



# Toddler Class

## “Whales”

Mrs. Helen and Ms. Shara



**Information Booklet**  
**(2016 – 2017)**

# It's not just PLAY

Today you are improving:

Co-ordination

Fine and gross motor skills

Strength, stamina, fitness

Problem solving skills

Decision making

Risk awareness, judgement

Sense of self, autonomous thinking

Independence

Sense of place in the world

Social skills – communication, negotiation,

relationship building, co-operation,

teamwork

Responsibility for self and others

Awareness of others

Confidence

Resilience

## Welcome to Toddlers – Here's to a wonderful year in Whale Class!

We warmly welcome you and your child to Toddler Class. We are so excited to share our passion for children's development as we set out to explore, discover and learn together throughout the year.

Our Toddler class is the perfect introduction to a child's first school experience. Starting school is an exciting time as children embark on new adventures in the world of learning. Our safe, nurturing, child-centred setting and high student-to-teacher ratio support each child's unique needs and interests. We provide a tailored, multi-sensory programme that offers a range of learning and development experiences for your child. Our focus is on fun and engaging activities that will provide play-based opportunities to promote children's discovery of self and their environment. Children learn best by doing, and through their experiences, and active participation they blossom independently, socially and cognitively.

As parents we both understand the diverse needs of young children and their families, and we know how vital the partnership between parents and school is in providing the best possible care for your child. We hope that you will always feel welcome to join us in class to share in your child's development, and to talk about your child's learning journey. We feel strongly that communication between school and home is essential in maintaining our partnership, and in ensuring personalised learning opportunities for your child.

We are both experienced educators with diverse backgrounds in many different areas of education. We hope that our expertise will ensure your child has a happy and successful year with us that is full of wonderful experiences.










*Mrs. Helen and Ms. Shara*

## First days at school...



During our first weeks, your child will be settling into their new environment and getting to know us, his or her peers and our daily routines. For some children, early days at Provo Primary may be their first experience of separating from the most important people in their short lives. We seek to make these transitions as smooth as possible, for your child and for you. We offer a flexible approach that enables us to cater for each child and family individually, as we work together to ensure that children feel secure and happy.

Please be assured if your child seems upset or cries, we will handle it with care and understanding. Some children take longer to settle in and this is not a cause for concern. It is a part of their natural development. Separation anxiety is a normal experience at the start of school for both child and parent! Separating from a loved one becomes easier with the following suggestions and knowledge:

-  **Take advantage of pre-enrollment visits, such as Flamingos and Chicks or visiting the school/classroom on occasion; summer camp and attending the open house session before school begins. These visits will allow you and your child to become familiar with the school, teachers and classroom.**
-  **When you do leave, display confidence and trust. Let your child know when you leave with a kiss and a hug, along with the reassurance of your return later. Prolonged good-byes can bring tears and make separating even more difficult.**
-  **Some children do well with a blanket or toy from home which provides comfort.**
-  **Try not to linger in the area as your child may see or hear you.**
-  **If separation continues to be an issue, we will work together to create a solution. This may be reducing the time your child spends at school in the beginning and gradually building the time as they become more comfortable.**
-  **If your child cannot be consoled, despite the staff's best effort, rest assure that we will give you a call.**
-  **As always we have your child's best interests in mind.**

## **CLOTHING**

Children should wear comfortable clothing that will allow them to participate in all activities. We try to keep clothing covered during messy activities; however, sometimes the mess inevitably finds its way on clothes! Please send in extra (named) clothing in a suitable size bag that is separate from the snack bag in case your child should need to change.

Our outside play area is mostly shaded, but hats and sunscreen are advisable to ensure your child is protected.

Footwear is taken on and off throughout the morning and we encourage a level of independence with this process. Shoes that your child can take off or put on themselves or do so with some assistance are ideal.

The same goes for socks if worn. For safety reasons, flip-flops or slip-on shoes without straps are not appropriate.

Please make sure your child's bag, lunch bag and water bottle are labelled with their name. It is also a good idea to label any clothes, shoes and hats they wear to school, so they can easily be returned to their rightful owner if they go missing!

### **SNACK**

Please send a healthy snack (yoghurt, cheese, fruit, rice cakes, crackers, vegetables, etc.) in a lunch bag (a cooler pack is recommended to help keep foods fresh) and a water bottle. Children are encouraged to eat their 'healthier' foods first. Children are not forced to eat what they do not want. If your child fails to eat, we will inform you and discuss options. The lunch bag, water bottle, snacks and snack containers should be appropriate for the child to manage as independently as possible. We discourage the use of sippy cups and recommend that your child's water bottle have a straw to promote speech and language development.



### **TOILETING**

We are happy to support potty training practices implemented at home. Please discuss your child's needs and routine with us to ensure we are working together with the plan you follow at home. If required, 'pull-ups' work better at school as opposed to diapers, and they also help to begin fostering independence. We call our body parts by their appropriate names (i.e. bottom and genitalia names). This helps to eliminate confusion or create future embarrassment. Please provide all diapering essentials (sufficient wipes, diapers and cream if needed).

### **DROP OFF**

Children can be dropped off from 8.10am. Please place water bottles, lunch bags and changing/clothes bags in the designated areas, then help your child to thoroughly wash his/her hands with soap. This simple measure aims to help reduce the spread of common childhood ailments. Of course, we encourage lots of hand washing throughout their day at school as well. Before you leave, please encourage your child to choose, and engage in an activity.

Routines are extremely important in helping your child settle in to their new learning environment. Your child will receive a 'My Routines' book to help them learn what happens during the morning.

This is designed to help children feel reassurance about the pattern of their day, and to help them begin to develop autonomy. Please look through the book with your child to familiarise him/her with the pictures and phrases.

Daily conversations are an important part of your child starting school. They provide the opportunity for 'check ins' for the teacher or parents. Please inform us at drop off of any change in routines, such as a restless night, staying with grandma, a family matter, etc. This enables us to help your child throughout the morning, if he or she is feeling unsettled or tired.

### **PICK UP**

Pick up is at **12 noon**. Children should be collected on time – some children can become anxious when they are picked up late. At the end of the morning, we aim to provide the opportunity to share achievements and accomplishments with parents as they pick up their children from the classroom. Children will be ready for pick up with their bags and water bottles, and any children who are still waiting for their parents will be listening to a story or song.

We cover lunchtime duty for other classes directly after our Toddlers session, so please ensure you pick up your child before 12.15.

Please call us to let us know if you think you are going to be late. After 15 minutes of unexplained lateness, a 'late fee' may be charged.

Should anyone other than a parent be collecting your child at the end of the morning, please make sure you let us know in advance. We will not allow a child to leave school with anyone other than a parent unless we have the necessary permission.

### **PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

Children benefit most where there is a strong and mutually supportive partnership with parents, and regular communication between home and school. It is vital for us to understand a child in the context of his or her family and culture to be able to provide learning experiences that are relevant and tailored to facilitate his or her progress. By filling in the 'Starting Point Profile' at the beginning of the year, you provide us with essential information that enables us to plan engaging and relevant learning experiences for your child. It also helps us to track their progress through the first term.

### **Journal**

Sharing any significant events, achievements and experiences for your child in their journal is an important way for parents to keep us updated, and to help us direct your child's learning and experiences. You can also encourage your child to be involved with choosing the news they would like to share. It could be visits with family, playdates, accomplishments, interesting trips, days out or activities, toys or books that they've particularly enjoyed, or any other stories that your child would like to share with school. We will encourage your child to share their news from home to help them develop their communication and recounting skills, and ensure that it is celebrated. **We will also use the journal to communicate with parents too, so please make sure you check it regularly.** Please also feel free to speak to us or email us at any time about your child. Communication between school and home is essential in helping us provide a nurturing learning environment for your child.

## **OUR FACILITIES**

As well as our classroom and outdoor play areas, the children visit and enjoy many different areas of the school – the artificial grass field, the garden, the stage and playground. We also organise field trips to visit places in our community.



## **CURRICULUM AND TOPICS:**

### **Curriculum**

The Toddler programme follows the UK Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It is our aim that our programme will encourage creativity, curiosity, discovery, understanding and a love of learning.

The classroom is set up with a variety of inviting areas and children are encouraged to visit these throughout the session. The curriculum is broad and balanced, giving our students the opportunity to learn and practise skills, helping them become independent life-long learners.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- **Communication and Language**

How your child is beginning to listen to stories/rhymes; to follow simple instructions; to copy familiar expressions and to use sounds and words to communicate for a range of purposes.

- **Physical Development**

How progress is being made in their gross motor skills (the child's general ability to move around and use the various parts of the body) and their fine motor skills (the coordination of small muscles and skills like holding a pencil). It also includes the development of their general self-care, such as, washing hands, awareness of toileting, helping with dressing and feeding and drinking independently.

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

How they are learning to play and interact with others, how they are managing their feelings and behaviours, and how they are developing their confidence and self-awareness.

The prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning. These will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- **Literacy**

How they are developing their interest in books and rhymes. They may have some favourites.

- **Mathematics**

How they are beginning to organise and categorise objects, say some counting words randomly, recognising big things and small things and getting to know familiar routines.

- **Understanding the World**

How they are curious about people, animals and vehicles, using their senses to explore objects and showing interest in toys with flaps/buttons/sounds/lights.

- **Expressive Arts and Design**

How they are exploring and experimenting with a range of media through sensory exploration, are beginning to move to music and to express self through physical action and sound.







Here is a link to a useful [Parents Guide](#) on UK EYFS curriculum.

Our aim is that all children will fulfil their potential. We recognise that all children are different and learn at their own individual pace. As we get to know each child closely, we monitor and plan for their individual development and progress whilst nurturing their special character, interest, strengths and skills.

This development and progress is shared with you at the end of each term during our 'Stay and Play' sessions. During these sessions, you will be able to see your child's learning in action, and we will share with you your child's individual '**Learning Journey**'. This is where we record our observations of your child's play and interactions. It enables us to track his or her progress, and to plan tailored activities that enhance his or her learning and development. Our observations, along with photos and examples of your child's work are documented, and parents are also encouraged to add their contributions and observations.

### Topics

The EYFS curriculum is taught through a variety of topics over the year. We plan topics that we feel will inspire the children's curiosity, understanding and development. All seven main areas of learning are incorporated into the outdoor curriculum and planning is cross-curricular across all areas. Topics we will cover this year include 'Magical Me', in which children explore what makes them unique and special; 'Friends', during which children learn how to work together with their friends, recognise how they are feeling, and how we can take care of each other; 'Toys', in which we learn about colours and shapes, and how our preferences are all different; and 'Me and My World' where we investigate our beautiful environment and the cultures of our islands. This will also incorporate traditional tales and songs.



We share our topics and planning with you via topic maps, newsletters and weekly email updates. We welcome our parents to come and share any expertise, resources or experiences you may have that are relevant to our areas of study. If you feel you, (or a friend/family member/associate) may be able to assist us with our learning in class, please do let us know! It is also a great chance for you to see your child interact with their activities and friends.











We may organise trips or visitors to enhance our learning, and notices of times and costs (if applicable) will be given as early as possible.

## **DAILY ACTIVITIES:**

We value and promote play as a meaningful and vital method of learning. Every day is different!

As much as possible, we provide children with the opportunity to direct their play, and choose their activities according to their interests.

Throughout the morning, the children will have access to a variety of ‘hands on’ activities, both adult-led and child-initiated:

-  Outdoor play, visits to the school garden and the artificial grass field
-  Painting, gluing, arts and crafts
-  Sand, water, play dough and other sensory activities
-  Soft play, yoga and physical development activities
-  Puzzles and games, construction
-  Playing with vehicles, and ‘small world’ toys
-  Investigative activities
-  Stories, music, movement, singing
-  Imaginary/role play
-  Circle Time and sharing news/achievements








## **SPECIALIST / SUPPORT TEACHERS:**

We are fortunate at Provo Primary to have specialist teachers/volunteers who further enrich our children’s learning. Spanish is the modern foreign language taught throughout Provo Primary. This year in Toddlers, Mrs. Yorcka will spend time with us as our Spanish Immersion Teacher. She will join some of our sessions, and, speaking only in Spanish, will play alongside the children, lead activities and sing songs. This Spanish Immersion programme continues through our Early Years, becoming a combination of this and more formal lessons when children start in Year 1.



## **PURPOSEFUL MOTIVATION**

Respect, kindness and positive behaviour and attitude towards school life and those around us are the normal expectations at Provo Primary School. In order that everyone knows what is expected of them and others around them, we have five golden rules, which are:

-  Care for myself and others
-  Be honest
-  Work hard
-  Listen
-  Look after property



Our school logo is a flamingo. It is made from a handprint. The digits help us to remember our five golden rules.

The school is committed to creating an environment where children are motivated intrinsically and all teachers support this commitment giving verbal praise and positive recognition at every opportunity. We encourage the use of *kind hands* and *use your words* approach to assist in conflict resolution. We model ways to handles disputes and to show empathy like hugging, saying, “I’m sorry”, “Please”, “Stop” or “I don’t like that”. We look at the expression portrayed and say “She is crying because you hurt her” or “He is sad because you took the toy away”. Then we model the correct way of handling the situation, e.g. “If you want a turn with the toy you need to ask... say please”. At no point is physical punishment used at Provo Primary School.

### **MEDICAL**

Please let us know if there are any health issues relating to your child (including medication and allergies) that we should be aware of.

If you child is off sick, drop us an email or call us to let us know. Children returning to school after illness should clearly be fit to do so and be free from infection. Please err on the side of caution when making a decision about your child returning to school. As a rule of thumb, children should not come to school if they have a fever, have vomited or had diarrhoea within the last 24 hours. Thank you for your consideration.

If your child has taken ill or has an accident in school, we may need to contact you IMMEDIATELY to pick up your child. Please make sure that your contact numbers are kept up to date in school to make this possible. If it is deemed serious your child will be taken immediately by staff members to the hospital, unless otherwise requested.

We currently allow peanuts in school. If, however, there is a child with a peanut allergy in your class or the school, we may need to inform you of current expectations, depending on the severity of the allergy.

### **BIRTHDAY POLICY**

We are happy to celebrate children's birthdays at school by singing ‘happy birthday’. If you would like to bring in something special to eat or drink on your child’s birthday, please tell us a few days beforehand. We ask that these items are mindful of our healthy eating awareness. As we recognise that some parents wish to monitor the food their child may be eating, we ask that you bring a small individually wrapped item.




These will then be distributed and taken home at the end of the school day. If it is table-ready fruit, then we are happy to share this out during snack. If you are sending items to school to be shared out, we ask that they do not contain peanuts. **Please note that we are unable to hold parties at school, with balloons, party food and party bags.**

### **SCHOLASTIC BOOK ORDERS:**

The school PTA offers the opportunity to order books and learning resources from Scholastic through a monthly catalogue that is sent home. As you order books for your child, our class/school gains points to use towards buying books and resources for your child to use and enjoy. An email will be sent out with ordering details. Let's order some great books!



### **HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT?**

-  Read newsletters, your child's journal, weekly email updates; check out the school's website; visit the classroom regularly, and have daily conversations with your child's teacher.
-  Become involved in our PTA and support its events.
-  Any offer of help to our class or the school - whether regularly or for specific events – will be gratefully received. Please give your name and contact information to us, along with how you would be willing to help.

### **PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGE CONSENT:**

Taking photographs/videos is a big part of life here at Provo Primary School. We use some of these on our website/Facebook page or on school displays as well in other printed publications we produce, including our annual school Yearbook. Please note that your child's name will not be published alongside any photographs used.











**We ask for your permission to photograph or make any recordings of your child and as part of the enrolment process and a form will be given to you to complete.** Please note: parents are not permitted to take photos or make a recording for anything other than their own personal use. We trust that you will understand the necessity for this formality and that the joy of sharing the moments of your child's times during their early years at school can continue.

Finally, we have an open door policy: if you have any questions or concerns, PLEASE come and speak to us.

Thank you,

*Mrs Helen and Ms Shara*

## TODDLER CHECKLIST:

-  Take advantage of pre-enrollment visits, such as Flamingos and Chicks or visiting the school/classroom on occasion; summer camp and attending the open house session before school begins. These visits will allow you and your child to become familiar with the school, teachers and classroom.
-  Things to bring everyday - snack bag with healthy snacks that your child can open/eat quite independently, a water bottle (kind with a straw) and bag (with change of clothes, diapers and diapering essentials) – PLEASE LABEL!
-  Wear comfortable clothing that will allow them to participate in all activities.
-  Footwear is taken on and off throughout the morning and we encourage a level of independence with this process. For safety reasons, flip-flops or slip-on shoes without straps are not appropriate.
-  Please communicate the toileting practices you have implemented at home.
-  Drop off routine – (8.10 onwards) encourage your child to carry something; put water bottle in cooler, snack bag and clothing bag in designated areas; wash child's hands; encourage him/her to engage in an activity; kiss/hug/say goodbye. If your child is having difficulty separating, together we will support you and your child.
-  Pick up – (12 noon) wait until teacher opens door; come in and collect belongings (encourage your child to carry something).
-  Stay informed – have daily conversations with your child's teacher (discuss any changes that the teacher needs to know about); check your child's journal; read any email updates; visit website; have a look inside the classroom regularly.
-  Sickness – let the office know by email or telephone and keep your child home at least 24 hours after symptoms have subsided.
-  Medical – please ensure we are informed of ANY health issues!