



Chelmer Village Hall, Chelmer Village Square, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6RF
Telephone: 07901 886488
Registered Charity No. 1054083

Prospectus

Including Policy Statements

Revised September 2025

Pre-school Manager: Kerrie Schreiber
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Registered charity No. 1054083

Rainbow Pre-school was established in 1982 and is a parent run pre-school, Registered Charity No. 1054083, and a member of the Early Years Alliance No. 213080. We operate on a termly basis and set our dates in accordance with those published by the Local Education Authority; making our terms similar to those of the local schools. We open 38 weeks per year and our term dates for the year ahead are displayed in the entrance lobby and our website.

Rainbow aims to:

- provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age;
- work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop;
- add to the life and well-being of the local community; and
- offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

Our pre-school meets Monday to Friday between 9.00am to 3.30pm. We are registered for 40 children each session and provide care and education for children below school age and over the age of two. Once a child starts at pre-school, parents become members of the Rainbow Pre-school Association and are entitled and encouraged to attend meetings. These meetings take place termly and parents are notified via email/ newsletter and posters within the setting. They make take place in person or alternatively online.

Rainbow is inspected by Ofsted and our Ofsted number is 508748. As an Ofsted registered early years provider we are legally bound to meet the requirements of the Ofsted regulations, and the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework published by the Department for Education.

Our pre-school is registered with the Essex Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and contributes to the Partnership's overall planning to provide education and care throughout the Foundation Stage.

Registration and Admissions

Registrations are made online through our website, please note that joining our waiting list does not guarantee you a place at Rainbow and we recommend that you register as early as possible to avoid disappointment. For further details of how we manage our waiting list and admissions please refer to **9.01 Waiting list and admissions**.

Once registered the Admissions Co-ordinator will contact parents nearer the time their child is due to start, normally the term before. At this time the parents will also receive an invitation to visit Rainbow. All children on our waiting list are invited to our open day which is usually held in June. When you register your child with us, we will provide you with a privacy notice that gives you further details of how we fulfil our obligations with regard to your data.

Information we hold about you and your child

We have procedures in place for the recording and sharing of information [data] about you and your child that is compliant with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) as follows:

The data is we collect is

1. Processed fairly, lawfully and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject [you and your family]
2. Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed for other purposes incompatible with those purposes.
3. Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which data is processed.
4. Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Kept in a form that permits identification of data subjects [you and your family] for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which the personal data is processed.
6. Processed in a way that ensures appropriate security of the personal data including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

There are two main admissions in each academic year September and January. We have a limited number of places for two-year olds in our 'Little Stars' room and three's and over will usually be in our main hall. Although we aim to offer places to as many families as possible, we are limited to the number of spaces available.

Fees and Funding

Our Fees Schedule is on display in the lobby and can be found on our website, we also accept:

- 2-year-old Entitlement for families in receipt of government support (FEEE2 15 hours)
- Universal Entitlement for all 3-&4-year-olds (FEEE3&4 15 hours)
- Eligible Working Parent Entitlement for 3-&4-year-olds (FEEE3&4 EFE 15 hours)
- Eligible Working Parent Entitlement for 2-year-olds (FEEE2W 30 hours)

Please note that FEEE2 can only be claimed by one setting, other entitlements can be split between 2 providers.

For further details of how funding can be used and examples of what possible patterns of attendance could look like please refer to **9.13 Fees and Funding**.

Fees are payable half-termly in advance for fee paying children and must be paid in full by the due date or by arrangement with the fees administrator if using childcare vouchers. **All fees must still be paid if children are absent for a short period of time.** Invoices are emailed at the end of the first week of each half term and detail what hours are being charged and any funding being used. We ask that payment is made by bank transfer as we are unable to

take cash or cheque payments at the hall. We do not ask for a deposit to secure a place at Rainbow.

Please note that no reduction of fees will be made for absence due to illness or holidays. In the case of prolonged absence, please consult the fees administrator about payment. Each child's attendance at the group is conditional upon continued payment of fees. For your child to keep her/his place at the setting, you must pay the fees. We are in receipt of nursery education funding for three and four year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply. In some cases, we are also able to access two year old funding and we also accept two year working parent funding and extended hours funding for three and four year olds. For part fee paying/ part funded children parents need to agree with the admissions coordinator which sessions are to be funded and which are to be paid for.

Additional sessions requested after head count day must be paid for by parents/carers. For children transferring mid-term parents/ carers will be responsible for fees unless the previous setting is willing to transfer funding to Rainbow (Please ask a supervisor for details).

For parents who find it hard to pay a lump sum, alternative arrangements such as weekly payments can be made with the manager. However, if payment is not made by the date shown a reminder will be sent. If payment is still not received, then your child's place at Rainbow may be withdrawn.

If a child leaves Rainbow (for reasons other than to commence formal schooling) one month's term time notice is required in writing otherwise additional fees are payable.

If you have any problems with fees, please speak to the manager.

Birthdays

Birthdays are celebrated by giving each child a card and small gift during the session on or nearest to their actual birthday. Parents may also like to bring in pre-packed bags of sweets which clearly show the ingredients (but please remember our "No Nuts" policy). In line with Natasha's Law (October 2021) these sweets will be available for the children to take on their way out of the setting with the parent's permission. Please feel free to ask staff for the number of children that are likely to be in on a particular session or if there are any allergies to be aware of.

Parents

Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be valued and respected, kept informed, consulted, involved and included at all levels. As a community based, voluntary managed setting, we also depend on the good will of parents and their involvement to keep going. Membership of the setting carries expectations on parents for their support and commitment.

We aim to ensure that each child:

- is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- is given generous care and attention, because of our ratio of qualified staff to children, as well as volunteer parent helpers;
- 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 key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress;
- is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

Children's development and learning

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE 2021). From September 2008 the Early Years Foundation Stage became law. This brings together Birth to Three Matters and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. Our provision reflects the four key themes and 16 commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage which are as follows:

A Unique Child

- Child development: Skilful communicator, competent learner.
- Inclusive Practice: Equality and diversity, children's entitlements, early support.
- Keeping safe: Being safe and protected, discovering boundaries, making choices.
- Health and well-being: Growth and development, physical and emotional wellbeing.

Positive Relationships

- Respecting each other: Understanding feelings, friendships, professional relationships.
- Parents as partners: Respecting diversity, communication, learning together.
- Supporting learning: Positive interactions, listening to children, effective teaching.
- Key person: Secure attachment, shared care, independence.

Enabling Environments

- Observation, assessment and planning: Starting with the child, planning, assessment.
- Supporting every child: Children's needs, the learning journey, working together.
- The learning environment: The indoor, outdoor and emotional environment.
- The wider context: Transitions and continuity, multi-agency working, the community.

Learning and Development

- Play and exploration: Learning through experience, range of contexts, adult involvement.
- Active learning: Mental and physical involvement, decision making, personalised learning.
- Creativity and physical thinking: Making connections, transforming an understanding, sustained shared thinking.
- Areas of development and learning: Six equally important and overlapping areas.

How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development across all seven areas.

The Prime areas of learning are:

- *Personal, social and emotional development*
- *Communication and language development*
- *Physical development*

These areas are the most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning and will help to develop skills in the following specific areas:

- *Literacy*
- *Mathematics*
- *Understanding the world*
- *Expressive arts and design*

For each area, the practice guidance sets out the 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. The practice guidance also sets out in 'Development Matters' the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the early learning

goals. Our setting has regard to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

Our programme supports children to develop:

- positive approaches to learning and finding out about the world around them;
- confidence in themselves and their ability to do things, and valuing their own achievements;
- their ability to get on, work and make friendships with other people, both children and adults;
- their awareness 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; and
- their ability to expect to have their ways of doing things respected and to respect other people's ways of doing things

Communication and language development

Our programme supports children to develop:

- conversational skills with one other person, in small groups and in large groups to talk with and listen to others;
- their vocabulary by learning the meaning of - and being able to use - new words;
- their ability to use words to describe their experiences;
- their knowledge of the sounds and letters that make up the words we use; and
- their ability to listen to, and talk about, stories;

Physical development

Our programme supports children to develop:

- increasing control over the large movements that they can make with their arms, legs and bodies, so that they can run, jump, hop, skip, roll, climb, balance and lift;
- increasing control over the small movements they can make with their arms, wrists and hands, so that they can pick up and use objects, tools and materials;
- their ability to dress and undress themselves;
- their ability to look after their personal hygiene and toileting needs; and
- their understanding about the importance of, and how to look after, their bodies.

Literacy

Our programme supports children to develop:

- knowledge of how to handle books and that they can be a source of stories and information;
- enjoyment of songs, poems, stories and rhymes;

- an ability to recognise familiar words;
- knowledge of the purposes for which we use writing; and
- making their own attempts at recording, mark making and writing.

Mathematics

Our programme supports children to develop:

- understanding and ideas about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- understanding of numbers and their order;
- understanding and ideas about patterns, the shape of objects and parts of objects, and the amount of space taken up by objects;
- understanding that numbers help us to answer questions about how many, how much, how far and how big;
- understanding that objects can be categorised by their features;
- understanding and ideas about how to use counting to find out how many; and
- early ideas about the result of adding more or taking away from the amount we already have.

Understanding the world

Our programme supports children to develop:

- knowledge about the natural and man-made world and how it works;
- an interest in the significant people and events in their lives;
- their learning about computers, how to use them and what they can help us to do; and
- their learning about their locality and its special features

Expressive arts and design

Our programme supports children to develop:

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

Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Our setting uses the practice guidance Birth to 5 Matters 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 Birth to 5 Matters has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as photographs of the children and examples of their work, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We achieve this through our online learning journals via Kinderly

Please follow the link <https://kinderly.co.uk/legal/> for Kinderly's Terms & Conditions

Records of achievement

Staff and parents working together on their children's online learning journal is one of the ways in which the key person and parents work in partnership. Your child's learning journal 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.

The record will be regularly updated and shared with the parents online. This also allows the parents to share learning and development through photographs and videos from home. These observations will be linked to their stage of development and their Characteristics of Learning.

Working together for your children

In our setting we exceed the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set through the Welfare Requirements. We also have volunteer parent helpers where possible to complement these ratios. 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 setting

Rainbow recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the setting 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 setting;
- 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 setting;
- taking part in events and informal discussions about the activities and curriculum provided by the setting;
- joining in community activities in which the setting takes part; and
- building friendships with other parents in the setting.

Fundraising

Every effort is made by the committee to keep fees as low as possible. However, the fees alone do not cover the total expenditure of Rainbow. This means it is necessary to have many fundraising activities throughout the year. If you have any ideas or would like to help out, please come along to the next parents meeting or speak to a member of staff or the committee.

The parent rota

The setting has a dated rota which parents can sign if they would like to help at a particular session or sessions. Helping at the session enables parents to see what the day-to-day life of the setting is like and to join in helping the children to get the best out of their activities. It is not only parents who can come in, other family members are also welcome. Sessions shaded pink on the rota are when we will be cooking; an extra pair of hands are especially welcome at this time!

Joining in

Joining the rota is not the only means of taking part in the life of the setting. Parents can offer to take part in a session by sharing their own interests and skills with the children. Parents have visited the setting to play the drums for the children, bring in an unusual pet or talk about their work. We also welcome parents to see Rainbow at work or to speak with the staff but we do ask that you book an appointment with a supervisor to ensure that we do not have too many visitors at once and that we are not on a trip when you wish to come in.

Key persons and your child

Our setting uses a key person approach. This means that each suitably qualified member of staff has a group of children for whom they are particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, she will

help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, she will help your child to benefit from the setting's activities. Within your child's first term your key person will introduce themselves to you and discuss your child's stage of development. This will form the basis of the partnership between parent's, child and Rainbow. The names, qualifications and a photograph of our all staff members are displayed in the entrance lobby and on our website

Learning opportunities for adults

As well as gaining qualifications in early years care and education, the settings staff take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with current thinking and best practice. Our membership of the Pre-school Learning Alliance enables us to do this with publications such as the Under Five magazine. The current copy of Under Five is available online. From time to time the setting advertises learning events and courses for parents run by organisations such as the Pre-school Learning Alliance, Essex County Council Early Years and our local Children's Centre; Bumble Bee at Danbury. Watch out for information about these on our parents Facebook page or in our newsletter

The setting's timetable and routines

Our setting believes that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in the setting are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of the setting;
- 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

We organise our 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 which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others. Activities include: the book corner, building and construction, puzzles, games, sand, water, gluing, painting, playdough, cooking, musical instruments, home corner, climbing equipment, planting, sorting.....the list is endless.

We have a book of the week for our 3-4 year olds and our Little Stars have a nursery rhyme/song of the week. Parents are notified of these via our newsletter and parents Facebook page. Children are encouraged to bring something from home that relates to the story/nursery rhyme that they can talk about with the staff and other children. The idea is to stimulate conversation, widen vocabulary and to help form ideas about the world around us.

Please do not send anything you will be upset to lose, as if it can be squashed, broken or eaten then someone will probably manage it!

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 hall.

The number of sessions your child attends is up to you, but we do insist on a minimum of two as we have found this to be necessary to help children settle and form good relationships with both staff and other children. If you wish to increase or change your sessions, we ask you to put your requirements in writing, all requests will be dealt with in date order. For older children you may wish them to stay all day.

Snacks

At snack time we offer milk or water and a snack. Rainbow operates a healthy eating policy and will provide your child with a snack, free of charge. We believe that this is a valuable social activity which encourages children to try a wide range of foods. We plan the menus for snacks so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food as well as taking account of individual dietary requirements and reflecting the diversity of children's cultural backgrounds. Little Stars eat snack together at a table. For our 3-4 year olds we operate a rolling snack system

Policies

Copies of Rainbow's policies and procedures are enclosed with this prospectus and are also available on our website or on display in the entrance lobby. Our policies help us to make sure that the service provided by Rainbow is a high quality one and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents. The staff and parents of the setting 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 setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

Safeguarding children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm'. Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our settings and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff. Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

We also have due regard to The Prevent Duty Guidance (2015) and implement this through our 'British Values'. These are not unique to Britain but are universal aspirations for equality. They are fundamental to helping all children become compassionate, considerate adults who form part of a fair and equal society.

Special needs

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

- The setting works to the requirements of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015). Our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is Laura Smith-Adams.

The management of our setting

A parent management committee - whose members are elected by the parents of the children who attend the setting - manages Rainbow. The elections take place at our Annual General Meeting.

The committee is responsible for:

- managing the pre-school's finances;
- employing and managing the staff;
- making sure that the pre-school has, and works to, policies that help it to provide a high-quality service; and
- making sure that the pre-school works in partnership with the children's parents.

Parent meetings are held termly and are open to the parents of all children who attend Rainbow; they provide opportunities to learn about pre-school activities, take part in decision making for the group and to become involved in the running of the group. One of these meetings each year is the Annual General Meeting it is our shared forum for looking back over the previous year's activities and shaping the coming year's plan.

Each child's attendance at the group is conditional upon continued payment of fees. For your child to keep her/his place at the setting, you must pay the fees. We are in receipt of nursery education funding for three and four year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply. In some cases, we are also able to access two year old funding and we also accept two -year working parent funding and extended hours funding for three and four year olds. For part fee paying/ part funded children parents need to agree with the admissions coordinator which sessions are to be funded and which are to be paid for.

Additional sessions requested after head count day must be paid for by parents/carers. For children transferring mid-term parents/ carers will be responsible for fees unless the previous setting is willing to transfer funding to Rainbow (Please ask a supervisor for details). For parents who find it hard to pay a lump sum, alternative arrangements such as weekly payments can be made with the manager. However, if payment is not made by the date shown a reminder will be sent. If payment is still not received, then your child's place at Rainbow may be withdrawn. **If a child leaves Rainbow (for reasons other than to commence formal schooling) one month's term time notice is required in writing**

otherwise additional fees are payable. If you have any problems with fees, please speak to the manager.

Starting at our setting

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us, a child who is unhappy will not be able to play or learn properly, so it is important that we work together to help each child feel confident and secure in the group. To make sure that this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle in. Rainbow has a policy about helping children to settle into the setting: a copy is enclosed in this prospectus. You will also receive via email a copy of our "My First Week" booklet. This process takes longer for some children than others so please do not feel worried if your child takes a little while to settle but please do keep talking to your key person.

Whilst we allow children to have comforters in pre-school to help them settle, we do not allow dummies and cloths that are sucked or chewed are discouraged for hygiene reasons. We also discourage the use of dummies as they may be linked to difficulties in speech and language development (see speech and language display in the lobby or ask Laura Smith-Adams for details).

It is important that children are delivered to Rainbow on time and collected promptly, it is good practice for school, and we need to make way for other groups who use the hall. We ask that you see your child into the hall at the beginning of each session. Please remember that the member of staff on the hall door is there for the children, if you need to speak to someone or hand something in there is another member of staff on the double doors in the middle of the lobby. When you collect your child please wait in line in the lobby and your child will be called to the door by a member of staff.

We are not allowed to let any child be collected by anyone other than the parents/carers unless written permission has been given. If you, or any of the adults named by you on the registration form as authorised persons, cannot collect your child from pre-school please advise a member of staff. You will be asked to complete a Collection Notification form giving details of who will be collecting your child and how we can verify their identity, usually by means of a pre-arranged password. The person collecting your child will then be asked to sign the Collection Notification form. In the case of an emergency please phone the pre-school to make arrangements with a supervisor. **If a child remains uncollected for more than 10 minutes a charge becomes payable (please refer to the Schedule of Fees for charges),** the amount of the charge is set by the committee and will take into account any extra expenditure incurred by the setting or individual staff members.

Please note that at the end of the morning sessions some children and the staff need to have their lunch. Equally other groups use the hall after Rainbow, and it is therefore important that children are collected promptly at the end of all sessions.

We ask that you advise the pre-school if your child is to be absent for any reason such as sickness, a holiday or a special day out with grandparents. It only takes a text and as before is good practice for when your child starts school. We have a duty to ensure prompt and regular attendance and so will contact parents if no explanation has been given for absence.

What to wear

We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves such as managing their own clothing in the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this without being too dependent on other people's help. T-shirts and sweatshirts with our distinctive Rainbow logo are ideal for wearing at pre-school and can be purchased from either www.myclothing.com for our grey uniform or we have stock at the setting of our new brightly coloured uniform. We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities but even so it is a good idea to send your child in easily washable not too new clothing. Whilst long dresses may look good they can make climbing difficult and dangerous and trousers with elasticated waist are much easier to manage than buttons or belts. For safety reasons we ask that jewellery should be kept to a minimum: we do not want children to hurt themselves or damage a precious item. If your child has pierced ears, please ensure that they wear something appropriate.

In the warmer weather the children are required to wear sun-cream before being allowed to play outside in the garden. This should be applied by the parents before the session starts. We will also have a hypoallergenic spray sun-cream at the setting which will be renewed at the beginning of each summer term. Sun-cream will be re-applied to your child throughout the session in particularly hot weather and in line with promoting independence and self-care we will encourage the children to rub it in for themselves, helping them where needed. We will provide parents with a photo of the newly purchased sun-cream at the start of each summer term and would ask parents to confirm in writing if they **do not** wish us to use our spray but will be providing their own in their child's bag

What to bring

We ask that you provide your child with the following items:

- a pair of soft soled shoes for indoor use, plimsolls are ideal. (no buckles or laces please)
- a bag, clearly named on the **OUTSIDE**, containing a spare set of clothes
- spare nappies/ pull ups and wipes if your child is in nappies. If your child needs cream applied when changing their nappy please let us know as we require your permission to administer this
- suitable clothing and footwear for outdoor play (all year round)

Please make sure that all items are clearly **NAMED**.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of Rainbow and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff and committee are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions.