



## Thinking about keeping your child at (or sending your child to) Attimore Barn Pre-School for their Nursery Year?

At Attimore Barn Pre-School we recognise that each family and child are unique; the decision to send your child to a Nursery maintained by Hertfordshire County Council or our privately run Pre-School should be based on your individual needs and what will suit you & your child best.

Here we would like to share with you what we can offer your Nursery aged child:

### **Our achievements**

Our Pre-School was graded Outstanding in all 17 areas by Ofsted in July 2010, just 6 months after opening. We are one of only a handful of local Early Years providers to have achieved this coveted accolade. Following this amazing achievement, we became 'Pre-School of The Year' at The Nursery World Awards in September 2011, further testament to our commitment to excellence in Early Years provision.

As you can imagine, these two significant achievements mean that we are a highly sought after Pre-School with a long waiting list.

### **Delivery of the same EYFS curriculum as School Nurseries**

At Pre-School we have a holistic approach to each child's learning, development & care; placing the same level of focus on each child's health and well-being as the 7 areas of learning & development. Our EYFS provision is supported by Claire Mason, who has achieved Early Years Professional Status, which is the equivalent to qualified Teacher status in Early Years.

*"Children make excellent progress in their learning and development because they are given effective support to ensure that they are fully included and able to gain the most benefit from activities and opportunities offered to them." Ofsted, July 2010*

### **High ratios of staff to children**

There are 6 members of staff at Attimore Barn Pre-School; all of whom are either Level 3 qualified, working towards their Level 3 qualification or above. We operate at (at least) 1 member of staff per 8 children aged 3-4.

*"There are excellent opportunities for staff interaction as the leaders always ensure that the minimum required staffing ratio is exceeded." Ofsted, July 2010*

### **Nursery Group**

We have a dedicated Nursery Group, headed up by Lucy Kirwan (Deputy Manager) and supported by Lorelei Cassidy (Level 3 practitioner). Lucy and Lorelei work closely with our Nursery aged children and their parents to deliver appropriate learning opportunities and to prepare them for the transition to 'big school'. As well as, delivering an introductory 'Nursery Group Talk' for families shortly after children join the Nursery Group, Lucy & Emily ensure their detailed Nursery Group planning is available for families to see & contribute to. Each week a phonics letter & sounds sheet is sent home for families to share together, to help reinforce what has been learnt at Pre-School.

*"The exceptional planning means that children are offered an exciting and varied range of experiences that reflect their individual needs and incorporate relevant next steps to ensure that they make excellent progress." Ofsted, July 2010*

## **Parent Partnership**

We pride ourselves on a strong parent partnership and a personal approach. Our dedicated team of staff are always available during session times to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have. We are even available out-of-hours for those times when it just can't wait.....

*"Staff are committed to developing and maintaining excellent partnerships with parents and carers. They are invited to discuss any issues that they have together with the staff and the exceptionally comprehensive systems for exchanging information with parents ensures that staff are fully aware of the children's routines and preferences and parents are fully informed of their children's progress and activities. Regular newsletters, meetings with key-workers, open afternoons and evenings, and informative displays throughout the pre-school are also available for parents and carers to enable them to have an awareness about what their children have been doing."* Ofsted, July 2010

## **Facilities**

We have created an enabling environment which challenges, stimulates and meets the needs of children aged between the ages of 2 and 5. We recognise that all children are individuals and develop at their own pace; there is no requirement for children to be fully toilet-trained when attending our setting. Our high levels of staff mean that we are happy to fully support children and their families who are working towards achieving this important developmental milestone.

## **A flexible approach**

As a privately run Pre-School with extended hours, we have the ability to allow you to use your 15 or 30 hours of free Nursery Education flexibly. We offer a number of session options Monday to Friday, including morning (09:15 - 12:15), lunch club (12:15 - 13:15), afternoon (12:45-15:45) and full day sessions (09:15 – 15:45, 6.5 hours). Our extended hours are particularly popular with working parents.

## **Transitions**

There is no doubt that transitions can be stressful for children and parents alike. By choosing to leave your child at Pre-School for their nursery year, you will be reducing the number of transitions they experience during their Early Years. Children get the best from an Early Years setting when they feel secure, happy and relaxed.

Another factor to consider is that just because you get in to the Hertfordshire County Council maintained Nursery School of your choice, there is no guarantee that you will get a place in Reception at that same school. Potentially resulting in another transition later on.

Of course, if you do choose to send your child on to a Nursery School, we fully respect that decision and have a number of strategies in place to reduce the impact the transition will have your child and yourselves as a family, including visits to the Pre-School by the Nursery School Teacher, Transition Books which include photographs of all of the local School Nurseries and their Nursery staff teams.

## **Outside agencies**

We have developed close working partnerships with a number of Early Years professional s/agencies including the local Children Centres, Inclusion Development Officer, Speech & Language Therapists and Health Visitors. We have lots of in-house experience and knowledge but also have a wide range of external resources and contacts available to us.

*"Excellent partnerships with parents, carers and other agencies, such as the local children's centres, ensure that individual children's needs are met consistently and they are fully safeguarded."* Ofsted, July 2010

We hope you have found this document useful but, as always, please feel free to speak to Tina, Claire or Donna if you would like to discuss your child's Nursery Year in more detail.