Welcome to Pre-Prep

A Handbook for Parents
Welcome to Pre-Prep

A Handbook for Parents

Vinehall Pre-Prep School
Robertsbridge
East Sussex
TN32 5JL

Tel - 01580 880413
Fax – 01580 882119

Email – office@vinehallschool.com
Website – www.vinehallschool.com

Pre-Prep Department
Telephone: 01580 883094
Email: preprep@vinehallschool.com
# CONTENTS PAGE

## Part 1: Welcome to Vinehall
- A Welcome Note .............................................. 4
- Ethos and Aims ............................................... 4
- Moral and Spiritual Education ......................... 5
- Thinking Skills and the Pre-Prep Pals ................. 5

## Part 2: The Classes and Curriculum
### The Structure of Pre-Prep
- Nursery and Kindergarten ............................... 7
- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 ............................ 7

## Part 3: The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Nursery and Kindergarten ............................... 8
- Reception ................................................... 8

### The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
- Areas of Learning .......................................... 9
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development ....... 10
- Communication and Language, and Literacy ....... 10
- Mathematics .............................................. 11
- Understanding of the World ......................... 11
- Physical Development .................................. 12
- Expressive Arts and Design ......................... 12

## Part 4: Key Stage One
- Years 1 and 2 .............................................. 14

### The Key Stage One Curriculum
- English ...................................................... 14
- Mathematics .............................................. 15
- Science ..................................................... 15
- History and Geography ................................ 16
- Computing / ICT .......................................... 16
- French ...................................................... 17
- Physical Education ...................................... 17
- Art and Design Technology ......................... 17
- Music and Drama ....................................... 18
- Religious Education .................................... 18
- Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCEE) 18
- Learning Support ....................................... 18

## Part 5: Assessment and Reporting
- Assessment .................................................. 19
- Keeping you Informed ................................ 19
- Format of Written Reports ......................... 20
- Discipline .................................................. 20

Reviewed Jan 2020 KS/EB
Next Review Due Sep 2021
Rewards 20

Part 6: Links between Home and School
School Times and Dates 21
Concerts, Plays and other Pre-Prep Events 21
Trips and Outings 21
Admissions 22
Taster Days 22
What you can do before Starting School 22
Starting School 23
Key Person 23
Playgroup, ‘Little Vines’ 23

Supporting Your Child at Home
Reading 24
Library 24
Spelling 24
Maths 24
A Learning Journey (Topic) 24

Part 7: Extra-Curricular Activities
Music 25
Swimming 25
Activity Clubs 25
After School Care and Early Morning Club 25

Part 8: Uniform, Health, Safety and Security
Uniform 26
Snacks 26
Lunch 26
Medical Information 26
Illness 27
Holiday Absence 27
Safeguarding 27
Data Protection 27
Safety and Security 28
Safety on the Drive 29
Car Parking 29
Minibus Travel 29
Photographs 29

Part 9: Links with the Community
Local Links 30
Charity 30
Friends of Vinehall School 30

Part 10: Concerns and Complaints 30
Part 1: Welcome to Vinehall

A Welcome Note

The Pre-Prep is a part of Vinehall School, set in acres of beautiful countryside, offering a family ethos and quality education for all our children. We provide a happy and safe environment for boys and girls aged 2 to 7 years old.

We believe that education is a three-way partnership between the child, parent and teacher. It is important to us that you feel involved in the education of your child. We understand that starting school can be an anxious time for parents, as well as children. We hope that you find this booklet provides a helpful introduction to the Pre-Prep.

Ethos and Aims

We encourage strong links with our parents.

Vinehall Pre-Prep aims to help all pupils reach the highest standards they can achieve, while acknowledging that each child is an individual. The children’s learning experiences should always be successful and positive at their own level. All pupils are encouraged to do their best and we are keen to offer a wide range of opportunities which include academic, musical, investigative, creative and physical experiences.

Great importance is placed on the child’s social development. This is fostered in a caring environment, where courtesy, self respect, and independence, as well as consideration for others, are highly valued.

We aim to provide a high quality and well resourced learning environment in which children can investigate, question and even make mistakes without experiencing a sense of failure. It is important that children experience success and understand that learning is fun.
Moral and Spiritual Education

We aim to develop in all children a clear sense of morals, self discipline and respect for themselves and others. These are at the root of all our dealings with the children and are discussed in Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE at KS1) or Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED in Early Years) lessons or circle times and in the assemblies that we hold each morning.

The daily assembly is a time when the Pre-Prep Department or year groups unite. This often includes a story or focus for discussion, prayers and a hymn. Assemblies are planned around a theme and links are often made with our Golden Rules for good behaviour. The Golden Rules are usually displayed in the Pre-Prep corridor and in classrooms and they are interwoven into the Pre-Prep assemblies. The Golden Rules are referred to in Circle Time, which is planned as a weekly session to promote positive behaviour. There are more specific Pre-Prep rules, such as playtime rules which members of staff discuss with the children at regular intervals.

Vinehall is a Christian school and as such we mark the main Christian festivals and relate stories from both the Old and New Testaments of The Bible. However, we value highly the contribution given to us by children from other faiths. We encourage them to show us how they worship and how they celebrate their festivals.

Thinking Skills and the Pre-Prep Pals

We aim for a holistic education and to develop skills which will be valuable throughout the children’s lives.

‘It is not enough to have a good mind, the main thing is to use it well’, Descartes

Following inset training over an entire academic year, the staff in Pre-Prep have developed five characters – The Pre-Prep Pals. These are puppets that help the children develop intellectual character and positive thinking habits. A leaflet for parents is given out to describe our approach more fully; however, as an example…

| Billy Bee | Billy Bee collaborates and works with hard with his friends. |

Reviewed Jan 2020 KS/EB
Next Review Due Sep 2021
Part 2: The Classes and Curriculum

The Structure of Pre-Prep
Please note that an academic year starts on 1st September and ends the following 31st August.

Nursery and Kindergarten (Early Years Foundation Stage)

Children may attend the Pre-Nursery the term after they are 2 years old, depending on availability of places. They join the Kindergarten during the academic year in which they become 4 years old.

In the Nursery and Kindergarten we work to a ratio of one adult to four children for 2 year olds, then one adult to eight children or better, for children over 3 years old. The staff work under the direction of the Head of Nursery and Kindergarten.

School day for Nursery and Kindergarten:
Morning Session (inc. Lunch): arrival between 8.20 am and 8.40 am until 12.45 pm.
Whole day: 8.20 am – 8.40 am until 3.15 pm.

The children start by attending at least two morning sessions each week in Nursery and at least three sessions in the Kindergarten. They may stay for morning or whole day sessions. Each child will gradually build up the number of sessions in readiness for the transition to Reception. Kindergarten children should be attending for at least one full day each week in addition to at least three mornings during the Summer Term.

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

Children will start the Reception class in the academic year in which they become 5 years old. They become 6 in Year 1 and 7 in Year 2.

The School day:
Whole day: arrival is between 8.20 am and 8.40 am until 3.15 pm
Children are welcome in the classrooms from 8.20 am when the teachers will be ready to receive them. Lessons start at 8.40 am.

Reception (Early Years Foundation Stage), Year 1 and Year 2 (KS1) classes:

- There are up to 18 children with a qualified teacher.
- Teaching Assistants support the teachers in all areas of the curriculum ensuring a low ratio of children to adults.
- The classes have a mix of girls and boys, academic attainment and friendship groups.
- Music, French, gymnastics, athletics, swimming and ball skills are taught by specialist teachers.

Clubs

There are a range of clubs on offer either during break times or at the end of the Pre-Prep day (see Part 7, p 25)
Part 3: The Early Years Foundation Stage

Nursery and Kindergarten

The children are encouraged to explore, to think creatively and express themselves in different ways. It is important that they gain confidence and grow in independence over these years. Children learn when it is safe to take risks and when they can make mistakes knowing that there will be someone to help and support them.

Learning happens across all areas and is included in our daily activities. Whether we are changing for gym, sharing our news, handling clay or painting; the children have endless opportunities to explore the foundations for learning.

Purposeful play is an important part of the curriculum in the Nursery and Kindergarten. Play is planned, assessed and extended by the key workers whose role is crucial in developing the children’s language and learning. Every child is unique and our staff will provide challenges to ensure each child builds resilience, self-confidence and to be respectful of others.

We want the children in the Nursery and Kindergarten to enjoy their first experience of school. The grounds are used for a wide range of activities, such as nature walks or looking for mini-beasts. Visitors, including police officers, are invited in to enrich the children’s learning.

Reception

In Reception we build on the child’s prior learning and understanding through a more structured curriculum. Literacy and Mathematics, alongside other areas of learning, are linked to a theme each half term. These themes include the children looking at themselves, their families and other living things. We help the children to look at their environment and contrast it with others, questioning why things happen and how they work.

We teach reading skills in class and listen to children read their books regularly. Early in the Reception year there is an introductory talk for parents. We explain the way that we teach reading and how parents can support their child’s learning at home.

Children have weekly lessons in gym, swimming, ball skills and in the summer term we introduce athletics.
The Early Years Curriculum

At Vinehall we believe that the quality of education in children’s early years is the key to their future social and academic progress.

The teaching in the Nursery, Kindergarten and Reception is based on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The Characteristics of Effective Learning are key in our childrens’ development. ‘The unique child reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning – these move through all areas of learning:

Playing and exploring
Active learning
Creating and thinking critically’. (EYFS Statutory framework)

Seven areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage cover the main areas of young children’s development. These are:

Prime Areas
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)

Specific Areas
- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding of the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

During these foundation years we aim to introduce the areas of learning through stimulating and challenging experiences. In the Early Years we base the learning and play activities on the children’s existing skills and interests. We carefully structure the work to help children develop skills and build new relationships.

Within each learning area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs). Many children will be working towards these by the end of the Reception year; some children may have exceeded the goals and will be working beyond them at KS1 level. We recognise that not all children develop at the same speed or in the same way, but by observing the children we are able to continually assess their progress and attainment ensuring personalised learning for each child. We maintain a profile of each child’s development throughout the Early Years at Vinehall and we share the contents with you at parents’ evenings or afternoon consultations.
Areas of Learning

At Vinehall we have a unique opportunity to plan for and provide a seamless transition for the children in our care. All our children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and KS1 (from 2 to 7 years old) are under the one roof so that the parents, teachers and children get to know each other very well. This also enables the staff to offer a very joined-up approach; we have whole school events and our planning is systematic, ensuring we build a progression of skills, beginning with the very youngest children and going through to most able child in Year 2. We are on the same site as the Prep School and have strong links encouraging an easy transition into Year 3.

Personal Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

We believe that the ethos of the school should be built on a foundation of core values such as honesty, respect, co-operation, happiness, responsibility, tolerance, application and understanding. These themes permeate the whole curriculum and provide the basis for the intellectual, emotional, spiritual and moral development of the whole child. PSED and circle time sessions are planned once a week as a class activity, however class teachers tackle incidental issues as they arise.

Pre-Prep assemblies are planned for each term. They include whole Pre-Prep assemblies, year group assemblies and whole school assemblies. Most of the assemblies are linked to a ‘Golden Rule’ to encourage positive behaviour. A copy of the Early Years and Pre-Prep Behaviour Management Policy is available on request to the Head of Pre-Prep and is on the Vinehall website.

We believe that children need to learn how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. In the Pre-Prep environment, the children develop confidence, responsibility and independence. They are encouraged to think about themselves, their feelings and how their behaviour affects others. There are opportunities to reflect on choices and how to set simple goals. Children learn that there are different communities to which they belong and that members of these groups help and care for each other.

This area of learning is about emotional well-being, knowing who you are and where you fit in and feeling good about yourself.
Communication and Language, and Literacy

Communication and language depend on learning and being competent in a number of key skills, together with having the confidence, opportunity, encouragement, support and disposition to use them. We believe that the development of communication and language is at the heart of young children’s learning and underpins future literacy progress.

This area of learning includes:

- Communication of thoughts, ideas and feelings
- Speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes
- Extending vocabulary, exploring the meaning and sounds of new words
- Developing and using phonic knowledge
- Showing an understanding of stories and texts
- Being able to read a wide range of books
- Being able to read simple texts
- Sharing rhymes, music, songs, poetry, stories and non-fiction books.
- Writing for a variety of purposes
- Linking language in a range of contexts and activities.

Mathematics

Mathematical development depends on becoming confident and competent in learning and using key skills. This area of learning includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures.

We give particular attention to providing a wide range of practical mathematical activities in a variety of contexts which underpin children’s developing communication skills. Recording in mathematics will reinforce the oral and practical activities once the concepts have been understood.
Understanding the World

In this area of learning children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding which help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography and information and computing or communication technology (ICT).

We provide activities based on first hand experiences, which encourage exploration, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking, evaluation, decision making and discussion.
Physical Development

Physical development in the Early Years Foundation Stage provides opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; it is about improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. Physical development helps children gain confidence in what they can do and enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active. We believe that effective physical development helps children develop a positive sense of well being.

We aim to:

- Provide a range of activities, which offers appropriate physical challenges.
- Provide sufficient space, both indoors and outdoors, for children to experience a range of activities.
- Give sufficient time for children to use a range of equipment effectively.
- Develop the language of movement alongside the actions.
- Build understanding of the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Expressive Arts and Design

We believe that creativity is fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and to extend their understanding. This area of learning includes art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play.

We aim to provide:

- A stimulating environment in which creativity, originality and expressiveness are valued.
- A wide range of activities, which children can respond to using many senses.
- Time for children to explore and develop ideas.
- Opportunities for children to express their ideas in a range of media.
- Resources from a range of cultures to stimulate different ways of thinking.
Part 4: Key Stage One (KS1)

Years 1 and 2

We build on the enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning fostered in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A thorough grounding in English and Mathematics is supplemented by a broad curriculum of other National Curriculum subjects which are taught thematically, with programmes of study from different areas of the curriculum often being grouped into topics. A wide variety of activities ensure that the topics are interesting and the children are motivated to learn. Art, design, music and drama are used to enhance the curriculum and the children’s work is displayed for all to see and celebrate. ICT is visited in many areas of the curriculum, as well as being taught as a separate subject. The children have access to class-based computers, iPads and interactive white-boards and from Year 1 the children also use the computer suite in the Prep School.

The Key Stage One (KS1) Curriculum

The curriculum in KS1 builds on the children’s learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

English

As children move from the Early Years to Key Stage One the emphasis remains on the core skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening to ensure a secure foundation in literacy. High standards are encouraged in all areas.

Activities are planned to develop the children’s speaking and listening skills. They are encouraged not just to answer questions but to describe events, tell stories and make observations. Drama, puppet shows, class assemblies and concerts all encourage performing skills.

We recognise reading as a key skill and ensure that each child reads regularly to an adult, usually every day. The teachers monitor progress carefully to ensure that the children read within their ability and comprehension. We regularly add to our range of reading schemes and, as the children progress, they move on to a wide selection of readers, including books with chapters and high quality information books.

The teaching of phonics is systematically planned from the Early Years Foundation Stage and continued and developed with a different spelling pattern taught each week in KS1. In spelling we also concentrate on word families and common irregular words. These spellings are tested in a weekly dictation. The children write in a variety of forms such as stories, recounting events, factual topic work, letters and poems. Capital letters and full stops are encouraged from an early stage. By the end of Year 1 the children should be able to sequence a simple story and will have discussed story settings, characters and plots. In Year 2 they are helped to look more critically at their writing and to discuss how it may be improved. Cursive handwriting is taught through the Think Write Programme and the children make good progress in this area. Many children achieve neat cursive writing by the end of Year 1.
Mathematics

We aim to build a firm foundation in mathematics in an enjoyable way. We have developed this area in recent years investing in ICT and multi-sensory resources to support the children’s maths systematically from the early years and throughout KS1. Children enjoy mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of each lesson and are increasingly able to see patterns of numbers and to juggle the numbers in their heads, reaching an answer without pencil and paper.

Class instruction and follow-up activities are designed to be enjoyable so that the children learn while having fun. Emphasis is laid on practical work, using coins, tens and units etc., to gain a clear understanding of the relationship between numbers. As children progress they are introduced to an increasing number of mathematical terms, and are expected to learn facts, such as number bonds to ten or multiplication tables. The teachers monitor each child’s progress as some children need continual practice of a concept in order to gain confidence, while others can be accelerated and given more challenging tasks.

In Year 1 and 2 mathematics is taught using the Maths - No Problem Programme, this is a maths mastery approach and encourages the children’s understanding. The children explore a range of calculation methods and apply their knowledge choosing the method that is right for them. The topics starts with practical and exploratory activities which engage the children and develop their confidence. When the children are ready we move through the imagery phase and then onto written methods, the children are able to work at their own pace and have a range of differentiated methods to support and extend. Teachers use their own knowledge and experience to interweave other activities and opportunities when appropriate.

By the end of Year 2 the children will have had experience not only of number work but of the wider mathematical areas of money, time, shapes, angles, simple fractions, measuring length, weight and capacity and data-handling.

Science

The structured science scheme for each year group has units of study focusing on Living Things, Materials and Physical Processes. At Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum (age 5-7 years) the emphasis is on observing, investigating, comparing, gathering and organising a variety of data. In Year 1 the children will progress from making simple observations to being able to sort and group these. The teachers’ structure the tasks so that the children themselves question why things happen, start to predict the results of explorations and recognise patterns. By Year 2 they should be able to not only observe and compare but also to reflect on the outcome of an investigation and say whether what happened is what they expected. The children should now begin to design their own investigations and discuss whether a test is fair.
History and Geography

These subjects are taught through a ‘Learning Journey’ (or topic) with outings, interactive resources and visitors to bring the subject alive. ‘Learning Journeys’ usually incorporate art, craft and written work.

In History the children enjoy ‘stepping back in time’ using BBC educational programmes, the internet, role play and drama. Year 1 focus on developing the children’s historical skills through a range of different topics such as pirates. They explore the development of farming techniques and we take on the roles of many famous people throughout history such as Beatrix Potter. The Year 2 topics may highlight famous events and people, e.g. Remembrance Day, Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot, Samuel Pepys and the Great Fire of London, Florence Nightingale and Queen Victoria.

In Geography the Year 1 classes study the human and physical features of our school locality. We invite members of the school community into the classroom to tell us about the work they do. In Year 2 the study of a contrasting locality and of the culture of another country involve simple map making and reading and directional work as well as the use of globes and maps for location. Many children by this stage can use the library to find relevant topic books and they are helped to extract information.

Computing / ICT

ICT is visited in many areas of the curriculum, as well as being taught as a separate subject. Each classroom has computers, iPads and interactive whiteboards which are used to support the activities of the class. Children in Years 1 and 2 receive individual tuition on the computers in a weekly class lesson taught by a specialist teacher in the Prep school computer suite. The children will use technology purposefully and learn to understand what algorithms are. In addition they will be taught how to use technology safely and respectfully.
French

The children begin learning French in the Reception Year and have fun using useful vocabulary and phrases through songs, games and role play. Their specialist French teacher encourages the children to develop an authentic accent.

Physical Education

There is a wide range of activities to encourage the children’s physical development and the Pre-Prep children take advantage of the school’s excellent indoor and outdoor sports facilities. Weekly swimming lessons are held in the indoor heated pool; gym takes place in the Pre-Prep Hall or the new Sports Hall while ball skills and athletics are taught on the playing fields and astro pitch. All activities are led by specialist teachers.

Art and Design

There are many opportunities for creative development in Art and Design using a wide variety of materials and tools. We aim to stimulate the children’s imagination through observation and exploration of colour, form, texture and pattern. Through discussion and experimentation, the children learn to develop their ideas in an environment in which originality is valued. They learn to collaborate and respect the ideas of others. Through art the children extend their understanding of other areas of the curriculum while portrait work supports the Year 2 study of ‘Ourselves and Our Bodies’. Work from each child is displayed in the classrooms and in other areas of the Pre-Prep to encourage a sense of achievement.
Music and Drama

Music and Drama play an important part in Pre-Prep life and all children have at least an hour a week of music lessons. In Years 1 and 2 the children are helped to appreciate different musical styles, to create rhythm patterns and to sing songs with percussion accompaniments. All classes are taught by a music specialist and the skills learned are used in concerts, assemblies and performances.

Individual music tuition is available from Year 1 and is arranged in discussion with the Director of Music. As examples, children in Pre-Prep have played the recorder, fife, violin, cello, cornet and piano. The concert at the end of Year 2 displays the musical skills acquired in Pre-Prep. The children also enjoy performing small plays for assemblies and each year group puts on a more elaborate musical production during the year.

Religious Education (RE)

As Vinehall is a Christian school our work in RE focuses on Christianity but the children also study Judaism as well as other cultures and religions. In Year 1 the children learn about baptism and belonging to a church and enjoy an interesting visit to a local church to learn about Christian artefacts and symbols. Year 2 children begin to learn about Jewish practices and beliefs, including Shabbat and the Torah. The children are read some of the Christian parables and discuss why Jesus told these stories. Both year groups celebrate Easter and Christmas.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

These sessions are timetabled during the school week as well as being reflected in the values of the Pre-Prep Department. We consider this area of the curriculum, which focuses on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family, to be very important. In Circle Time the children are encouraged to think about themselves, their feelings and how their behaviour affects others. There are opportunities to reflect on choices and to set simple goals.

Learning Support

A SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) is available to advise staff and further assist those children who require it in liaison with parents. An additional charge is made should a child need regular individual support sessions. We also have close ties with outside agencies such as those for speech and language as well as occupational therapy.
Part 5: Assessment and Reporting

Assessment

The teacher, as part of good practice in education, routinely assesses your child. This ensures we are providing the right curriculum for your child and that they are making progress. We also use the information from our assessments to inform our planning, discussions at parents’ evenings and written reports. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are closely observed and you will be encouraged to be involved in building a profile of your child. By the end of the Reception year, staff will have completed an Early Years Foundation Stage Profile of each child. The results are sent to East Sussex Education Authority on request and are shared with parents.

Keeping you Informed

Before the start of the academic year you have the opportunity to meet the staff and find out what will be happening in the class throughout the year. The staff will advise you of the curriculum, their expectations, daily activities and any homework.

There is daily contact between the parents and the Pre-Prep staff. Parents collecting their children from school are always welcome to look round the class and talk to the teacher. We feel that close home-school links are essential and we particularly want to hear of any change in circumstances at home or of problems that have arisen. You have a Home-School Link Booklet or Reading Record Book to record any information that you feel is important to ensure your child has a good day at school. Likewise we use the book to keep you up to date with class reading or events specific to your child’s day.

For Nursery, Kindergarten and Reception children, we have Parents’ Consultation Evenings or Afternoons during the Michaelmas and Lent Terms, where you have the opportunity to see your child’s work and then to discuss your child’s progress. Parents of children in the Reception Year meet again with the teacher once the children’s Profiles are complete in June. Written reports are received at the end of the academic year.

Years 1 and Year 2 children have Parents’ Consultation Evenings or Afternoons in the Michaelmas and Lent Terms, where you have the opportunity to see your child’s work and then have an appointment to discuss your child’s progress. You will receive a written report at the end of the Summer Term, which is informed by the child’s Individual Learning Profile (ILP). The ILP is built up over Years 1 and 2 and includes information from parents to help us individualise the child’s learning.

If any significant issues arise during a consultation appointment, we would ask that parents arrange a separate appointment with the teacher. This ensures you have enough time to talk through your concerns and helps us to run these consultations to time.

Teachers are happy to see you at the end of the day if you have any issues you wish to discuss. In the mornings they are preparing for the day ahead and have the important task of welcoming and settling the children into the classroom. We ask that if you have anything you wish to discuss, to make an appointment with our staff later in the day or write a note in the Home-School Link Booklet and they will get back to you as soon as they are able.
Format of Written Reports

Nursery, Kindergarten and Reception reports are based on the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They include comments on areas of learning, the children’s ‘characteristics of effective learning’ and ‘next steps’.

In Years 1 and 2, the reports summarise the learning and achievement and give guidance for future targets.

Discipline

At Vinehall Pre-Prep we take a positive approach to discipline and behaviour management. In assemblies, as well as in class, we concentrate on explaining to children the reasons why good behaviour is important and why rules help us. We reward good behaviour and acknowledge a child’s efforts both in class and in assemblies. It is made clear that it is the inappropriate behaviour that is unacceptable and that the child can do something to correct this. We treat verbal or physical bullying seriously. If you have any concerns, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can actively tackle situations as they arise.

The following polices are available on request and are on the website:

- Pre-Prep and Early Years Behaviour Management Policy
- Policy for the Prevention of Bullying (whole school)
- Complaints Policy (whole school)

Rewards

We feel it is important that children are proud of their achievements and have the opportunity to share them with you and their peers. We praise and reward the children for a range of things including effort, kindness, helpfulness, or academic achievement. If a child consistently receives rewards this is celebrated in assembly by the whole school or on ‘The Wall of Fame’. Rewards are also given using the Pre-Prep pal books in Reception and Years 1 and 2 and Pre-Prep pal stickers and postcards in Early Years.
Part 6: Links between Home and School

School Times and Dates

You will receive the School Calendar at the beginning of each term and this will list the main events of the term as well as dates for the coming year. If you or any members of your family are able to join us at school for concerts, Prep School church services, matches and other similar events, you will be most welcome.

We try to keep you up to date with events in the Pre-Prep through regular letters, posters, emails and newsletters which give relevant dates and news. Weekly class updates are written in the home link books and these ditties are also emailed to parents.

There is a weekly newsletter ‘Vinelines’ that can be e-mailed direct to you, and accessed from our website. Please ensure the office has your current email address.

Concerts, Plays and Other Pre-Prep Events

There are many opportunities for drama and music making as part of the curriculum. Children enjoy performing in small events such as class assemblies and each class takes a special assembly to which parents are invited. Each year group puts on a more elaborate play and/or concert for parents during the year. This enables the children to experience both the spontaneity of immediate performances, as well as the practice required to achieve a high standard in a more formal setting. There are many other occasions, particularly in the areas of craft or cooking, when parents come into school to help and volunteers are sought to assist with our weekly ‘Puzzle It Out’ sessions.

Trips and Outings

From the Reception year there are outings and parents may be invited to accompany these. The School Trips Policy (whole school) is available on request. Pre-Prep school trips are not usually charged for as we view them as an important aspect of our curriculum enrichment programme. Each outing is carefully planned and an individual risk assessment is undertaken.
Admissions

Our Admissions Policy is given to all our parents.

Taster Days

- Your child will visit the Pre-Prep Department for a morning or a day, depending on the age of your child, before starting school. Children will spend this time in the classroom getting to know their teacher and some of the other children in the class.
- At the end of the session you will have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and discuss how the session went.
- If you have any queries or worries after that visit, do feel that you can drop in or telephone. We understand that a new school is as big a step for many parents, just as it is for the children!
- A medical form will be sent to you before your child starts school. It is important that this is returned before the taster day so that we are aware of any requirements your child may have.

What you can do before starting school

Most children settle into school life quickly and happily. However, there is much that you can do to help, particularly in the Early Years:

- Encourage your child to look forward to school.
- If your child is not already attending a nursery or playgroup perhaps you could arrange time away from you with family or friends. This will help to prepare your child for the transition from home to school.
- Help your child to share. Learning to ‘give and take’ is not easy but practice at home will help.
- Show your child how to use the toilet and wash hands efficiently. An awareness of these things is useful, even if your child is not toilet trained.
- Make changing easy for your child. Shoes with Velcro fastenings and tracksuits that are large enough to fit easily over uniform will encourage independence. Large loops will enable children to hang up their clothing easily.
- Introduce a knife and fork at mealtimes. We will, of course, help to master the skill of using these effectively.
- Encourage your child to be polite, for example, to say ‘excuse me’, ‘please’ and ‘thank you’.

Don’t worry if your child has not mastered everything by the time they start school. We will help your child and support the important work you do at home.
Starting School

- Children sometimes feel unhappy when leaving their parents. Try setting a leaving routine and stick to it, often if you leave quickly and calmly your child will soon be playing happily. It makes it much harder for your child (and for you!) if the leave-taking is drawn out. Please be assured that if we had any concerns, we would contact you.

- If your child is upset, a cuddle from us goes a long way towards making them feel comfortable and settled.

- We appreciate the comfort of a favourite toy or ‘cuddly’ should it be necessary in the first few weeks of school. When toys are brought in they are kept in a safe place and not played with during school time.

- Children love showing their parents what they have done at school and it is important that they know their parents are interested in these activities. Feel free to come and look around at the end of the day so that the morning routine is not disturbed.

- We often encourage children to bring in objects to supplement our ‘interest tables’ around the classroom. Check the notice board outside the rooms to keep you up to date with what is needed.

- Please name all clothes so that they do not get lost or muddled with those of others.

- Large hanging loops need to be sewn securely to aid the child’s independence in changing and tidying up!

- School is always busy and your child will be looking forward to seeing you at the end of the session. Please collect your child on time, thus avoiding feelings of uncertainty or insecurity if you are late. Sometimes delays are unavoidable. Please phone the Pre-Prep Office or email the Head of Pre-Prep if you know you are going to be late. We will then be able to reassure your child.

Key Person

Every child in the Nursery and Kindergarten is assigned a key person to help ensure that every child’s care is tailored to meet their individual needs. The key person will be an allocated member of staff. They help the child become familiar with the setting and they build a good relationship with the child and their parents.

The teacher is the key person for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Playgroup, ‘Little Vines’

Families who are interested in joining Vinehall may attend our playgroup, ‘Little Vines’. This is run by parents for parents and is free of charge. Families meet in ‘The Den’ and opportunities are provided when appropriate for the children to meet the EYFS staff and visit our Nursery which promotes an easy transition into Nursery. Parents/carers must attend with their child/ren and give their contact details to the school. A register is taken and the parents leading the group have DBS clearance.
Supporting your Child at Home

Reading

When your child has developed the necessary early reading skills we start to send books home for you to share together. We also send home a Home-School Link Booklet or Reading Record Book. We record the book your child is reading and make a note of which pages they have read at school. Please use this book to let us know what work you have done at home.

Library

Over the last few years we have developed a wonderful library and we are keen that the children use it. Therefore, it has been set up as a lending library and the children are encouraged to borrow a book once a week to enrich their reading experience. Each book is logged out and must be returned to allow another book to be borrowed. Please return all books at the end of each term and we do ask that any which have been lost are replaced.

Spelling

From Year 1 the children are sent home with a weekly list of spellings to learn. The children need to practise these daily. We recommend you follow the simple procedure of:

- **LOOK** at the word
- **SAY** the word
- **COVER** the word up
- **WRITE** the word
- **CHECK** if it is correctly spelt

Revisit the process if the word is not correct.

The Reception classes introduce children to ‘Sounds Books’ and ‘Tricky Words’ on an individual basis as they are ready.

Maths

Maths is integrated throughout home learning through a range of number and shape activities. We encourage the children to observe numbers used in real world application, such as shopping, house numbers and road signs.

Learning Journey / Topic

At the beginning of each term, we let you know which topics your child will be covering in class. You are welcome to send in suitable books and artefacts that support the work we do in school. If you feel you have a skill or expertise you are able to share with us, please consult your class teacher. We are always happy to welcome parents into class and have benefited from some exciting talks. These talks have ranged from caring for babies, visiting the doctor and examining skeletons, learning about bee-keeping, to caring for and bathing the dog!
Part 7: Extra-Curricular Activities

Music

Music is taught by a specialist teacher from the Prep School. Individual instrumental lessons are taught by visiting music teachers. In the Pre-Prep, instrumental tuition is offered to Year 1 and 2 children and they can choose an instrument following discussion with the Director of Music. If you would like your child to have individual lessons we would encourage you to contact the Music Department directly to discuss this.

Swimming

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children have weekly swimming lessons in the school pool. Children are proud of their achievements and we invite parents to celebrate with them by attending a lesson at the end of the year.

Activity Clubs

There are clubs available during lunch time and after school. There is an extra charge for some of these activities. You will receive a letter inviting you to register before the start of term. Some of the clubs that we have been able to offer include Gym, Funky Dance, Judo, Multi-Sports, Soccer, STEM, Drama, Balance Bike and Ballet. These clubs may vary from term to term.

There is private gym and individual instrumental tuition available for children from Years 1 and 2.

After School Care (ASC) and Early Morning Club (EMC)

If you need to extend the care we provide beyond the school day then After School Club is available from 3.15 pm until 6 pm for children during the term in which they turn 3 years old. There are also shorter options; from 3.15 until 4.30 pm and from 4.30 pm (after clubs) until 6 pm which includes a tea. The After School Club Lead directs the supervisors to ensure the children have the opportunity to relax and play with friends. The children play either inside, or when the weather permits, outside in the extensive grounds. A tea is provided between 4.45 pm and 5.15 pm and the children may be collected any time before, but no later than 6 pm. There is a charge for sessions and pre-booked regular sessions can be added to the invoice each term. Depending on availability places can also be booked at short notice at our Pre-Prep Office. For further details there is an Out of School Care Policy, available from the Pre-Prep Office on request.

We also provide an Early Morning Club free of charge for our children from 8 am until the classroom doors open at 8.20 am. This is available to children during the term in which they turn 3 years old, whose parents need to drop off early. The ratio of adults to children is maintained at 1:8. Children arriving on the school buses are automatically guaranteed a place. To book additional places please ask at the Pre-Prep Office. Children entering ‘The Den’ for Early Morning Club must be handed over to the supervisors so that they can register who is present. If a registered child is under 3 years old and requires the Early Morning Club, please discuss this need with the Head of Pre-Prep.

Breakfast is available from 7.30 am for a small charge. Please see the Head of Pre-Prep for further details.
Part 8: Uniform, Health, Safety and Security

Uniform

Uniform lists are sent out for new children and are available on our website. Please make sure that every item of clothing is named and most items require loops for hanging. Some items are available at the school uniform shop. For opening times please see the School Calendar, ask at the Pre-Prep Office, Front Office or telephone the shop; the number is available from the School Calendar or our website www.vinehallschool.com. The shop is located towards the end of the drive, opposite the old gym. If girls wear hair bands they should be navy blue or in the school uniform fabric (summer dress or tunic), these are available from the school shop. Long hair should always be tied back; it should be tidy, free of colouring and braids and be made especially secure for PE and swimming. Jewellery (except ear studs), tattoos, watches and nail polish should not be worn in school. Second hand uniform is available from matron at published times during the week.

Snacks

During the morning, your child will be offered a drink of water or milk, some fruit and a healthy carbohydrate.

Water is freely available in the classroom and we encourage children to drink water throughout the day. Water bottles allow us to monitor amount that the children are drinking more easily.

Lunch

The Chef Manager publishes his planned menus on the school website for parents’ information. There is a copy displayed on the Pre-Prep notice boards at both entrances to the building. We aim to provide a healthy balance of dishes. To encourage good manners teachers/TAs serve the children and all the Pre-Prep children sit together at lunch time. We encourage the children to try at least a small amount of everything. Special diets are catered for by arrangement with Chef.

Medical Information

Before your child’s start date at school, you are required to complete a medical form to ensure we are aware of any condition or illness that could affect your child when they are at school. On occasion, you may request that we administer prescribed medicines during the course of the school day, which should be handed in at the Pre-Prep Office and checked by a member of staff. You will be required to complete a medical consent form, detailing the medicine, relevant dosage and the time we need to administer it. If your child needs pain relief or medicine to reduce a high temperature then home is the best place until the child is fully recovered.

We encourage parents to check for nits at least once a week. We run the occasional nit check and parents are contacted if any action needs to be taken. Once the children are treated they may return to school. Children with a verruca need to wear a verruca sock or sealant to be applied before swimming.
Illness

If your child is ill at school we will notify you. Please make sure we have up to date contact numbers, including mobile phones and an emergency contact number. There are trained first-aiders in the Pre-Prep and the School Nurse is available in the Prep School, should we need her advice. All accidents at school will be reported to you.

If your child is not able to attend school because of illness, please advise us by phone between 8.00 am and 9.00 am.

If any child suffers from sickness or diarrhoea please ensure they stay at home for 48 hours after the symptoms have passed. This will help prevent the spread of any infection.

Holiday Absence

We ask you to take children on holiday during our designated holidays. Government guidelines are clear on holiday absence.

- Any request for holiday absence should be made in writing to the Head or Head of Pre-Prep in plenty of time.
- The maximum leave for any academic year is 10 school days.
- We are obliged to inform the DCFS if any child exceeds this limit because they are not attending school for the statutory period required.

Safeguarding

In all the work we do we see the rights, safety and welfare of the children as paramount. This means that sometimes we have to take actions which some parents and carers could find threatening. In such cases we will work for a mutual understanding. We will explain our professional responsibilities and we will give every reassurance as to our motives but we will always stress that, for us, the children’s needs have to come first. Our Safeguarding Policy is available on request or from the Vinehall website.

Data Protection

Vinehall processes personal information about its’ pupils and is a ‘data controller’ for the purposes of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. Information is collected from parents/carers and may be received from the children's previous schools. We hold and use the information to support the teaching and learning and to monitor and report. The information we hold includes contact details, assessment results, attendance information, ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

We do not give information about our families to anyone outside the school without permission unless the law and our rules permit it. We are required by law to pass some information to East Sussex County Council and to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). You may ask to see the information we hold about you; for further details please see the Head of Pre-Prep or request the Vinehall Data Protection Policy. If you need to know more about how East Sussex County Council and the DCSF store and use your information please contact them.
Safety and Security

As you will understand, we take this responsibility seriously. No visitors are allowed in school without permission. The Pre-Prep building is locked between 8.40 am and 3.00 pm. If you need access to the Pre-Prep building during school hours, please go to the main Pre-Prep entrance (library end door) and ring the bell to be let in, alternatively walk around and knock on your child’s external class door.

If you are collecting or returning children during the working day, please sign your child in or out using the book provided in the Pre-Prep Office.

In the mornings you should bring your child to the classroom door. Teachers will be available in the classrooms from 8.20 am.

At the end of the day the children should be collected from their classrooms and the teacher will hand your child over to you. Each child shakes hands with the teacher and says ‘good afternoon’ before being dismissed.

If you are late for any reason please phone the school and advise us so that arrangements can be made to look after your child until you arrive.

We will establish with you from the beginning who will be collecting your child from school. If this changes for any reason please let us know in writing. A note in the Home-School Link Booklet will ensure we are kept up to date with any changes. Should circumstances change during the day, please leave a telephone message. We will not let a child go with anyone without the parents’ permission.
Safety on the Drive

We ask all parents to exercise extreme caution on the drive and not to exceed 5 mph. This is particularly important on the road leading from Pre-Prep to the main drive, where the Prep school children may be crossing from the playing fields.

Car Parking

Car parking is always difficult as we have more cars than spaces available for parents to use. We ask parents to be considerate and sensitive to the needs of others, especially those with younger children. Once you have dropped your child off, please leave the space promptly to allow someone else the opportunity of using it.

The parking spaces nearest to the Pre-Prep are reserved for staff; this is for safety reasons as these cars will be static at the busy times of the day, when our young children are coming in and out of school.

Minibus Travel

We encourage staff to enrich the children’s learning through outings. Travel is usually by minibus driven by Vinehall staff with the appropriate training, and the welfare arrangements for EYFS children are always applied.

Regulations for children traveling to and from the school on the minibus service however are different and the driver is unaccompanied. Procedures for emergency help, record keeping and risk assessments are in place. Drivers are aware of EYFS children on their service and will park and hand over the child to an adult at each end of the journey. All health and safety policies including those regarding minibus use and outings are available on request.

Photographs

It is our custom to take photographs or recordings of the children which are primarily for use within school. However the photographs or recordings may be published in the school magazine, on our website, in a future prospectus or even in a newspaper or other publications. You have the right to refuse permission, please inform us in writing if you do not want your child photographed or recorded in any way.
Part 9: Links with the Community

Local Links

From time to time visitors will be invited into school to talk to the children and outings are organised to enhance the children’s learning.

Charity

The Pre-Prep supports charities nominated by the Prep School Charity Committee, Food Bank Friday and occasional Christmas appeals. We raise money throughout the year through various events. We are always grateful for the support our parents give us.

Friends of Vinehall

This is a thriving organisation which organises a wide range of events, social and otherwise, for both children and adults. The ‘Friends’ work extremely hard and we value the support they give the school. If you would like to help in any way, they would appreciate hearing from you. Contact details are published in the termly calendar and each class has a parent representative.

Part 10: Concerns and Complaints

If you have any problems or complaints, do please come in and discuss them. Academic issues should be raised with your child’s class teacher initially.

If you have any concerns that you would like to discuss with the Head of Pre-Prep, she is usually available at the start and the end of the day in the Pre-Prep Office area or corridor. If you would like an appointment to discuss any issues with her, she is happy to see you either during or after school, by arrangement.
If you are still dissatisfied, you may approach the Head or Chairman of the Governors. The Chairman of the Governors is Mr John Giles, c/o Vinehall School, Robertsbridge, East Sussex, TN32 5JL.

In regard to EYFS children only; Ofsted requires us to investigate written complaints relating to the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements. Complainants are notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days of having received the complaint. The contact telephone number for Ofsted is 0300 123 1231 and the address is Ofsted, Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD.

Vinehall is an accredited member of the Independent Association of Prep Schools (IAPS) and is regularly inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). The contact address for ISI is CAP House, 9 - 12 Long Lane’ London’ EC1A 9HA, Tel. 020 7600 010

Vinehall School keeps records of all complaints and their outcome.

School documents and policies are available on our website and/or on request, these include...

- A statement of our Pre-Prep Ethos and Aims (included in this handbook)
- Pre-Prep and Early Years Behaviour Management Policy (Pre-Prep)
- Policy for the Prevention of Bullying (whole school)
- Complaints Policy (whole school)
- Safeguarding Policy (whole school)
- Data Policy (whole school)
- School Trips Policy (whole school)
- Curriculum Policy (whole school)
- Admissions Policy (whole school)
- Equal Opportunities - Pupils (whole school)
- Missing Pupils / Procedures for when a child is not collected on time / Wandering Child Policy (whole school)
- Administration of Medicines Policy (Pre-Prep)
- Special Educational Needs Policy (whole school)
- Catering Policy (whole school) Menus are posted in Pre-Prep each week.
- Medical Policy (whole school)
- Out of School Care Policy (Pre-Prep)

Information regarding the daily routine is available from class teachers, the school calendar and is included in the Pre-Prep Daily Routine Policy. Information regarding clubs and activities are displayed in the library and are available from our Pre-Prep Office, the calendar and included in this Handbook. An up to date staff list is available on the website and on request.
## Pre-Prep Staff
### Academic Year 2019/2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr Dom Britt</td>
<td>Acting Head of Pre-Prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Sarah Wolford</td>
<td>Head of Nursery and Kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Sally King</td>
<td>Year 2 Teacher – 2B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Louisa Bennett</td>
<td>Year 1 Teacher – 1B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Jackie Garwood</td>
<td>Reception Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Harriet Parkin</td>
<td>Reception Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Tessa Richardson</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Laura Wallbank</td>
<td>Early Years Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Emily Bidwell</td>
<td>Early Years Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Amanda Greenhalgh</td>
<td>Early Years Practitioner / First Aider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Siobahn Garvey</td>
<td>After School Club Lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Clare Ruddle</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant /After School Club / First Aider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Angelique Sander</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant / First Aider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Amanda Winn</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant / First Aider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Julie Grogan</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant/ Breakfast Club Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Karen Stenton</td>
<td>Pre-Prep Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Aly O’Sullivan</td>
<td>Pre-Prep Administrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Zac Attwood</td>
<td>Reception Games and Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Jane Austen</td>
<td>Reception and KS1 French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Sarah Denman</td>
<td>Dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Derek Guy</td>
<td>Swimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Matt McKinnon</td>
<td>KS1 Games and Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Jon Newman</td>
<td>KS1 Games and Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Susan Fulford</td>
<td>Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Nikki Towner</td>
<td>Gymnastics and EYFS Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Zeneptha deCordova</td>
<td>ICT Years 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In the event of the absence of the Head of Pre-Prep, the Head of Nursery is the Named Deputy for the Early Years.*