



# St. Oswald's Pre-School SERVICE PLAN

September 2024 – August 2025



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## 1. Introduction and Executive Summary

The service provides pre-school provision for children aged 2– 5 in the local area. The Pre-School is located in the park pavilions in the beautiful grounds of St Oswald’s Park, Wren Close. The park is a lovely setting for the pre-school with play areas, grassed areas, flowers and trees. There is a secure outside play area for the sole use of the Pre-School and Tots in the Park which is our two-year-olds provision.

The Pre-School was recently awarded an ‘Outstanding’ rating by Ofsted.

St. Oswald’s Pre-School has been operating for many years. It can accommodate 40 three-year-olds and 12 two-year-olds at any one time and is open from 8.45am to 3.30pm, each weekday, during school term time only.

The service is managed by the Pre-School Manager, supported by a Deputy Manager/SENCO, plus five members of staff based in the Pre-School and three in the Tots in the Park building, including room leads. Corporate support is provided by officers of the Council.

The Pre-School Service Plan runs for the period covering the school year, unlike other Town Council Service Plans which run from each financial year, and sets out some overarching key information about the Pre-School. This is supported with detailed aims, objectives and action/development plans which are constantly being reviewed.

## 2. Great Aycliffe Town Council Vision and Strategic Aims

The strategic mission statement for the Town Council, set in consultation with members of the public, is to be:

*“A proactive and responsive Council, working in partnership, listening to and speaking up for the community, contributing towards making Great Aycliffe an excellent place in which to live for all its residents”*

In support of this statement, the Council agreed a number of strategic aims, which are reviewed on a regular basis.

1. *To provide good quality governance and management of the Council.*
2. *To manage the Council’s finances and assets in a responsible manner.*
3. *To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities.*
4. *To provide pre-school education as appropriate in Great Aycliffe.*
5. *To contribute to the environmental improvement of Aycliffe by managing and developing parks, play areas and green spaces.*
6. *To help and encourage partnership working to improve the services and facilities for the residents of Great Aycliffe.*
7. *To encourage the residents of Great Aycliffe to become more involved in local democracy.*
8. *To research information and make the case for Great Aycliffe.*

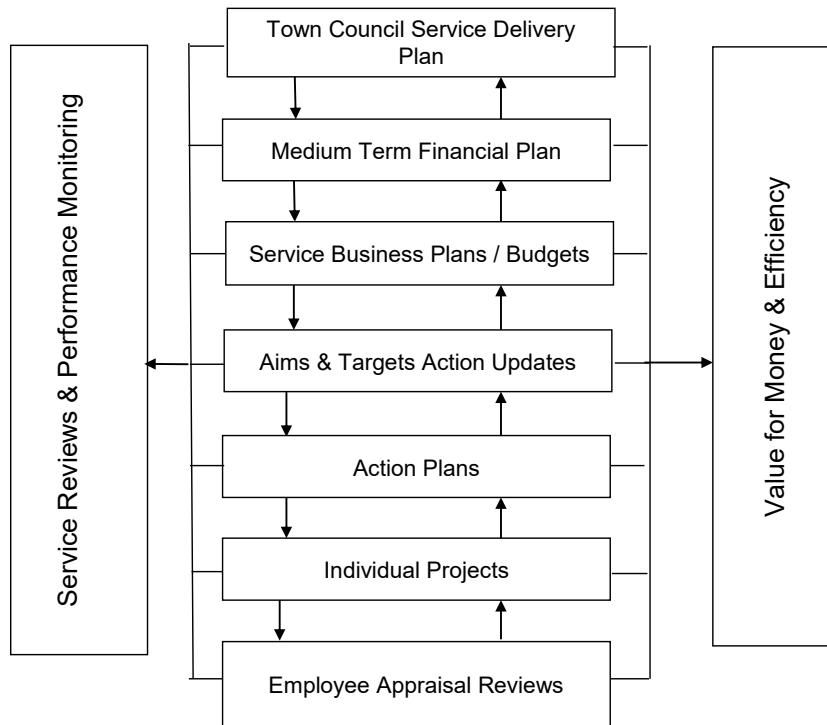
### 3. Contribution to Council's Strategic Aims

The Pre-School Service assists in achieving the Council's Strategic Aim 4.

*"To provide pre-school education as appropriate in Great Aycliffe".*

### 4. Performance Management Framework

The Council's approved performance management framework, below, demonstrates how its Strategic Aims and Targets, set out in the Town Council Service Delivery Plan, link to the Council's other strategies, aims and objectives of individual service areas, right down to the objectives of individual officers.



## **5. Pre-School Performance Management Arrangements**

Monitoring and management of the performance of the Pre-School service is undertaken by the Pre-School Manager, supported by the Corporate Management Team.

An annual Action Plan is included within the Pre-School Service Plan setting out specific actions that are planned during the year to improve the quality of the Pre-School Service.

The Council's Pre-School Sub-Committee oversees the management and operation of the Pre-School.

## **6. Equalities Statement**

Although this is an internal working document, we have taken the decision to make this available to anyone who may be interested in the work of Great Aycliffe Town Council.

Great Aycliffe Town Council is committed to the removal of all barriers preventing access to our services arising from: Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex or Sexual Orientation.

## **7. Investment in Employees**

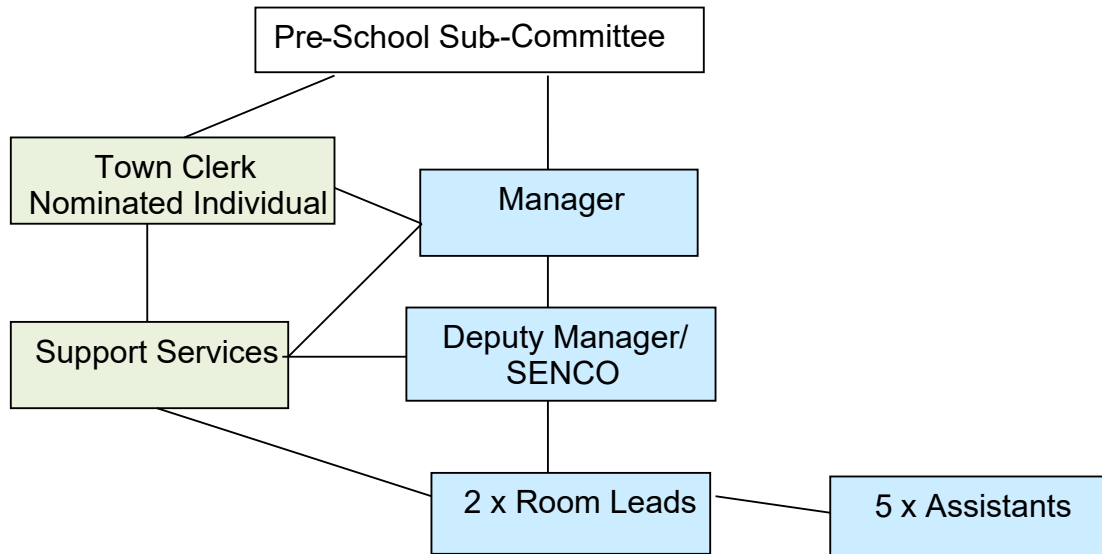
It is clearly acknowledged and recognised that pre-school staff are the Council's greatest asset in delivering services effectively and investment in employees is therefore paramount in helping the Council to deliver its strategic aims and targets.

The Council is committed to investing in the training and development of all of its employees and operates a Performance and Development Appraisal Scheme which helps to monitor and improve the performance of all staff as well as identify training and personal development needs.

Annual appraisals and regular supervision sessions are completed and a training plan put in place to provide the training requested and/or required.

A training budget is in place for the Pre-School to provide for any identified training needs.

## 8. Pre-School Service Profile



The Pre-School Manager is qualified to level 6. Eight members of staff are qualified to level 3 or above and two other members of staff are also qualified to level 6. All staff are encouraged to undertake training and development throughout the year.

St. Oswald's Pre-School provides 40 places, both full and part time and is open from 8.45am to 3.30pm.

The Tots in the Park provides 12 places, both full and part time and is also open from 8.45am to 3.30pm.

Great Aycliffe Town Council provides this service for the following reasons:

- *The Council is committed to supporting the local community.*
- *The Council deems this provision to be necessary.*
- *The Council is satisfied that the service is valued by the community*
- *The Council is satisfied that the service represents good value for money.*

## 9. Pre-School Service Vision

The Pre-School Service Vision is:

*"To provide a high-quality service where every child feels safe, is happy and has fun in a safe and secure learning environment".*

## 10. Service Aims and Objectives

The Pre-School's key aims and objectives are as follows:-

- *To provide pre-school education as appropriate in Great Aycliffe.*
- *To provide a safe, stimulating and challenging environment for children, supervised by suitably qualified, experienced and dedicated staff.*
- *To provide 'peace of mind' to parents and carers who wish to place their children in the care of the service.*
- *To ensure that children will be treated as individuals and nurtured.*
- *To offer a flexible service that is able to meet the needs of local families.*
- *To provide high quality, pre-school provision that will enable families to reach their full potential.*
- *To ensure the teaching and learning at St. Oswald's Pre-School is of a high standard to enable all children to make progress toward the Early Learning Goals.*
- *To continue to provide a clear direction for the pre-school and ensure that it is constantly improving and moving forward.*
- *To continue to raise standards for all children.*
- *To ensure the safety of all children.*
- *To develop further and maintain our Outstanding Ofsted Grading.*

## 11. What We Achieved Last Year (2023/24)

Over the last year there have been some major changes and challenges, but despite this we have achieved the following:-

- Ofsted Inspection carried out in January 2023, where outstanding was received in all four areas
- Extended the outside play area at Tots in the Park and installed matting on top of the turf to assist with drainage during wet weather.
- Received a high score, with only a few low priority recommendations, on a routine health and safety audit carried out by the Council's Health and Safety Advisor.
- Added to the lending library to enable children to take books home to share with their parents and carers.
- Accessed Disability Allowance Funding to purchase a mobility pushchair to support the children when going for walks and visits.
- Used Disability Allowance Funding to purchase an indoor climbing frame to use in the sensory room to assist with the children's development.
- Established compost bins to encourage the children to recycle their fruit and vegetable peelings etc.
- Carried out works to create an area within Tots in the Park for staff lunch breaks
- All staff undertook refresher Paediatric First Aid training.
- Worked closely with the local care home in taking part in regular visit to see the residents.
- Collected charity donations for the Angel's trust, half of monies received went back into the pre school contributions to purchase resources for the children

## 12. Targets and Actions for Next Year (2024/25)

In addition to the weekly planning and provision of the core service, the following key actions have been set for 2024/25:

- *Continue to visit the local care home taking part in activities alongside the residents and sensory connections*
- *Hold an open evening and regular parents' evenings.*
- *Continue to have group time at the beginning of the sessions encouraging the children to share their ideas and interests*
- *Hold stay and play sessions, where parents have the opportunity to see what activities their children do at pre-school and get a better insight into the pre - school day*
- *Organise visits from local emergency services.*
- *Organise days for parents to come in and read, cook and carry out activities with the children to ensure we work in partnership with our parents.*
- *Carry out baking activities with the children using the children's interests*
- *Provide staff with opportunities to widen their knowledge by attending the free training provided by Durham County Council.*
- *To ensure we are a healthy pre-school and promote healthy eating with children and parents at lunch time*
- *To continue to work alongside the plastic pledge and reduce our use and waste of plastics*
- *To continue to work with local charities and organisations supporting one another*
- *To maintain the outstanding rating as given by Ofsted in January 2023*
- *To extend the pre school garden around the conservatory perimeter*
- *To ensure staff have an comfortable area for rest breaks*
- *To work alongside local schools ensuring children receive a smooth transition when starting school and getting to know their new teachers.*



## **13. P.E.S.T. Analysis (External Environment)**

### **Introduction**

This PEST analysis is merely a framework that categorizes the external issues and factors surrounding the **p**olitical, **e**conomic, **s**ocial and **t**echnological forces.

In analysing the macro-environment, it is important to identify the factors that might in turn affect a number of vital variables that are likely to influence the operation of the Pre-School Service.

<b>PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS</b>	<b>NOTES</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT</b>	<b>IMPLICATION</b>	<b>AND</b>	<b>IMPORTANCE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
	How might the factors on the left impact on our business	High, Medium, Low Undetermined	<i>Type:</i> Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat	<i>Impact:</i> Increasing Unchanged Reducing Unknown	<i>Importance:</i> Critical Important Unimportant Unknown	
<b>POLITICAL:</b> Changes in Government policy	May affect funding and staffing	Medium	Opportunity	Unknown	Important	Ensure recommendations are implemented
<b>POLITICAL:</b> Ofsted inspections	Loss of the provision	High	Opportunity	Increasing	Critical	Ensure recommendations are implemented
<b>ECONOMIC:</b> Employment	Affects the spending resources available	High	Weakness	Increasing	Critical	Keep prices and costs low
<b>ECONOMIC:</b> Energy use and costs	Instability of pricing	Medium	Threat	Increasing	Important	Be more aware of energy use and saving measures
<b>SOCIAL:</b> Job losses and increased unemployment	Childcare no longer needed or unable to afford	Medium	Threat	Increasing	Important	Keep prices and costs low. Additional funded hours now available.
<b>TECHNOLOGICAL:</b> Internet	Making information available on council website	Low	Opportunity	Unknown	Important	Ensure website is up to date and current information is advertised.
<b>TECHNOLOGICAL:</b> Internet	Improved use of Social media	High	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Post regularly to closed group

## 14. S.W.O.T Analysis (Internal Environment)

In order to improve the Pre-School Service, it is important to analyse the existing internal strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats which may impact on service delivery.

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained and experienced staff</li> <li>• Low charges</li> <li>• Reputation</li> <li>• Adult to child ratio of 1:13</li> <li>• Partnership with parents</li> <li>• Partnerships with external services</li> <li>• Sole use of rooms</li> <li>• Good quality care</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Secure and stimulating environments</li> <li>• Liaise with the community</li> <li>• Supported by the Council</li> <li>• 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating</li> <li>• Use of social media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council committee structure - decision making</li> <li>• Paperwork</li> <li>• Recent changes in staff</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase marketing</li> <li>• Recent changes in staff</li> <li>• Take younger children</li> <li>• Operate summer play schemes</li> <li>• Self-Evaluation Procedure / Development Plans</li> <li>• Pre-School Sub-Committee</li> <li>• Changes to legislation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High demand for places</li> <li>• Further changes to staff</li> <li>• Reduction or withdrawal of funding</li> <li>• Removal of council support</li> <li>• Changes to legislation</li> <li>• Difficulties recruiting staff</li> <li>• Increasing numbers of children with SEN</li> <li>• New government initiatives for 2-year-old funding</li> </ul>

## 15. Risk Analysis

The list below is the strategic business risks only and it is by no means exhaustive. Risk assessments are being undertaken in detail and reviewed on a regular basis.

Specific health and safety risks and risk assessments are not dealt with here.

Ref	Detail	Current control	Likelihood	Impact	Score
S03	Withdrawal of Ofsted registration	Policies and procedures in place	1	1	Low
S15	Low uptake of places leading to loss of income	Unpredictable	1	2	Low
S16	Power failure - unable to provide service at Pre-School	None	1	3	Medium
S19	Future changes in legislation regarding grants and qualifications	Monitoring legislation	2	1	Low

