet.

School Parent Portal

We are keen to encourage parents to see this as their principal source of news and information. To access it you will need to register for an account, the details of which will have been sent to you. Please contact us if you have not received them by the start of term. Please be aware that these registration details can be used as many times as you need to set up separate access ids. Once registered, you can access the Parent Portal from the Elstree website, www.elstreeschool.org.uk, click on the Parents' Login link when the "username and password" dialogue box appears. When the Parent Portal Login page appears, enter the user name and password you registered and this will take you to the home page of the School Intranet.

School Website and Social Media

The school internet regularly posts school news and photos under 'What's On' and on social media including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Vimeo.

Newsletters

The Head of Elstree Pre-Prep and the Headmaster send out newsletters during the term. These are to keep parents fully informed of important events or occasions, additional fixtures, and so on.

Notices

Please do read these as they carry a great deal of useful information.

Calendar and Call List

The Call List is placed in your child's bag on the first day of each term. It is a very important booklet because it contains the term's calendar, times for the start and end of term and many other useful details. A live version of this Calendar is available on the School Parent Portal and is kept updated.

'Salvo' Magazine

The Salvo Magazine provides a full record of the events and achievements of the whole school year. It is published in the Autumn and a copy is given to all current parents.

Pre-Prep Friends

This is a committee of parents who arrange social events and support the school by organising some fund raising activities. They are a valued group of people who actively welcome new parents to the school.

Homework

Year 1 and 2 have spellings to learn and they are also allocated maths games from the Abacus scheme once the work has been covered in lessons. This is an ideal way to consolidate their class work. In addition, Year 2 start to learn their times tables and are encouraged to practise them at home. Children will bring home a reading book to share with you each evening. Repetition is an essential part of the reading process. Please be patient and try not to convey to your child that he or she should really be on the "next book". Please read to your child regularly throughout his or her time at Elstree Pre-Prep. Do also remember that being able to comprehend and talk about text is a vital part of reading. Simply racing through books will not aid a child's reading. The experience of listening to storybooks enables children to practise and to become familiar with several reading processes. There is strong evidence too that young children's vocabularies grow from listening to storybooks.

It is very important at this stage of their young lives that they are praised and encouraged for their efforts.

Reports

A written report is produced at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms.

School Account

Parents of new pupils will receive their first account shortly after the end of the term and before their child starts at Elstree Pre-Prep.

The school fees become due and must be paid before the first day of each term. A surcharge on outstanding accounts will be payable at the rate of 2% per month from the first day of term.

Lost Property

The school does not insure children's property and parents are advised to check that their own policy will adequately cover their child's belongings while at school. Naming uniform does make it much easier to return lost clothing.

Parking

Please park carefully and not in front of the farmhouse between 7.45am-8.45am. **Please ensure that your child is not playing on the drive or grass area in front of the School; it is too dangerous. Please accompany your child to the front of the Pre-Prep to meet Miss Holifield.**

Play

Well-planned play, both indoors and outdoors, is a key way in which young children learn with enjoyment and challenge. In playing, they behave in different ways: sometimes their play will be boisterous; sometimes they will describe and discuss what they are doing; sometimes they will be quiet and reflective as they play.

- We encourage children to be active, independent learners.
- We provide a rich and stimulating environment with a variety of provision indoors and outside.
- All the children are valued, included and safe.
- The children engage in adult-directed activities and those which they initiate themselves.
- The children learn to share, interact and observe others through working together.
- The partnership between home and school is positively nurtured.
- The curriculum is relevant, imaginative and creative.
- Profiles are kept for all children in the Foundation Stage and progress is noted and learning priorities identified for each child.
- There is an emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. It is crucial, however, to remember the importance of creativity and imagination and the contribution they make to other areas of learning.

Trips and Outings

These are arranged from time to time and are conducted at all times with safety in mind. The children will travel only in cars or coaches with seat belts fitted. Any food necessary will be provided by the School. Children may not bring their own drinks or sweets.

Learning Development (SEN, EAL and Able and Talented)

Children at Elstree Pre-Prep are encouraged to be individuals with their own interests and needs. The class teacher will plan the curriculum and activities so that children in their care can access them and make progress. Where teachers have a concern about a child's progress, they will contact the Head of Learning Support for advice. Possible intervention may then be offered. This can take the form of differentiated support or extension in the classroom, 1:1 lessons or support or extension from external educational practitioners.

Policies

Our school policies can be accessed via our website and found on our school intranet page.

Staff

During your time in Pre-Prep, you are likely to get to know the following staff:

Alice Holifield (Head of Elstree Pre-Prep and Year 1 Class Teacher)
Sarah George (Elstree Pre-Prep Secretary)
Vikki Thornburrow (Head of EYFS and Nursery Teacher)
Katie Sanford (Nursery Assistant)
Jessica Rollo (Nursery and Reception Assistant)
Hannah Jones (Reception Teacher)
Sophie O'Neill (Reception Assistant)
Lara Shaw (Year 1 Class Teacher)
Alexandra Hartley (Year 1 Assistant and Ducklings After School Club Lead)
Rachael Baxter (Year 2 Class Teacher)
Patricia Langford-Thomas (Year 2 Class Teacher)
Cath Kidd (Year 2 classroom assistant)
Anna Oliver (Drama Teacher)
Liz Collins (Music Teacher)
James Morris (PE Teacher)
Rebecca Biruls (Dance Teacher)
Charlotte Hawkins (French Teacher)

6. Uniform List

Please ensure that your child wears the correct uniform at all times. Alternatives are not acceptable. **All items on this list, except footwear and the waterproof trousers, should be obtained from the uniform shop** which is located at Elstree Pre-Prep and run by Shelly Francis. The opening hours are Mondays from 8am to 9am and Fridays from 8am to 9am or you can email uniformshop@elstreeschool.org.uk to arrange an alternative appointment. Everything **MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED** with a name-tape in the collar, the waistband or as shown in the diagram.

Autumn and Spring Term	
*Children may return to school in either their winter or summer uniform in September. After half term, they are advised to wear Winter Uniform.	
Boys	
Short trousers	medium grey (boys)
Long trousers (Winter only)	medium grey Years 1 & 2 (optional, boys only)
Sweater	navy blue, crew neck (boys)
Socks	³ / ₄ grey (boys)
Shirt	pale blue short sleeved cotton
Girls	
Kilt	blue and pink
Cardigan	navy
Polo Neck	pale blue
Tights or ³ / ₄ socks	navy
Uniform for all children	
Waterproof Coat	navy blue
Waterproof trousers	navy blue Years 1 & 2 - available in outdoor shops
All in one waterproof	Nursery and Reception - Buy from www.muddypuddles.com
School shoes	navy or black, velcro fastening preferred
School hat	either pink or navy
Gloves	navy
Mittens	Nursery and Reception- navy
Elstree Sweatshirt	navy with the Elstree crest
Tracksuit trousers	navy (2 pairs)
Trainers	velcro fastening preferred
P.E. shorts	navy
P.E. shirt	white
P.E socks	short white
Gym bag	navy
Gym shoes & plimsole bag	Reception, Year 1 & 2 only: black or white non marking shoes with velcro fastenings and a blue plimsole bag

Football boots, shin pads and football socks	Year 1 & 2 - for after school football club on Fridays only. In Year 2 the football socks need to be blue for matches
Summer Term or First half of the Autumn Term	
Girls	
Dress	blue and white striped
Socks	short, white (girls)
Blue cardigan	navy
Boys – as with the Autumn and Spring term, with the change in socks	
Socks	short, grey (boys)
All	
Sun hat	white
Swimming costume. Girls need a hat.	Years 1 & 2 – any colour
Swimming bag	Years 1 & 2 – any colour
Towel	Years 1 & 2 – any colour

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT
Elstree Water bottle
Pre-Prep Book Bag
Wellington boots - any colour
Pre-Prep Art apron - for Reception, Year 1 and 2
Napkin ring for lunch - named
Recorder and practice book for Year 2 – Both are provided by the school and the cost will be added to your end of term account. Year 2 learn the recorder from the Lent term onwards through to Years 3 and 4.
FOR RECEPTION AND NURSERY AT THE WOODS ON A WEDNESDAY
Waterproof Mittens – navy – buy from www.muddypuddles.com
Woolly socks – any colour
Snow boots (optional)
Neck warmer (optional) - https://www.muddypuddles.com/ski-wear/breezy_fleece_neck_warmer_midnight_navy.htm

7. Valuables

Possessions inevitably go missing in all schools. Please do not send your child to school with anything of great monetary or sentimental value. Please inform the form teacher if it has been necessary to do so, so that special care can be taken with the item. The School, however, cannot accept responsibility for any articles of value brought into the School.

8. The Foundation Stage at Elstree Pre-Prep

*I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand*

We follow the Early Years Curriculum in Nursery and Reception. A breakdown of it is included below.

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

a) Making New Friends

By the time children start school, they will have met their teacher and many of the children who will start school with them.

Many children make friends easily while for others the process takes a little time. Some young children will happily play alongside other children without the need for a special friend.

We structure the classroom activities in such a way that making friends becomes a natural process and we take every care to ensure that children feel happy, safe and secure in their new environment.

b) Learning to share

One of our main aims is to foster a sharing, caring environment. We are constantly promoting the need to consider the feelings and viewpoints of others, as well as our own.

Gradually, children learn that what they say and do has consequences for themselves and for others. This is an important part of their development.

Through play or, as we would rather call it “active learning”, children learn co-operation, consideration and respect for other children’s ideas and feelings.

c) Doing things for ourselves

We encourage children to be independent in thought, word and deed and they are guided towards looking after their own needs as soon as possible. This is not to say that we would not help a child. Indeed, no child is ever left to struggle or to feel worried, upset or anxious. The important factor is the willingness to try.

Communication, Language & Literacy

a) Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening are the skills on which all learning depends. Children use language in their play. When their talk is valued, children become more confident in experimenting with and developing their language.

b) Looking at Books

Many children believe that when they start school they will learn to read and that they will achieve it on day one. With very few exceptions, children do learn to read, but it takes a little longer than that!

Children who come to school knowing about books and stories, who regard books as a source of enjoyment, excitement and information, will already understand the purpose of reading and will be eager to do so.

Through enjoying books, children learn the fundamental facts about reading. They will learn that words and pictures convey meaning, sentences are made up of several words and that there is a vital link between the spoken word and black squiggles on paper.

c) Sharing Stories with our Friends

Story time forms an important part of our Early Years' curriculum. Stories promote the development of listening skills and language development. They also develop and enrich a child's vocabulary.

Our aim is to encourage a love of books and desire to read. Through books – fact and fiction – we can introduce ideas and topics. Thinking about stories and encouraging reflection and questions help children gain a better understanding of language.

These strategies combined will develop the necessary skills needed for reading and writing in the early years.

d) Learning to Write

Children need to develop control over their gross motor skills before they are able to master fine motor skills such as using a pencil effectively. When children start making marks on paper they are developing pre-writing skills.

From a distance, some of these marks look like writing. Of course, on closer examination, it is just wavy lines but it is the child's version of what writing looks like. It is at this point, when a child is beginning to hold a pencil with confidence and show an interest in writing, that we begin to show them the correct way to form letters, in a cursive script.

Towards the end of the Foundation Stage your child will be encouraged to write independently using their phonetic knowledge.

Expressive Arts and Design

a) Imaginative Play

We provide the opportunities and equipment for children to enjoy imaginative and role play based on first hand experiences. In this way they learn to express their feelings, thoughts and ideas.

b) Drawing Pictures

Through drawing, cutting, colouring, painting and sticking, your child will gain hand-eye co-ordination, use simple tools such as brushes, pencils and scissors, and develop new techniques. We encourage children to develop their creativity by giving them plenty of opportunity to choose and make their own decisions about their creative work.

It is the enjoyment and participation that is important, rather than the finished product. We are aiming for independence and the ability to decide, choose and plan. Through children's own drawings we are able to tell whether they are ready to begin writing.

c) Singing and Playing Music Together

Music is a valuable area of the curriculum and should not be underestimated.

Music helps children to learn actively through their senses. It helps children to develop speaking and listening skills, fine and gross motor skills and emotional and social harmony.

We feel that music should be an integral part of daily school life. Our aim is to make music fun and enable children to enjoy the sheer pleasure of making music.

In addition, music is used for number, action rhymes and exploring movement.

Mathematical Development

a) Maths is fun!

It is essential that Maths is practical in the first few years of learning. We provide plenty of opportunities to reinforce mathematical ideas and introduce mathematical language through play activities, singing and games.

We observe and structure each child's mathematical development. There are many sides to mathematics apart from counting and recognising numbers. Sorting, matching, ordering, doing jigsaws – to name but a few.

From Reception, we use the Abacus Maths Scheme as a basis and this ensures a structured progression.

Understanding the World

a) Let's Explore!

Through the indoor and outdoor environments your child will gain many experiences of handling, touching, looking carefully, talking about and making hypotheses which will develop all aspects of learning.

Interesting and stimulating provision will introduce a wide range of experiences. Activities include planting seeds and bulbs, making displays and collections, exploratory play with sand, water, clay, paint and cooking. When in Nursery and Reception your child will have the opportunity to experience the wider environment through school trips.

It is through talking and listening to others that attention can be drawn to new and fascinating details.

These experiences help children to develop their confidence and knowledge.

Physical Development

a) Children learn by being active!

We have plenty of outdoor play to exercise large muscles and develop co-ordination, confidence and agility. We also use the facilities of the Sports Hall at Elstree.

Fine control skills can be developed by playing with construction toys, play dough, paint, glue, scissors and crayons, for example. Water and sand play, changing clothes and shoes are also invaluable activities.

We ensure that all children are encouraged to develop fine control skills and to enjoy energetic activities, both of which support all other areas of learning.

We hope that your child has a very happy time in our Pre-Prep and we look forward to working with you to support the start of their learning journey.