Rayndrops Pre-School Prospectus

Raynsford Church of England Academy

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Our vision, deeply rooted in Christian values is that, all thrive in a safe environment, where they are celebrated for their uniqueness and are empowered to meet their full potential

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Welcome to Rayndrops Pre-School,

We are a preschool in the small village of Henlow, Central Bedfordshire providing learning, care and development for children aged 2-4 years.

Thank you for your interest in Rayndrops preschool, we pride ourselves on offering a warm, nurturing environment where every child can grow, explore and thrive. We believe in learning through play; offering rich first-hand experiences that spark curiosity, creativity and confidence. Through a carefully planned child- centered approach children have engaging carpet sessions that ignite a love of learning from the beginning. Our goal is to help children develop a natural love of learning alongside the social and emotional regulatory skills they need for life.

We are proud to be a part of Raynsford Church of England Academy and have adopted their principles values and beliefs as a Church of England school. We follow the ethos of Forgiving, Respectful, Inclusive, Empathetic, Neighbourly, Determined. This ethos supports our aims as an Early Years provider for the attributes we strive to instill in the children who attend our setting. We celebrate diversity, inclusion and promote respect at all levels in an age appropriate way. We believe that children learn from positive role models, therefore we ensure our staff are equipped with the skills to not only model but teach children how to share, take turns, have conversations and many more attributes. All children are welcome at Rayndrops and we support all with developmental milestones including those with additional learning needs.

We have close links with St Mary's Church and attend their Bible worship assemblies to celebrate many bible stories with the rest of the school that underpin our core values.

For those children who join us we strive to build relationships with the whole family, where you will be supported by a team of highly qualified and motivated members of staff. Positive partnerships with families is integral to the progress your child makes as well as the relationships and bonds they build with the staff and setting. We therefore to aim to have an 'Open Door Policy' where communication is key to share any important matters around your child/ren with staff before or after the session. We use an online platform where messages can also be sent too.

We follow The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 2025 which sets out the standards that all childcare settings must follow up to the end of their reception class. For more information please visit the The Early Years Foundation Stage

We look forward to working with you.

The Rayndrops Team

Section 1: The Rayndrops Team

Rayndrops is part of Raynsford Church of England School and the Headteacher is **Mr Ed Wheatley.**

Our Rayndrops team is led by **Miss Danielle Goggins** (QTS, Pediatric Frist Aid) and **Mrs Naomi Whitbread** (Level 3 Diploma for working in the Early Years sector, Pediatric Frist Aid) with;

- **Leah Fookes: -** Cache Level 3 Diploma for Children / Pediatric certificate in first aid
- **Ella Winwood:** Level 3 in Childcare & Education/Pediatric certificate in first aid.
- **Lisa Sipols:** Level 3 Dipolma Childcare and Education, Pediatric Frist Aid
- **Jane Payne: -** Level 3 Diploma in Pre-school Practice / Lift off to Language 2 & 3 Years / Pediatric certificate in first aid
- **Lizzie Renney: -** BTEC Level 3 Early Childhood Studies / Lift off to Language 2 & 3 Years / Pediatric certificate in first aid
- **Denise Smith:** CACHE Level 3 Diploma for Children and Young People / Lift off to Language 2 & 3 Years / Pediatric certificate in first aid/Lift off to Language 3 Years / Pediatric certificate in first aid

Section 2: Registration Procedure

To register your interest in Rayndrops please complete an Expression of Interest form which is available on the school website or from the main school office.

Prior to your child starting Rayndrops, we will offer a show around visit, which will enable you and your child to see how the pre-school operates. During the visit you will have the opportunity to meet the staff working at the pre-school and ask any questions, this will help us get to know you and your child whilst they play.

Children are able to start Rayndrops once they are two years old, however this will depend on the availability of places, therefore you can support your enrolment process by completing an expression of interest form to add your child/ren to the waiting list.

The Early Years Foundation Stage statutory ratios are; one adult to five children under 3 years old and one adult to eight children over 3 years old.

Section 3: Admissions Procedure

We have up to a total of 28 places per session and we are usually able to accommodate termly intakes in the months of; September, January and April if there is space to do so.

Once we have agreed your hours there is a £20 administration fee to secure your child's place.

To support your child's application process, we ask that you complete a registration form, medical form and bring in your child's birth certificate for us to view and photocopy as soon as possible.

As part of the transition process you and/or your child will be offered a stay and play session as well as a home visit. A home visit will be done before your child starts their requested sessions and is done within your family home with two staff members from the pre-school team. We strive ourselves on building early, positive relationships and believe that children will build an early bond with us earlier in the comfort of their own familiar surroundings. During the home visit a form will also be completed between staff and parents, this is a chance to share anything in regards to toileting, sleep, diet and dummies.

We offer a staggered start to new starters so we can welcome them and make them feel secure. We also offer three transition sessions when they start to help them settle, these transition sessions will typically have a different start time than the normal pre-school hours and the transition session may be shorter in length to the normal day. This is to ensure an effective transition takes place and your child is happy and secure when being left.

Members of staff are experienced in helping children to settle; however, we recognise that all children are different and some may take longer to settle than others. If your child does not settle after a few weeks, we can discuss the appropriate next steps. In some circumstances it has meant reducing the hours and days and in other personal circumstances parents have chosen to defer the placement. We will work with you to do what is best for your child and family because sometimes a couple of a weeks can make the difference.

Section 4: Sessions Offered

We are a term time school-based setting. Breakfast and afterschool club are not open to Rayndrops children.

We accept children from their second birthday, where possible we do try to offer our two-year old's morning sessions however we recognise that this is not always possible, therefore we always have these discussions with you.

We offer the following sessions from Monday to Friday, term time only.

Session	Time	Notes
Morning	08:30 – 11:30	Counts towards funded hours
Afternoon	12:00 – 15:00	Counts towards funded hours
Full Day	08:30 – 15:00	Uses up to 6 funded hours; includes a 0.5-hour lunch period (unfunded supervisory time)
Lunch club:	11:30am to 12:00noon	(additional charge)

Afternoon and full day children can either bring a packed lunch or order a school meal via our school meals app.

All booked sessions will be charged regardless of attendance.

We require a half term's notice of any intention to leave or decrease the number of sessions, this must be put in writing to:

- cwebb@raynsfordacademy.co.uk or
- rayndropspreschool@raynsfordacademy.co.uk

Section 5: Keyworkers

In Rayndrops we recognise that children form emotional, secure bonds with adults in different ways. Therefore, children are allocated a key person who over sees their learning and development outcomes as well as completing a progress review with parents every term.

Raynsford school have five different owl families and when your child starts Rayndrops they will be allocated to an owl family, the adult in that owl family will be your child's named keyworker, however we believe for the children's wellbeing it is much better that they choose who they go to for comfort, nappy changes and help. We have seen children strive within their social development when working with different adults in the pre-school setting. We have an open-door policy that means you can talk to any adult about your child's learning and development.

Section 6: Attendance and Absence

We want every child to feel happy, settled, and confident when they are with us. Coming to pre-school regularly really helps children build routines, make friends, and enjoy all the learning opportunities we offer.

Although pre-school is not compulsory, if your child is using **funded hours** from Central Bedfordshire Council, there are a few attendance guidelines we need to follow. We aim to keep everything simple and supportive for families.

We understand that life happens. Children may be unwell, families go on holiday, or appointments come up.

Just let us know as soon as you can — a quick message, phone call, or chat at drop-off is perfect.

Short absences will **not** affect your funded place.

If your child is absent for an extended period or we haven't heard from you, we will try to contact you to check in and record the reason for absence.

Because we receive funding from Central Bedfordshire Council, we do need to let them know if a child stops attending for a longer time. This helps them make sure funded places are being used by the children who need them. Parents are not charged for any missed funded hours, and you will not be asked to repay funding if your child misses sessions **due to normal absence**. In line with CBC rules, funding would only ever be reclaimed from a parent if false or misleading information had been provided on a funding form. Any funding adjustments are sorted out between the council and the pre-school.

If your child is absent for **five consecutive sessions** without a clear reason, and we have not been able to contact you, we are required to:

- continue to try to contact you and your emergency contacts, and
- inform Central Bedfordshire Council that your child is not currently accessing their funded place.

This helps the council make sure funded places are being used by the children who need them.

We may still charge for:

- Any extra hours you pay for privately
- Meals, snacks, or optional extras
- Notice periods listed in your contract (for non-funded hours)

We will always explain these clearly so there are no surprises.

If Your Child Stops Attending

If your child has stopped coming for a while and we haven't been able to reach you, the council may choose to stop the funding for that place. If this ever happens, we will talk with you first and support you in whatever way we can.

Our goal is to work closely with families to make sure every child has a positive and consistent pre-school experience. If you ever have difficulties with attendance, or need to talk to us about your child's sessions, please come and chat with us — we're here to help.

Section 7: Safeguarding and statutory welfare requirements

Keeping children safe is at the heart of everything we do. Part of our safeguarding duty under the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** is to monitor children's attendance and follow up on any unexplained absence. This helps us make sure every child is safe and well.

Your child's safety and well-being are our top priority. We follow all **EYFS Safeguarding and Welfare Requirements** to make sure children are protected, cared for, and happy during their time with us.

- ***Keeping Children Safe***
    - All staff receive regular safeguarding training.
    - We have a **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** who oversees all safeguarding matters.

- Staff know how to recognise concerns and act quickly if a child needs help

- ***Attendance & Absence***
  - We keep a daily register of who is with us.
  - Please let us know if your child is not attending.
  - If we can't reach you after an unexplained absence, we follow our safeguarding procedures to make sure your child is safe.

- ***Health & Safety***
  - Daily safety checks and risk assessments keep our environment safe.
  - Trained paediatric first aiders are always available.
  - All accidents are recorded and shared with parents.

- ***Safe Staff & Supervision***
  - All staff, volunteers, and students have enhanced DBS checks.
  - Children are always supervised indoors, outdoors, and on outings.
  - We follow EYFS staff-to-child ratios at all times.

- ***Managing Behaviour***
  - We encourage positive behaviour, kindness, and respect.
  - We never use physical punishment or anything that could hurt a child emotionally or physically.

- ***Health, Medication & Allergies***
  - Medication is only given with parental permission and clear instructions.
  - We follow strict procedures for allergies and dietary needs.
  - Healthy eating habits are promoted throughout the setting.

- ***Online Safety & Photos***
  - Personal mobile phones are not used in childcare areas.
  - Photos of children are only taken on setting devices and only with parental consent.

- ***Working with Families***
  - We believe that children thrive when we work closely with parents.
  - We encourage open communication and are always here to listen and support.

Section 8: Complaints

We take all complaints seriously and follow the statutory obligations when doing so. We encourage parents and carers to talk to the pre-school leader first and in her absence the Early Years Leader.

For more information on our complaints policy and procedure please refer to the school

Complaints procedure on our school website.

Section 9: Snack and drinks

Drinking water is available throughout all sessions, we do encourage all children to have a water bottle in session with them.

We recognise that snack time is a great opportunity for children to try new and exciting foods. Daily, we offer children a piece of fruit, milk or water alongside a 'fruit or vegetable of the week' which differs from the daily offering. For example, we have 'red pepper' where over the week at each snack time children are given the opportunity to try this. We believe children feel more comfortable and therefore more fourth coming to try new and exciting food groups when they see their peers doing the same. We offer a two-week rotation snack menu with an example provided below:

- **Week 1 – fruit options are; apple, banana, cucumber**

Vegetable of the week: Red Pepper and houmous

Monday- Bread sticks and fruit + pepper offering +houmous

Tuesday – pitta bread slices and fruit + pepper offering

Wednesday- Breadsticks and fruit +pepper offering and houmous

Thursday- pitta bread slices and fruit + pepper offering

Friday- Breadsticks and fruit +pepper offering and houmous

- **Week 2: Fruit options are; satsuma, banana, blueberries**

Vegetable of the week: Yellow Pepper

Monday- Rice cakes and fruit + pepper offering

Tuesday – Thin bagel pieces and fruit + pepper offering

Wednesday- Rice cakes and fruit +pepper offering

Thursday- Thin bagel slices and fruit + pepper offering

Friday- Oatcakes and fruit +pepper offering

If your child has specfic dietary needs, then please inform the Rayndrops team and the main office who will update your child's record and in turn inform all staff who need to be aware.

Section 10: Nursery Education Funding (NEF) (Effective from September 2025)

Nursery Education Funding (NEF) is government funding provided to early years childcare providers (nurseries, preschools, childminders, etc.) so that eligible children can receive a certain number of free early education hours each week

Age Groups:

- **3 and 4-year-olds:** All children in England are entitled to **15 hours** of free early education per week, for 38 weeks per year (the school term time).
- **Working families** may be entitled to **30 hours** per week (the "extended entitlement").
- **2-year-olds:** Some are eligible for **15 hours** per week if they meet certain criteria (e.g. low-income families, special educational needs, or children looked after by local authorities).

Settings that can claim NEF:

- Registered nurseries, preschools, and childminders that are approved by the local authority
- Funding goes directly to the childcare provider, not the parents.

What it pays for:

- The education and care during the funded hours.
- Providers cannot charge for the funded hours, though they may charge for meals, trips, or extra hours outside the entitlement- see pre-school
- Funded hours are free at the point of delivery, and parents are not required to purchase additional hours, services, or consumables in order to access their child's funded place. Parents may take up only the funded hours if they wish.
- Please find out more about these schemes and other ways to save money on childcare by visiting; **www.childcarechoices.gov.uk**

Non-funded Charges are

Category	Fee
Unfunded 2–3-year-olds	£8.20 per hour
Unfunded 3–4-year-olds	£6.20 per hour
Consumables Fee (voluntary)	£3.00 per session (morning or afternoon)
Lunch Period Fee (additional)	£3.10 per day for 2-3 year olds £4.10 per day for 3-4 year olds
Administration Fee (one-off, includes book bag)	£20.00 per child (for new starters)

Lunch Club

This 11:30–12:00 session is **separate from your funded hours**. There is no charge for the education you receive within your funded sessions. The Lunch Club fee covers the **additional 30 minutes of care and supervision** and, where chosen, the cost of a school meal.

Fees and Provision:

From April 2025, government guidance requires all Early Years providers offering funded places to clearly show parents how any charges for consumables, additional services, or enhanced provision are applied.

At Rayndrops Preschool, we have always been transparent about what is included in our funded offer. This information is shared with families and published on our website.

What is included?

- What is included within your government-funded early education hours,
- What we offer beyond the funded entitlement, and
- Why we apply a small consumable charge to help cover the cost of the resources, materials, and experiences that enrich your child's time at Rayndrops.

What's Included in Your Funded Hours

Your government-funded early education hours cover:

- **Qualified staff-led learning and play** designed to support your child's development across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- **Daily indoor and outdoor activities** that help develop social, physical, creative, and cognitive skills.
- Access to basic learning resources such as books, puzzles, and play equipment.

These hours are fully funded, and there is no charge for the educational care and learning provided during these times.

What the Consumables and Enhanced Provision Charge Covers

While the funded hours cover your child's core learning and care, we provide additional resources and experiences that enrich their time at Rayndrops Preschool.

Our consumables/enhanced provision charge helps cover:

- **Craft and creative materials** used in art, sensory, and cooking activities.
- **Snack ingredients or optional cooking activities** that extend learning experiences.
- **Special resources or equipment** used for enhanced provision (e.g., themed days, seasonal activities, or outdoor learning materials).

- **Optional enhancements** such as additional activities beyond the funded curriculum, where appropriate.

Important Notes:

- This charge is voluntary, and your child will still receive the full funded hours and entitlement whether or not you choose to pay.
- Parents are given the choice to provide their own consumables (e.g., snacks or craft materials) if they prefer not to pay the contribution.
- Any additional services or sessions beyond the funded hours (e.g., lunch clubs) are charged separately and clearly itemised.
- All invoices clearly separate funded hours (shown as £0.00) from any paid-for sessions, optional consumables, or additional services, in line with national funding transparency requirements

For funded places, parents/carers will also be asked to complete a Parent/Carer Funding Agreement Form each term, in line with Central Bedfordshire Council requirements.

This confirms the number of funded hours you are claiming with us (and with any other providers) so we can claim the correct funding on your behalf.

Section 11: Two-Year-Old Progress Check

It is a statutory requirement that we carry out a two-year check on your child in the prime areas of the EYFS:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development and Personal
- Social and Emotional development.

This will be carried out in preschool, typical 8-10 weeks before their third birthday unless your child attends another setting or childminder for more sessions than they attend Rayndrops. Please speak to staff in you wish for more information about what this check entails. In the case that a two-year check has not been completed by another setting this will be done on entry to Ryandrops.

Section 12: Accidents

Slips, bumps, trips and falls are all normal childhood accidents. There are occasions where your child may need first aid. If this is the case then a trained first aider will treat your child in the appropriate manner with the upmost care. The accident or injury will be recorded on the Medical Tracker app, which you will register for when your child starts school. On occasions it may be appropriate to ring you prior to receiving the medical tracker notification.

Section 13: Behaviour in Our Setting

We want every child to feel safe, supported, and understood. We know that all children behave differently and learn at their own pace. When young children show challenging behaviour, it is usually because they are overwhelmed or unable to express their needs. We help them communicate their feelings in ways they can manage.

We use the Zones of Regulation to help children understand their 'big feelings'. Adults support children to calm through co-regulation, and over time we help them learn to manage their feelings independently. No child is ever made to feel embarrassed or different — everyone is treated with kindness and respect.

If a child has been hurt or upset, we use a simple restorative approach. This means helping children understand what happened, how others feel, and how they can help put things right. This approach teaches empathy and problem-solving rather than giving punishments.

Our Key Behaviour Principles

- We help children feel calm and safe before talking about their behaviour.
- We involve children in making things right.
- We teach them how to understand and manage feelings.
- We help them repair friendships after a problem.
- We use clear, consistent routines so children know what to expect.

If we notice that your child's behaviour is becoming more challenging, we will always talk with you. We'll work together to find supportive strategies that can help both at home and in our setting

Section 14: Medicines

If your child requires medication during the school day, you may request that it is administered by Rayndrops staff by completing an Administration of Medicine form. All medication must be handed directly to a member of staff in its original, labelled container and will be stored safely in line with our school policy.

Only prescribed medication can be administered in school, and parents must complete the relevant forms before any medication is given. Please note that children should remain at home for the first **24 hours after starting a new course of antibiotics** to monitor for any potential allergic reaction.

Rayndrops does not administer non-prescribed or over-the-counter medicines such as Calpol or other paracetamol-based products. If a child requires these, they should be kept at home until they are well enough to return.

Section 15: Toileting and Intimate Care Policy Statement

No child will be excluded from our setting because they are not yet toilet trained or are still wearing nappies or equivalent. We work in partnership with parents and carers to support each child's toilet training journey, recognising that children develop these skills at different stages. Where toilet training is not yet appropriate due to medical or developmental reasons, we will follow the guidance provided by parents and relevant professionals.

Our setting provides appropriate nappy-changing facilities and follows strict hygiene procedures to ensure the health, safety, and dignity of every child. We view toilet training as an essential self-care skill that children learn with patient, supportive, and non-judgemental guidance from staff.

If your child is wearing nappies when they join the setting, you will receive a copy of our Toilet Training and Intimate Care Procedure and be asked to sign a consent form for nappy changing.

Section 16: Personal belongings and transitional items

Children do not need to bring large backpacks to Rayndrops, as storage space is limited. We request that each child arrives with **one small bag** containing a **named spare set of clothes**. Labelling all of your child's belongings helps staff return items more easily and supports your child's early name-recognition skills.

We understand that some children may benefit from bringing a **transitional object or comfort item** to help them settle into preschool. If needed, this should be **limited to one item** and should not be a highly valuable, irreplaceable, or treasured toy, as we cannot be responsible for items that may become lost or damaged.

Section 17: Uniform

At Rayndrops, we aim to create a safe, organised and nurturing environment where children are free to explore, learn, and play. This policy outlines expectations for what children wear and bring with them to preschool, helping us ensure comfort, safety, and consistency throughout the day.

Wearing a uniform at Rayndrops is **optional**. Families who wish to purchase our purple preschool t-shirts or jumpers can do so through the school's main office. Although not compulsory, some children enjoy the sense of belonging that wearing uniform provides.

Children should come to preschool dressed for a day of **active learning**, which often includes messy, outdoor, and sensory experiences. Activities such as mud play, painting, water exploration, and playdough are offered daily.

To support this, please ensure your child wears:

- Comfortable, practical, **washable clothing**
- Clothes that they can manage independently (e.g., elasticated trousers, Velcro shoes)
- Items that are **not delicate or difficult to replace**

Children learn best when they can participate freely without worry about damaging special clothing.

Long hair should be **brushed and tied back** each day.

This supports safety, reduces distractions during play, and helps minimise the spread of head lice.

We make full use of the outside area, no matter the weather. Please continue to send your child with appropriate outerwear, especially in colder or wetter weather.

Section 18: Suncream

At Rayndrops, we are committed to keeping children safe during outdoor play in warm and sunny weather. The EYFS requires settings to ensure children are protected from the sun and appropriately dressed for the weather, we do this by:

- Parents must apply **long-lasting, high-factor sun cream (SPF 30 or above)** to their child **before arrival** at preschool during warm weather
- Outdoor play continues during sunny weather, but we encourage play in **shaded areas** particularly between **11am and 3pm** when the sun is strongest.
- Staff monitor the UV index and may **limit or adapt outdoor play** when necessary
- Parents are asked to send children in with a named sun hat (wide brimmed or legionnaire style)
- Light, breathable clothing that covers shoulders and footwear suitable for active play e.g. no backless footwear
- Water for drinking and water play is available throughout the session

For children who do not have a sun hat will be directed to the shade or inside.

Section 19: Contact us:

01462 812319

office@raynsfordacademy.co.uk

www.raynsfordacademy.org.uk

Section 20: Other Key Policies

Rayndrops Preschool follows all statutory policies and procedures required under the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Central Bedfordshire Council, and Raynsford Church of England Academy.

The following policies apply to all children attending the preschool and are available on the school website or on request from the school office:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND & Inclusion Policy
- Administration of Medicines Policy
- Intimate Care & Toileting Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection & Privacy Notice
- Complaints Procedure
- Charging & Remissions Policy
- Preschool Charging Policy (Rayndrops)

Parents are welcome to request a printed copy of any policy at any time. These policies ensure that our provision is safe, inclusive, transparent, and compliant with statutory requirements.