



## Cobtree Playschool for Special Children

Maidstone Mencap Charitable Trust Ltd

Welcome to Cobtree Playschool

# Parents' Guide

Maidstone Mencap Charitable Trust Ltd

Registered Charity No: 1009677

Registered Company No: 2672192

# Your staff Contact List

Role	Responsibilities	Name
Playschool Manager Child and Young Person Welfare Manager for Maidstone Mencap	Part of my role is to ensure that Cobtree Playschool meets the mandatory welfare and safeguarding requirements as set by the Early Years Foundation Stage and Ofsted, ensuring that all the children in our care, learn and develop well, in a safe, secure and happy environment. SENCO CHILD PROTECTION- safeguarding lead HEALTH AND SAFETY	Liane Morris NVQ4 <a href="mailto:manager@maidstonemencap.org">manager@maidstonemencap.org</a>
Deputy Manager Key Person EYFS support	Key Person: Every child has a key person, our role is to help ensure that each child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs working in partnership with their parents and outside support agencies. deputy SENCO deputy designated safeguarding lead	Tina Adams NVQ3 <a href="mailto:office@maidstonemencap.org">office@maidstonemencap.org</a>
Key Person	Key Person:	Sheryl Rooney NVQ2
Key Person	Key Person	Cath Handley NVQ3
Key Support Staff	Recruited to support the children with SENIF funding to ensure that their individual needs, development and care plans can be met, supporting the role of the key person	vacancy Jaime Macdonald David Tyler
SENCO Special educational needs co-ordinator	Our Senco will support the children and their families with implementing effective interventions enabling the children to make progress, taking in regard the SEND code of practice and local authority guidance.	Liane Morris
Physiotherapist Ex NHS	Working together with support agencies, Sue provides opportunities for the children with individual programmes of activities and resources to develop their physical skills. supported by funding received for individual children from SENIF	Sue Hay
Speech Therapist Occupational Therapist Visual/ hearing impairment Therapist team Specialist Teaching teams	We work alongside the children's support workers and agencies to ensure that their individual targeted support plans are part of our planning and provision, continually monitoring progress and development.	SENCO Supported by the children's key person
Maidstone Mencap Charitable Trust Ltd	Maidstone Mencap vision is to make a positive difference to the lives of all those with learning disabilities, and their families, with our local community. We aim to provide the best possible start and care through our care, education and support from their early years onwards, enabling and empowering those in care to achieve their true potential.	Board If you wish to become a member of our board, to represent parents' voices and to support the continual planning of our services -contact Sue Roughly <a href="mailto:chair@maidstonemencap.org">chair@maidstonemencap.org</a>
	Playschool is represented on the board of Maidstone Mencap Charitable Trust Ltd. Meetings are held regularly to ensure complete inclusion, information sharing and monitoring of standards and welfare.	Liane Morris <a href="mailto:manager@maidstonemencap.org">manager@maidstonemencap.org</a>
Mencap Office co-ordinator	supports the Playschool and Maidstone Mencap, with office admin including fire health and safety requirements	Tina Adams <a href="mailto:office@maidstonemencap.org">office@maidstonemencap.org</a>

## Cobtree Playschool for Special Children:

Ofsted unique reference number: 127120

Telephone number: 01622 670464

Address: Cobtree Hall, Mote Park, Willington St; Maidstone, Kent. ME15 8EB

# Cobtree Playschool for Special Children

- Service Statement

As a registered provider of Nursery Education, here at Cobtree Playschool, we strive to provide the highest quality of care and education for all our children, ensuring they are happy, safe and secure within our environment.

We aim to assist all children attending our playschool to attain their maximum potential, by providing experiences where learning is based through a combination of their own play, interests and structured carefully planned activities. We are able to meet each child's own level of learning and development, with the continuing circle of monitoring and recording their development and individual abilities throughout their stay with us, using our observation and assessment techniques. Our aim is to continually provide a warm safe happy environment, so the children can grow in confidence and learn through their play, therapy and specialist teaching.

Our policy is to work closely with parents and carers; we will support your needs to give you the peace of mind, that your child is receiving the highest quality of care from us. We therefore always welcome suggestions on how to improve and adapt our procedures throughout the playschool, at any time.

Copies of our updated policies and procedures from our manuals will be available from the office. These have been written to ensure that we comply with the mandatory welfare requirements as established within the Early Years Foundation Stage and the current Children's Act 2006. Ofsted has regard to these requirements in carrying out their inspections on the quality and standards of our setting. They include, among many, policies for Children's safeguarding, (child protection, suitable people), accident and injury, health and safety, risk assessments, outings and record keeping.

We work with the support from the Kent Early Years department, and other outside support agencies to ensure that we comply with all the new developments and relevant changes that may affect our playschool in such areas as the curriculum, special educational needs, health and safety and Ofsted regulations.

- Equal Opportunities

Cobtree Playschool caters only for children who have learning difficulties and/ or disabilities. We welcome children and families from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups. We recognise that many different types of family successfully love and care for their children.

All children will be respected and their individuality and potential recognised, valued and nurtured. Activities and use of play equipment offer children opportunities to develop in an environment free from prejudice and discrimination. Toys and equipment are chosen to give a balanced view of the world and to develop their self-respect and to respect other people.

Information, written and spoken will be clearly communicated and we will use the services of an interpreter if necessary. Sign-along signing is encouraged and used when appropriate.

Discriminatory behaviour and remarks are unacceptable in Playschool.

Cobtree Playschool operates an equal opportunity staffing policy. We will appoint the best person suitable for the role.

- Introduction to Cobtree Playschool

Here at Cobtree Playschool we can offer a service that can suit the needs of the Parents and Carers with children between the ages of 18 months and 5, who have learning disabilities, additional needs and/ or disabilities.

At Cobtree Hall we have the facilities that will enable us to provide a large range of specialist equipment, teaching, toys and, resources for the children. We are able therefore, to promote and support their individual interests, learning and development.

The children will receive support in key groups, led by an experienced, qualified key person with additional care provided by our extended staff team and dedicated volunteer carers. Children and their families will have the consistency in knowing that a familiar and trusted person is always accessible and available as a point of contact for them. With this knowledge, parents and their children can thrive knowing that they can have a special relationship, with constant care, encouragement, guidance and relevant learning opportunities throughout their time with us.

We work hard to ensure that all children have their own personalised learning development and welfare requirements met through our observation and assessment records, which in turn supports the planning of activities and routines for the whole group and the individual child, enabling us to be effective in consistently providing a stimulating and supporting environment for all.

- Settling in

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious or unhappy. Our settling in procedures aim to help parents to help their child to feel safe and happy whilst at playschool and to benefit from all that we can offer. We have a new intake of children for the start of a school year in September. (We also, do review our registers and waiting lists ready for the start of each new term during the year; we consider any changes and developments to our current staffing and volunteer ratios, and the individual needs of the children, to enable us to be able to offer our support to potential new families.)

We encourage parents to visit, with their child before admission is planned. When a place has been confirmed for September, we offer support in arranging a home visit from our manager, to help reassure and eliminate any concerns or worries you may have. Families and new children are then welcome for an induction day, at the start of term, to help familiarise yourselves with the environment, routines and staff. Families are welcome and supported in playschool for as long as it takes for their child to settle. When appropriate we will encourage parents to separate from their child, this can be for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences, the children do learn to accept their parents' absence and be confident that they do return.

- The Cobtree Day

We are open on Monday Tuesday's and Wednesday's between 10.00am to 1.00 pm.

Term time only.

The children's day starts at 10.00am. When they come in the mornings they will register and be meet by their Key person and carers, (this is an opportunity to share information with each other to help the transitions between home and playschool)

The children's day at playschool will include periods of free play, structured activities, craft, music, movement and targeted support sessions. Weather permitting children have access to our

enclosed garden or will be taken outside to the grounds of the park in which we are situated, when staffing ratios are heightened to manage the risks and the safety of all .

According to the children's individual needs and abilities, and working together, key staff, therapists and the children's team of volunteer carers, will devise a programme of support and care to ensure their day is full of opportunities and learning experiences.

We ask families to provide a packed snack for their child, to ensure their personal needs are accounted for. We have a small kitchen where we store or heat any drinks or snacks as appropriate. We provide free access **to water** throughout the session and milk entitlements are applied for the children.

The children are to be collected at 1.00pm, their key person will bring your child to you, we use this opportunity to share your child's daily achievements with you.

- Key Person

At Cobtree Playschool, a key person is a qualified member of our staff, who is responsible for the welfare of your child during their time with us. They will be responsible for the daily care of your child, observing and assessing their developmental pathway, working with our manager in supporting their personalised planning -what is needed to strengthen, deepen, challenge or extend their current learning and development in a fun and playful way.

At playschool the children, will also have the support and care from a team of volunteer carers who will work with the key person and the children in meeting these needs. Your child is able to build a special bond with these key staff, developing in confidence and independence. As parents you will also have this evolving relationship, to be able to discuss any worries, concerns or issues about your child's time at playschool. When children feel happy and secure, they will be confident to explore and try new things.

At Cobtree Playschool we work alongside the children's individual team of outside support agencies, taking into regard the SEND code of practice and local authority guidance. We implement guidance from their targeted strategies and planning to enable the children to progress and develop towards their true potential.

The children also have the additional support from our onsite ex NHS physiotherapist to ensure that the children and parents have access to individual devised programmes and advice networks to suit their needs.

- Parental involvement

Each day the child's key person will be informing you of your child's achievements that day. Please ensure that you make time in the morning's and afternoons to share information with us, to share information about your child's special moments at home, medication, health or any other notes for the Playschool team. Please also acknowledge that you can use our email, [manager@maidstonemencap.org](mailto:manager@maidstonemencap.org) or telephone us 01622 670464 to chat and ask/ share information daily as appropriate. We aim to support you and will arrange suitable times to meet with you.

You will be consulted on all issues concerning the welfare, care and education of your child

We encourage regular communication, please feel welcome, any time, to visit or call if you have concerns or queries to discuss these with the manager as soon as they arise

We encourage parental representation on the Board of Maidstone Mencap and welcome your support with our fundraising committee and activities.

Parent stay and play sessions have previously been introduced during the year, reliant on funding supporting the duration and consistency of these. We will invite you to sessions in advance when times booked.

Staff will be available throughout to support parents with any questions and to share our practices with you.

- Our early years learning curriculum-

We follow the Early years foundation stage (EYFS) and any updates as they become known, with additional guidance, to inform shape and support our best practices and activities from the “Developmental Matters” and the children’s individual therapy support network.

The purpose and aim of the EYFS, is to ensure that all children have the best possible start in life, to support and to fulfil their true potential.

A child’s experiences in their Early Years has a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right and it provides the foundation for children to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

As a parent you need to know that here at Cobtree Playschool, we will keep your child safe and help them to thrive. The EYFS framework provides you with this assurance. (Detailed information of the framework is available from our key staff or online websites such as [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) , the department for education, (dfe)

As a registered provider of Early Years education, we are inspected by Ofsted to ensure that we do meet all the welfare requirements. Our Ofsted reference number is EY127120, you will find details of our most recent inspection, online at [www.gov.uk>find-ofsted-inspection](http://www.gov.uk>find-ofsted-inspection)

- Assessments and Observations

Every child at our playschool will be supported with a comprehensive personalised plan.

Within the Playschool we are continuously observing and assessing each child, as they play and interact in everyday and planned activities. We are observing what each child can do. As parents you have this knowledge of what your child does at home, and together we can to build up a picture of their existing skills and abilities. These observations will support the planning for their future play and resources within our environment.

As parents you will be invited to share and discuss your child’s progress and share your observations with us. As part of your child’s “unique story” we develop their own personalised plans, which supports their desired outcomes of the end of their early years education. Parents contributions are valued in celebrating their achievements and supporting the next steps towards these targeted goals. We will hold times throughout the school year for these reviews when parents are invited in to discuss their child’s progress and developments with our team of staff.

- Equipment

The toys and resources at playschool are selected to provide a range of play opportunities and experiences, to enable the children, with adult encouragement, to learn new skills and play concepts, to develop their individual potential and move towards the learning goals of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The equipment is appropriate for the varying ages and stages of development of the children and caters for their physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs. Specialist toys and equipment are provided where necessary to meet specific needs. Our resources reflect a variety of race and culture and conform to relevant safety regulations.

We will support children with their prescribed specialist equipment such as they chairs, standing or walking frames. Any supporting equipment being used, such as specialist seating, will be considered on risk assessments of the children and their balance, posture and co-ordination for example and used as appropriate to support their individual needs.

- Health and Safety

The safety and wellbeing of the children in our care is of paramount importance and we have detailed policies and procedures linked to this.

If your child is ill or unable to come to Playschool please contact the Manager from 8.30 that morning or before if possible, to support communication and planning within the child's key person group.

Your child's admission form will need to be fully completed and details kept up to date, of your child's medical information, immunizations and allergies.

Staff need to be kept up to date on the emergency administration of medication for seizures, to ensure Individual care plans are current, in the event of 999 calls having to be made.

Children must be kept at home if they have an infection. When phoning the manager, you will be asked to give specific information regarding the nature of the infection, this is so that we can inform other parents of children in our care, as appropriate.

We follow established guidelines regarding exclusion periods of common and infectious diseases.

### **Definition of a well-child....**

A well-child ....

- Is not reliant on Calpol (or similar)
- Does not have a high temperature
- Is well enough to participate in playschool activities
- Has their normal appetite
- Does not require a greater staff ratio
- And has their normal bowel functions.

It is the Playschool policy to encourage and promote good health and hygiene for all the children in our care. This includes monitoring the children for signs and symptoms of communicable diseases such as chicken pox or measles, diarrhoea and vomiting.

With the welfare of the sick child in mind and in the interests of the remaining children in the playschool, if in the opinion of the staff a child is ill, then the parent/carer will be contacted and requested to collect their child as soon as is possible.

The staff of the playschool must be convinced that the child has returned to good health before admitting them back.

- Medication

Prior to your child's admission to playschool you will be asked to provide sufficient information on your child's medical condition and needs. The manager must be informed of any medication given to your child at home and of any changes to regular medication. Details of possible side effects must also be given. If a child has significant medical needs an individual health care plan will be drawn up in consultation with the parents/carers, medical practitioners and the Playschool management team.

At Cobtree we follow government guidelines regarding the administration of medication. If prescribed medication needs to be administered by our Playschool staff, it must be in the original labelled container. Over the counter medicines must be in the original container and named. Instructions on all labels must be clear to read. Parents will be asked to sign their consent and give written details regarding dosage, times and any other instructions to the named, authorised member of staff for medication. We keep a medication book for this purpose. If medication is refused or an error made, you will be informed immediately.

All medications are stored safely in a locked cupboard or if necessary in our refrigerator.

Staff are given appropriate training, by health professionals, in the administration of emergency medication, for example seizures, and are trained in first aid procedures. Only trained playschool staff will administer medication with a witness present.

- Hygiene

To prevent the spread of infection, adults at Cobtree Playschool follow good practice guidelines.

- Hands are washed after using the bathroom and toilet and are washed before serving any food and drinks.
- Individual hand towels and paper towels are used
- Toothbrushes, flannels and hairbrushes are not shared.
- Disposable, latex free gloves and aprons are worn by adults when changing and supporting children in their toilet and self-care routines
- Used nappies are disposed of in sealed bags and in designated bins
- Boxes of tissues and bins are made available throughout all the rooms to encourage children to blow their noses if possible.

Hygiene rules relating to bodily fluids are followed with particular care.

- Any spills of blood, vomit, excrement are wiped up and flushed away.
- Disposable gloves and aprons are worn
- Floors and other services are disinfected, and fabrics contaminated are sealed in bags ready for washing in hot water.
- Toilets, changing mats and potties are cleaned and disinfected daily after each child.



- Safety

At Cobtree Playschool, the safety of the children is our priority. We guarantee that staff will be vigilant and keep a close eye on the children in our care. They will always follow established safety procedures.

Staff and management:

- Implement regular safety checks relating to the premises and equipment
- Have established servicing contracts conforming to standards for fire safety equipment and appliances.
- Fire drills and procedures are actioned, and details recorded and assessed to ensure the safe evacuation of the building in an emergency
- Accident books are completed, and incidents assessed, and reasonable steps are taken to prevent similar accidents occurring in the future
- Visitors identity cards are checked, and visitor book completed
- Ensure insurance levels are suitable, with liability certificates displayed in the main entrance.

Security

- The security of the children is a first concern. At Cobtree Playschool we prevent unwanted visitors entering the building by keeping doors securely locked and set the main door alarm
- The staff take fire requirements into account when locking doors
- We ensure that both indoor and outdoor areas are kept safe and secure. All doors are closed on arrival and departure from the premises, gates and boundaries are kept in good repair and checks made regularly
- We require parents to inform staff in advance if another adult will be collecting their child. Passwords on admission are asked as a security measure. We ensure that children are handed over personally to the adults collecting them.

Supervision

- We always observe the adult to child ratio, following the guidance from the “Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage”. Children are in small groups, as a guide we plan key groups of six children, supported by their key person, supporting staff and a team of volunteer carers. They are closely supervised by their care team at all times.
- Registers are taken regularly to ensure that all children are on the premises.
- Sleeping children are not left unsupervised and are checked on regularly
- No member of staff or volunteer may be alone with a child in any of the play areas, bathrooms, changing areas, toilets or gardens at any given time
- We will always supervise children who are eating or drinking, with an awareness of feeding plans, allergies and intolerances.

Risk Assessment

- Every reasonable effort is made to carry out a risk assessment on every potential hazard.
- Safety checks are made each morning before each session.

- Children do not have access to our kitchen area and hazardous materials are stored out of reach.
- Fires, heaters, wires and electrical pints are adequately guarded
- Low level safety glass is installed
- Outdoor space is securely gated and fenced.
- Adults have hot drinks in the kitchen area only.
- Cobtree Hall, is a no smoking zone. No smoking is allowed outside whilst children are present.

#### Outings and off-- site visits

- Before any outing or visit, venues are assessed for any potential risks or dangers that could occur.
- Parental permission will be sought in writing before any trip. No child can be taken without parental permission.
- Staff take first aid supplies, emergency contact details and a mobile phone on every trip or visit.
- If transport is hired for an outing, car seats will be required to be fitted for all children by their parent/ carer.

#### Lost child on an outing

Regular head counts are taken throughout the outing. In the unlikely event of a child going missing

- All staff present will immediately be informed, and a thorough search of the area will be made, ensuring that all other children remain supervised throughout.
- If appropriate on- site security will be informed, and a description of the child given
- In the event of a child not being found the designated person in charge will immediately call the police
- The designated person in charge will inform Cobtree Playschool who will contact the child's parents/carers to inform them what has happened.
- Staff from Playschool will be sent to assist in the safe return of the other children to Cobtree Hall or to a designated safe point.
- A minimum of two members of staff will remain and continue searching for the missing child.

#### Late collection Procedure

In the event of a parent/carers failing to collect their child by 1.15pm the following procedures will be adopted by the manager

- A member of staff will be asked to take care of the child to ensure their safety while equipment is organised or being stored away
- The child will be reassured, and comfort given if they become anxious
- The parent will be contacted by telephone
- If this fails, the emergency contact given on the admission form will be contacted.
- Contact will continually be tried to be made by telephone. If this fails, by 2.30pm police and social services will be contacted.

- Behaviour

## Statement of intent

At Cobtree playschool we believe that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave and should be free to play and learn without fear of being hurt or unfairly restricted by anyone else.

- We aim to provide an environment in which there is acceptable behaviour and where children learn to respect themselves, other people and the environment.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide a positive role model of behaviour by treating children, parents and one another with friendliness, care and courtesy.
- We require all staff, volunteers and students to provide positive strategies for handling any conflict by helping children to find solutions in ways that are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development.
- We praise and endorse desirable behaviour, such as kindness and willingness to share.
- We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.
- We recognise that codes of interacting with other people vary between cultures and require staff to be aware of and respect those used by members of our Playschool.
- When children behave in unacceptable ways, we help them to see what was wrong and how to cope with it appropriately.
- We do not use techniques intended to single out or humiliate individual children
- We do not shout or raise our voices in a threatening way to respond to a child's behaviour.
- We work in partnership with children's parents. Parents are regularly informed about their child's behaviour desirable or otherwise, by their key worker.

For comprehensive details we have policies and procedures for behaviour and sanctions, please ask a member of staff for information.

- Children's Safeguarding

The Cobtree Playschool child protection Policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the "Children Act 1989 and 2004", the current "Early Years Foundation Stage, welfare requirements, Sections 175 and 176 Education Act 2002 and related guidance including the "Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families 1999", "Working together to Safeguard Children"2010 and "What to do if you're worried a child is being abused"

The staff and members of Cobtree Playschool, the members of the Management Committee and the Maidstone Mencap Board of Directors take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare and to safeguard all the children and young people entrusted to our care.

As an early years setting for children with Special needs, we are aware that research on the protection of disabled children indicates that they are more at risk of being abused than non-disabled children. We aim to keep all children safe by adopting the highest possible standards and take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm.

We have detailed policies which include the procedures that will be followed if we have any reason to believe that a child in our care is subject to Emotional, Physical, Sexual abuse or Neglect.

The designated person for Child Protection, who has overall responsibility for child protection practice at Cobtree playschool is LIANE MORRIS.

As part of the Ethos of the setting we are committed to:

- Maintaining children's welfare as our paramount concern
- Providing an environment in which children feel safe, secure, valued and respected, confident to talk openly and sure of being listened to.
- Providing suitable support and guidance so that children have a range of appropriate adults who they feel confident to approach if they are in difficulties.
- Using learning at the setting to provide opportunities for increasing self-awareness, self-esteem, assertiveness and decision making, so that young children have a range of contacts and strategies to ensure their own protection and understand the importance of protecting others.
- Working with parents to build an understanding of the settings responsibility to ensure the welfare of all children including the need for referral to other agencies in some situations.
- Ensuring all staff are able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of the settings procedures and lines of communication
- Monitoring children who have been identified as "in need" including the need for protection, keeping confidential records which are stored securely and shared appropriately with other professionals.
- Developing effective and supportive liaison with other agencies.

This policy is in line with the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Procedures.

- Concerns and Complaints

We aim to provide the highest quality of care for all our children, parents and staff. We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt careful attention to their needs and wishes. Our intention is to work in partnership with our parents/ carers and we welcome suggestions on ways to improve our playschool at any time.

Concerns and complaints will be taken seriously and dealt with in a way that respects confidentiality.

- Making concerns and complaints known.

A parent who is uneasy about any aspect of playschool should at first talk to the Manager, Liane Morris, about their worries.

The manager will log the issues following our concerns and complaints procedures. When using these formats all information is stored and treated as confidential, maintaining welfare requirements with the EYFS / Ofsted and Data protection Act. This enables complaints to be properly recorded and the actions taken to resolve them. Actions will be reviewed with all parties concerned.

Most concerns should, if possible be resolved informally at this early stage. If the parent is still not satisfied or the problem reoccurs the complaint should be referred to the playschool representative on the board of Maidstone Mencap Directors, Lesley Rowbotham.

If the matter cannot be resolved to their satisfaction, then parents always have the right to raise the matter with Ofsted.

### Ofsted Early Years

Complaints department. [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

Telephone: 03000 1234 234 quoting our registration number EY127120

If you think that a child is in danger you must contact your local council or the police.

- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) May 2018

Everyone at Cobtree Playschool has a legal duty to protect the privacy of information relating to individuals. The data protection Act 1998 reviewed for May 2018 as the General data protection Regulation sets the principles to which we adhere to when processing personal data or information that will identify an individual.

The personal data that we collect about your child will include information from parents, information from outside support agencies and from other settings. We hold this personal data and use it to:

- Support your child's individual teaching and learning
- Monitor and report on your child's progress and achievements
- Provide appropriate pastoral care
- Assess how well the setting is doing.

The information includes contact details and personal characteristics such as ethnic groups, special educational needs and relevant medical information.

We will not give out information about your child to anyone outside of Cobtree playschool, without your prior consent unless the law and our rules allow us to do so. We are happy to show you any information that we store regarding your child.

We are required by law to pass some information about your child to the Local Authority and the department of education. If you require more information about how they use and store your information you can access their web site. [www.kent.gov.uk](http://www.kent.gov.uk) or [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk) or you can write to them at

Access to information co-ordinator

Sessions House, County Road, Maidstone ME14 1XQ

For further details please read our privacy notice, included with our Parent Pack, and notice board, or please ask our manager for a copy.

- Confidentiality

Our work with children and families will bring us into contact with confidential information. We respect confidentiality in that parents will always have access to the files and records we hold on their child only. Information given to the manager will not be passed on without your permission.

Staff and the children's volunteer helpers will have access to the files and records of their own key children, with whom they are working with, but confidential information will be stored in a locked cabinet which is only accessible by the manager.

Staff and helpers will only discuss individual children with their parent / carer and these directly involved with the child.

Parental permission will be sought by any student conducting their child care studies.

The protection of each child is of paramount importance. If there are concerns for a child's safety, it may be necessary to pass on confidential information to the appropriate authorities

.Maidstone Mencap has a website: [www.maidstonemencap.org](http://www.maidstonemencap.org), and Facebook accounts to help share our information and news within the community. Parental consent will be sought prior to sharing any photos of the children on these sites.

- Fees

As from September 2017 playschool fees will be kept in line, to equal the hourly funding rate received for free early education for 2 yr. olds from the KCC.

~~Fees from September 2022 — £5.20 per hour.~~

~~From September 2023 — £5.75 per hour~~

From September 2024 - £ 7.55 per hour

Fees will be invoiced for whole the term by the first working week of the term, and are payable in advance.

There is no deduction in the fees if your child is absent from playschool, including time off for illness or family holidays. It is at the discretion of the Playschool management to refund fees for long term illness.

From September 2024 will be charging a termly fee to support contributions towards essentials and extras that we are providing to support the care and activities and resources

**Details of current fees and funding entitlements are stated on additional formats shared with the parent information package.**

- Fund raising

Our income from our fees and grants is not enough to cover all the running costs, staffing and resources for the running of the Playschool, therefore fundraising and support is essential.

Cobtree hall is owned by Maidstone Mencap Charitable Trust Ltd, who employ the playschool staff and support us in many other ways.. Parents are encouraged to join Maidstone Mencap and membership forms are available and included with initial parent induction pack

We hold several, enjoyable events throughout the year, that have included a summer fayre, jumble sales, and wine and wisdom evenings. Support and ideas from parents are invaluable and very much appreciated.

[Please contact Mencap Direct for Advice, Advocacy, Housing, Learning, Leisure, Support and Work on 0808 808 1111 help@mencap.org.uk www.mencapdirect.org.uk](mailto:help@mencap.org.uk)

You can follow us at



[www.maidstonemencap.org](http://www.maidstonemencap.org)



Maidstone Mencap



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