

THE FOLLY NURSERY AND PRE-SCHOOL



The Folly
nursery

Operational Plan

Building Foundations for Life, whilst allowing Children to be Children!

Background Information

The Folly Nursery takes its name from the old stone tower, at Tower Cross in Honiton, which was home to the nursery from its beginnings in September 1995 when it was started by Geoffrey Wilmot. In September 2001 the nursery moved to Manor House School in Honiton, which was also owned by Geoffrey Wilmot. Then, after the closure of the school in July 2010, the nursery moved to its current site in the former Dalwood School in August 2011. At this point The Folly Nursery Ltd was started by Geoffrey Wilmot and Helen Freeman.

In January 2012 we expanded into the full premises of Dalwood School which allowed us to expand, both in space and in numbers. In May 2013 we purchased the old school building from Devon County Council providing us the security of the site. By July 2015 we had reached capacity and started looking for a second site.

We purchased the former Miniatures nursery in April 2016 and have the capacity to take 36 children in total. 15 of whom could be under the age of 2.

The Folly provides care and early education for children from birth to eight years old, working within the required guidelines for the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) curriculum, over 2 sites, one in Somerset and one in Devon.

The nursery in Ilton is registered, with Ofsted (EY499936), and we choose to take up to 36 children at any one session split over the 3 classrooms. We operate on a staff to child ratio of 1:3 for under twos, 1:4 for two-year-olds and 1:8 for three- to four-year-olds.

Our Mission Statement

Building foundations for life whilst allowing children to be children!

Aims and Objectives

The Folly Nursery is a day nursery and a pre-school and therefore is on both the Early Years Register and the Compulsory part of the Childcare register provided by Ofsted our governing body.

The Folly aims to nurture the children's deep desire to learn, to experiment, to socialise and to gain independence. The curriculum we follow is The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which is designed to cover 7 areas of learning.

It consists of 3 prime areas which are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Communication and Language, and

Physical Development.

It is seen that these 3 areas are the most important areas from birth and build the roots for the rest of a child's learning.

There are also 4 specific areas which are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World, and

Expressive Arts and Design.

These 4 specific areas strengthen the prime areas and help us to apply the prime areas within a nursery setting. All these 7 areas are inter-connected and most of our activities within the nursery cover more than one area at one time.

The wide and varied range of activities we offer provides the children with not only a basic grounding in numbers and letters, but a wealth of learning experiences, allowing them to progress to their next stage of education with a sense of achievement and confidence.

All our activities are designed to cover more than just one area of the curriculum at any one time and ensure that every child gets a chance to achieve in every area. All activities are planned to follow children's interests as by doing so we have found children to want to be more involved in their learning and achieve their potential.

Emphasis is placed on the development of every child's self-esteem and independence, and they are strongly encouraged to be kind and caring to one another in a positive and nurturing environment. Children work and play together in a happy, relaxed, and positive atmosphere in which encouragement abounds and the surroundings are colourful, attractive, and adaptable.

The experiences provided for each child are stimulating, challenging, absorbing, and satisfying, allowing for every aspect of development and progression through the different stages of the preschool years.

The children are taught by dedicated, enthusiastic and well qualified staff in spacious and well-equipped classrooms. This all combines to help us provide a start to education of the highest standard. We have 3 rooms - our Ladybirds are in their own room for under 2s, our Caterpillars are in the 2-year-olds room and our Butterflies have their own Preschool room, designed for 3- and 4-year-olds, where they can do special activities planned to prepare them for school.

Staff

Out of our seventeen staff who work with the children, thirteen are qualified at level 3 or above, two are level 2 qualified and working towards their level 3 and the other 2 are working towards level 2. All staff regularly attend courses and workshops to keep abreast of current educational thinking, and staff are required to attend statutory courses such as Paediatric First Aid and Safeguarding Children. All staff are DBS checked before being allowed to commence work, and references are sought. Staff are also required to attend half termly staff meetings where ongoing training and information sharing take place, as well as room meetings where they can plan for the individual children in their rooms.

Nursery Staff List

Freeman, Helen - NVQ (Level 3) Early Years Care and Education, NVQ (Level 5) Management, BSL (Level 1 passed and 2 completed)

Director - Registered person with Ofsted

Proprietor

Safeguarding Officer

Wilmot, Geoffrey - Diploma Preschool Practice (Level 3)

Proprietor - Registered Person with Ofsted - Bank Staff

Forest School Qualified

Love, Sarah (Off site)

Admin Assistant

Jeffrey, Jo - NVQ (Level 3) Early Years Care and Education.

Forest School (Level 2) Qualified.

Manager.

SENCO

Yeadon, Becky - NVQ (Level 3) Childrens Care, Learning and Development
Assistant Manager.
Safeguarding Lead.

McGown, Ellie - Early Years Educator (Level 3)
Under 2's Room Leader.

Every, Sophie - BTEC (Level 3) National Diploma in Childrens Care, Learning and Development.
Nursery Assistant.

Layzel, Paula - NVQ (Level 3) Early Years Care and Education.
Nursery Assistant.

Harris, Jemma - NVQ (Level 3) Early Years Care and Education.
Pre School Room Leader.

Newton, Rachel - NNEB, Diploma in Nursery Nursing
Pre School Room Leader.

Parr, Debbie - NVQ (Level 3) Early Years Care and Education.
Over 2's Room Leader.

Adams, Emma - NVQ (Level 3,) Early Years Care and Education.
Bachelor Of Arts.
Over 2's Room Leader.

Humphreys, Lottie - Early Years Educator (Level 3)
Nursery Assistant

Sinnot, Holly - NCFE CACHE Technical Diploma in Childcare and Education (Early Years Educator)
Nursery Assistant.

Brion, Lucy-May - Early Years Practitioner (Level 2) Working towards her Early Years Educator (Level 3)

North, Amy - Early Years Educator (Level 3)
Under 2's Room Leader.

Pym, Megan - Early Years Educator (Level 3)
Foundation Degree in Early Years Childhood Studies (Level 4 & 5)

Packer, Jorja - Working towards her Early Years Practitioner (Level 2)

Staff Roles

All staff have their own responsibilities and they include;

The Directors - Mr Geoffrey Wilmot and Ms Helen Freeman have the final say in all matters, educationally and otherwise.

The Manager - Mrs Jo Jeffrey - is in overall charge of all staff and all children on a daily basis and makes all the day to day decisions.

Safeguarding Designated Officer - Mrs Becky Yeadon has specific responsibility for issues relating to Safeguarding Children and are qualified to level 3 along with Ms Helen Freeman the Proprietor, who can also be consulted during the absence of the Designated Officers.

All other staff have had Safeguarding Children Awareness training at level 2. (See separate safeguarding policy)

Room Leaders - The room leaders are in charge of making sure all the routines and requirements of each child in their room has been met each day, and that information has been received from and fed back to parents daily. They are also responsible for making sure the planning has been followed and adjusted as necessary to make sure each child in their room is achieving to their full potential.

SENCO and Behaviour Management - this is Emma Adams; after your child's key person Emma is the staff and the parent's first port of call if a concern about a child's development or behaviour arises. Emma would then, alongside the child's key person and the appropriate Room Leader, collect evidence of the child's development and behaviour traits and decide - along with the parents - the best course of action to follow. (Please see separate Special Educational Needs and Behaviour Management policies)

First Aid and Fire Marshalling - This is the responsibility of Mrs Becky Yeadon who liaises with the Fire officers to have the equipment checked 6 monthly/annually and is responsible for making sure the nursery is holding fire drills regularly and recording them. She is also responsible for checking that people keep up to date with first aid training and that there is always a qualified person on site.

Key People - All staff qualified at Level 3, or working towards it, are allocated key children, who they are responsible for. They are not the only member of staff who works with the child but they are the person who; inputs into the planning for them, files their work, keeps their records up to date and is responsible for the monitoring of their overall development and learning whilst at the setting.

The role of leading the sessions is taken on by the room leaders under the charge of the manager. In the event of room leaders and the Manager being absent, all other level 3 Staff are qualified to take charge, and one of them is nominated for this role. Part-time Staff are called upon to cover absence when regular Staff are ill, attending courses or on annual leave.

Staff Meetings

Staff Meetings for all staff are held every term, with ongoing discussion between staff taking place throughout the term. All Staff are asked to attend as many meetings as are possible and minutes are taken at all meetings. Staff work closely as a team and our Nursery Management system Family, along with a staff notice board situated out of view of parents and visitors, is used to alert staff of all current issues, information and changes to policies and procedures as well as changes to legislation is uploaded as changes occur onto our Nursery Management system Family which staff are asked to acknowledge by 'liking' said posts.

Staff Appraisals and Supervision

Staff work closely as a team, we have an open-door policy where staff can talk to the manager when things occur and the importance of this consistent approach is recognised by all as being a vital ingredient in the success of the nursery, providing, as it does, continuity and clear expectations for the children. The Manager works alongside all staff and is therefore aware of their approach and able to appraise performance informally on a day-to-day basis. Staff supervision takes place 3 times a year. This is an informal meeting between the Manager and a Director and each member of staff one by one where any issues can be raised, and feedback can be given. A formal appraisal takes place once a year for each member of staff, the timing of this is dependent on the month they started work with us. All Staff are

given a self-appraisal form to fill in, and then each member of staff is observed individually on two separate occasions and at two different types of activity by the Manager/Director. Staff are made aware when this will be taking place. Observations are followed up by an interview at which performance and the self-appraisal form are discussed. The contents and conclusion of the interview are then summarised in a brief report written by the Manager/Director at the end of the meeting and countersigned by the member of Staff. The Manager is appraised by the Directors who themselves are qualified Nursery Leaders.

Staff Recruitment, Selection and Retention

Vacancies are advertised along with a job description and a person specification. All candidates wishing to apply must fill in an application form and then a shortlist of applicants is chosen by the Manager and the Directors, by matching the applicant to the job description and the person specification. At this point names and personal details are not looked at. Each shortlisted applicant is then invited to spend part of a morning or afternoon at the nursery, during which time he/ she will be observed in his/ her interactions with the children by the Manager and one of the room Leaders. The applicant is then interviewed by a panel consisting of Manager and the Directors. All those on the interview panel ask questions prepared and agreed between them in advance. Notes are taken during the interview to aid later discussion and decision making. After all applicants have been interviewed the interview panel meet to discuss and choose the correct person for the job.

All posts are subject to a clear enhanced DBS disclosure (which includes Protection of Children Act list/List 99 check), and references. The results of these checks are kept on file at all times for Ofsted to see and are updated regularly to check for any changes to them.

At The Folly Nursery we have 2 different types of contracted staff. The first is staff contracted to term times only. They are contracted to work 38 weeks of the year during term times but are asked for occasional cover at other times.

The second is staff contracted for 52 weeks a year. They are contracted to work 52 weeks of the year but are able to take 5.6 weeks holiday pro-rata - this includes the bank holidays and the Christmas week when nursery is shut. Remaining holiday can be booked by filling in a holiday request form at least a month before which must be handed to the Manager.

If a member of staff on either contract chooses to leave The Folly, they would be giving Management 1 month's written notice.

At The Folly we don't have a high turnover of staff because we have a very open relationship between staff and Management. The Manager is always available if a member of staff wishes to discuss any aspect of their job, or home life which affects their working day. We always try to be as flexible as possible with our staff, as long as it bears no negative affect on the children in our care.

If a staff member had a grievance in the first instance they would speak to the Manager and together they would try to find a suitable outcome for both parties. If this could not be resolved, we would follow our Grievance Policy. (See separate policy)

Voluntary Helpers and Students

Parents do not come into the nursery on a regular basis to help, although occasionally a parent will be invited in to talk to the children on an area of expertise. The parent is never left with the children unsupervised by staff.

Students are able to come to The Folly for work placement. These must always be booked in advance. They are supervised at all times and are never left alone with a child. No more than one student may be placed with the nursery at any one time. If a student is going to become a regular visitor - more than 5 times in a year period - for example a college student on placement for a year - then they would have to go through our Recruitment process.

No student/ helper/ visitor under the age of 17 years would ever be counted in our child: adult ratio. On an occasion where a long-term student over the age of 17 has been deemed competent and responsible enough by the Manager, she may choose to count them into the ratios if needed.

At The Folly Nursery we do employ apprentices from time to time. Once an apprentice has been inducted and has settled in and is aged 17 or over the Manager will assess whether they are suitable to be counted in the ratios of staff to children.

We also do allow volunteers at The Folly to help out and gain experience as part of their training. In this case the full recruitment policy would be followed and a DBS check and references taken.

Visitors

Anyone visiting the nursery - prospective parents, educationalist or invited guest - will have an appointment, the details of which will be put into the Nursery Management Calendar. On arrival the visitor will be asked to fill their details (Full Name, Time in and out, Purpose of visit, contact details) in our Visitors' Book. They will then be asked to sign themselves out of the book when their departure time arrives. No-one unknown to the nursery is allowed to visit without an appointment. Visitors will ring the bell and are then greeted at the door where their identity is checked. They are then let in and are always accompanied by a member of staff during their visit. If a visitor is going to become a regular visitor - more than 5 times in a year period - for example a college student on placement for a year - then they would have to go through our Recruitment process. Visitors are asked to read our visitors safeguarding statement when signing in.

Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

What is it like for a child here?

Activities

Organisation of classes

Under 2's Room 0 - 2 years approx

Over 2's Room 2 - 3 years approx

Pre school Room 3 years - rising 5s

Life at Nursery

Our nursery is a vibrant and happy place. This section aims to cover the basic nursery routines and systems which help our nursery run smoothly, but there is far more to life at our nursery than space here allows.

The starting point for our Nursery Curriculum is the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, but the depth and breadth of coverage goes far further. Our curriculum is carefully planned and co-ordinated to ensure the children at The Folly receive a relevant, balanced, enjoyable and challenging learning experience. The EYFS is designed to cover 7 areas of learning. It consists of 3 prime areas which are:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, and Physical Development. It is seen that these 3 areas are the most important areas from birth and build the roots for the rest of a child's learning. There are also 4 specific areas which are: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design. These 4 specific areas strengthen the prime areas and help us to apply the prime areas within a nursery setting. All these 7 areas are inter-connected and most of our activities within the nursery cover more than one area at one time.

The nursery has its own four outside areas, each one designed for one of our 3 age groups. In the indoor space the children are split according to age - the Butterflies (3-4yrs), the Caterpillars (2-3yrs) and the Ladybirds (under 2's) each having their own room. We also have a sleeping/resting area for babies and young children needing a daily rest/sleep, in all three rooms.

The children undertake a wide variety of activities to make the very most of their natural enthusiasm for learning at this age. All of our activities are planned according to the children's interests and are observed and tracked along the EYFS, by the individual child's key person. We believe that children just lead their play, our staff offer opportunities to facilitate play and to offer gentle ideas, being responsive to children and bringing their learning forward to offer a wide and balanced knowledge that adds substance to what the child knows. Staff are there to bring new ideas and to extend what children already know to meet the EYFS and bring them closer to the Early Learning Goals. Whilst activities are planned for individual children they are all planned to cover multiple areas of the EYFS at any one time so aiding not just the child in question but several children with their learning. For example: sand play may cover Expressive Arts and Design by allowing the child to explore freely, but by building sandcastles with the children we are encouraging their Mathematical skills, their Personal Social and Emotional Development as they share their space and their Communication and Language skills as we talk to the children as they play.

Some of our activities include experimenting creatively with collage materials, clay, play dough, paints and crayons, spend time dressing up and playing together in the home areas or building their own creations from a variety of construction toys.

In all rooms children are encouraged to enjoy books and stories and are encouraged to take a book home once a week in their book bags to share with their families at home.

Tabletop activities encourage the development of fine motor skills with pencils, crayons, chalks, scissors, threading, puzzles and other equipment, while board games nurture the ability to take turns. We have tablets which can be used by the children which offer various matching, colour, number and letter games for our preschool children as well as building on their ICT skills. The children also enjoy cooking, and a variety of tactile activities including sand and water play. The environment is set up so children have access to all areas of the EYFS during their day at The Folly and the activities are all child led with staff there to accommodate children's ideas.

There are plenty of opportunities for outdoor play, and wherever possible we operate a free flow between inside and outside. All the rooms open to an outside area where the children can play in all weathers, as long as they have appropriate clothing for the occasion.

Forest Fun is a session attended by the oldest group of children, our Preschoolers. During Forest Fun sessions children develop their skills in all areas of the curriculum and work individually and as a team member to complete tasks. They also have the chance to work 1:1 with a member of staff to use saws, hand drills and other tools and equipment.

We also have another large outdoor area dedicated to a mud kitchen, sand pit and obstacle equipment and lots of space to run about. This is also where our separate Forest Fun area is situated.

As well as all of our outdoor space, we often go for walks around the village. There is lots to see with farms and countryside surrounding the nursery.

While singing is a part of every session at the nursery, we enjoy learning new rhymes and songs which are relevant to the time of the year or around children's interest developing children's growth of vocabulary, we also share these with parents to encourage parents to enjoy the different aspects of nursery life with their own child. Children have a wide range of musical instruments that come from different cultures and areas of the world to open their knowledge to differences between people.

Planning

Although we have a long-term plan for the term, our planning is very much child led following the EYFS guidelines and is reviewed on a weekly basis by the room leaders for each room., the planning is very much based around the children's interest, developing and extending those 'In The Moment' moments. We offer new inspirations to children by bringing different people with a varying degree of occupations in the nursery throughout the year and to open children's knowledge to the world around them.

We have a full and inspirational environment where children can flourish and develop their ideas and skills, our planning in the environment complements this and tells us what 'sparks' we may add to the environment to extend around the children's interest. The child's Keyworker and links from the child's family help us to make an enabling environment that allows children to progress through the EYFS in their own way.

Our planning is very flexible, and children's interests can change quickly, and our planning can cope with this as staff evaluate their activities and give regular feedback ensuring that they children's next steps are met even if not in the way originally planned for. Planning takes place 'In The Moment' with the child/ren, we observe the child, assess, and move the child's learning in the moment.

The room leader is responsible to ensure all children are observed during their 'focus week' and that the environment meets the needs of all the children and with support from the keyworkers that children are progressing and meeting their milestones.

Hours of Opening

The Folly Nursery is open 51 weeks a year from 7.45am to 6.00pm, we also close on Bank holidays. Term time only bookings are available too. We do have set sessions for you to choose from for your child however we pride ourselves in offering flexible hours to busy parents and hours are available outside of these sessions following our hourly rate. Hours of sessions are as follows:

Day sessions	School day 9.00am - 3.00pm (from age 2 upwards) or Full day 7.45am - 6.00pm
Funded day session	8.00am - 6.00pm or 9.00am - 3.00pm (preschool only)

Minimum attendance for children is 2 x full days a week, or once a child turns 2 they can attend 3 x school day sessions a week as a minimum, to enable continuity and routine for the child.

Fees

Fees are charged by the session as set out below. For additional hours either side of these sessions we charge by the hour at the hourly rate of £8.50. Children attending The Folly must attend a minimum of 2 full days a week, either one full day or 2 separate sessions.

Our fees are inclusive of all snacks and the relevant cooked meals each day. Breakfast is available to children arriving before 9.00am each morning, a cooked lunch is served at 12noon and a hot tea at 4.30pm.

Day sessions	9.00am - 3.00pm - £57.00 for children aged 2 and over
	7.45am - 6.00pm - £78.00 for under 2's £76.00 for children aged 2 and over

The Early Years Grant may be used at The Folly Nursery from the term following when a child turns 9 months old for eligible families and is available for up to 15 hours a week for term time only or up to 11 hours a week for 51 weeks of the year.

For some children this can be extended to up to 30 hours a week for term time only - 22 hours per week for 51 weeks of the year.

Funding can only be used on the following sessions:

8.00 - 6.00pm

9.00 - 3.00pm (preschool only)

Hours outside these times are charged at our usual hourly rate of £8.50. The early drop off period from 7.45am - 8.00am is charged at £2.50.

Funded children are asked to pay £10.00 per half day funded session or £15 per full day funded session to contribute towards consumables such as snacks, all meals, sunscreen and additional activities which aren't covered by the Government's funding rate.

Please speak to a member of staff for more information on the EYEF funding.

Collection of Children

Children may be collected from nursery only by their parents or other carers nominated by their parents and known to nursery staff.

Persons collecting a child must be aged 17 or older, regardless of whether there is an adult waiting in the car or not. Staff will not allow a child to leave the building with anyone younger.

Children who are not collected will be cared for in the nursery while attempts are made to contact, in the first instance, the parents, and failing that, the nominated emergency contact on the child's application form. At this point the Nursery's Safeguarding policy will be followed and the Designated Safeguarding Lead would be called upon for advice. If no one can be contacted and the child is still with us after 30 minutes, or as the nursery is about to close for the day; following our Safeguarding Policy, MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) would be notified, and their advice followed. No member of staff would ever consider taking a child home themselves or allowing anyone who had not been authorised by the parents, to do so either.

A written report would be written as soon after the incident as possible and this would be kept in the nursery's child protection file.

If in the instance where someone unknown to the nursery is needed to collect your child, you will be asked for a full description of the person, including their full name, and a password, only known to the two of you, which will then be asked for upon collection.

If the information given on collection doesn't match up with that given to the nursery by the parent, then collection will be refused, and attempts will be made to contact the parents.

Late Collection of Children

Staff at The Folly Nursery will look after uncollected children, whilst every effort is made to contact the parents.

If a parent is aware that they are going to be late in advance, then they are asked to inform a staff member on drop off in the morning or by telephone at least 4 hours before the collection should be made.

On these occasions children will be charged by the quarter of an hour at our usual hourly rate of £8.50, and it will be classed as extra hours.

If a parent is late to collect their child with less than 4 hours notice or no notice at all the staff will still look after the child whilst attempts are made to contact the parent, however, the charges will be at the higher rate of £1 per minute, and it will be classed as a late pick up.

Anyone still at nursery after 6.00pm will be charged at the higher rate of £1 per minute plus a set fee of £15 per quarter of an hour.

If a child is still at nursery 30 minutes after they were due to be collected, or as the nursery is about to close at 6.00pm, and all attempts to contact parents and the child's emergency contact, have been unsuccessful, MASH (Somerset's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) would be called upon and their advice would be followed.

Non-Payment of Nursery Fees

As an independent nursery The Folly's income is derived from the fees paid by parents, guardians or others on behalf of the pupils. Failure to pay outstanding nursery fees could lead to the withdrawal of a place from the nursery roll. Invoices are processed on or before the 1st of every month and fees are payable in advance, by the 10th of the month. If fees are in arrears, interest will be added at 2% over base rate to the outstanding amount as well as a £10 surcharge for every contact made with parents to obtain fees. Withdrawal of a place is entirely at a Director's discretion. It would be unusual for a child to still be in attendance at the nursery at a point where solicitors have been instructed to recover a debt.

Food

Here at The Folly, we have a big passion for food.

We believe in the importance of feeding children a mix of flavours and textures from a very young age to develop a healthy relationship with food right from the start and therefore all our fees are inclusive of all meals and snacks.

Children attending a full day at The Folly can expect to be given 3 meals a day, as well as a morning and afternoon healthy snack of something such as fresh fruit, rice cakes or breadsticks.

All dietary needs are met and catered for including but not exclusive to: Gluten Free, Dairy Free and Vegetarians. The nursery must be informed in writing of dietary needs on entrance to the nursery and it is the responsibility of the parents to keep the nursery updated on any changes to their child's information. The Folly Nursery is a totally nut free nursery.

Sample Menu:

Mon	Lunch:	Sweet potato curry & Rice	Pudding:	Fresh fruit salad
	Tea:	Tuna & sweetcorn Pasta Salad		
Tues	Lunch:	Roast Dinner		Melon smiles
	Tea:	Ham/ Cheese Roll & Veg sticks		
Wed	Lunch:	Chicken & Ham pie with Veg		Yogurt
	Tea:	Soup & Soldiers		

Thurs	Lunch:	Pizza spaghetti bake	Choc dipped banana
	Tea:	Chicken & Broccoli	
Fri	Lunch:	Fish Goujons, potato & peas	Pureed apple & custard
Tea:		Beans & cheese on toast	

Forest Fun sessions

Learning in an Outdoor Forest School environment is a very special experience and one that certainly helps promote 4 key skills that your child will need in tomorrow's world.

- * Problem Solving
- * Creative Thinking
- * Risk Taking
- * Self-Confidence

We are very fortunate to have a large garden with space for our own Forest Fun sessions, with undercover areas if needed.

Our Forest Fun sessions takes place 1/2 times a week in this exciting environment for our Pre-School children. This is led by our Level 2 Forest School qualified member of staff.

Our Forest Fun Sessions are designed for your child to develop:

- Independence
- Self Awareness
- Self Regulation
- Fine and Gross Motor Skills
- Self Motivation
- Empathy
- Good Social and communication Skills
- A Positive Mental Attitude
- Self Esteem
- Confidence

The Forest Fun sessions are about sharing our skills and experiences with each other. Everyone involved is both a teacher and a learner and we all help each other to achieve our goals as well as having a great deal of fun in the process.

As well as enhancing every area of the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) which is the basis for all our learning, Forest School supplies many other bush craft related activities including...

- * Using tools
- * Pencil Making
- * Shelter Building
- * Studies of habitats
- * Plant & animal identification

- * Rope tying
- * Sculpture making
- * Caring for the environment/ wildlife

All children attending Forest Fun sessions need to provide their own clothing. Clothing should include long sleeved tops and trousers, even in hot weather, to prevent scratches, nettle stings or ticks in the long grass. Waterproof tops and trousers are essential throughout the year as well as Wellington boots.

All items of children clothing brought into nursery must be named, including outdoor wear, shoes and wellies.

PLEASE REMEMBER: There is no such thing as bad weather: just inappropriate clothing!

Children

Registration of Children

There are no entry requirements for admission to The Folly. Admission is made through the Manager or the administrator.

Parents should initially contact the nursery and arrange for an appointment to view the nursery and speak informally with the Manager.

If parents decide to proceed, they will be asked to complete an application form (stating whether they are booking for term time only, or 51 weeks of the year) and asked to pay a registration fee of £100.00 per day booked. All but £50.00 will be credited onto the first invoice when a child starts on their requested start date.

If a child doesn't take up the space the whole registration fee will be lost.

Sessions are to be agreed between parents and the Manager.

Children must attend at least 2 days a week.

It is very important that throughout a child's attendance at the nursery parents ensure the Manager is informed of changes in details held, especially changes of address, telephone numbers including mobile numbers and all matters of medical significance.

We use a nursery management system called Family and this is the easiest way for our parents to inform us of change in details, holiday dates, child's sickness or any other queries they may have.

Shortly before a pupil is due to start at the nursery a "Welcome letter" will be issued containing details of his/ her first day, equipment needed, uniform, etc. This letter will also contain further documentation including a medical form which will need to be completed and returned by the child's agreed start date.

We understand, especially with young babies, that it is a hard thing for a parent to leave their children, so we have designed settling sessions to allow parents to feel confident that their child is happy in our care.

Before a child starts, we offer up to 2 settling sessions - these are included in the cost of the application fee. These are to be agreed between the parents and the manager and will be planned around the needs of the child.

These sessions tend to be held the week before the child is due to start, and all the forms will be gone through with the parent, so staff know the child's routine and requirements before they start properly.

Notice Period

Three month's written notice is required to withdraw or change sessions of a child who has booked term time sessions, or payment of three month's fees in lieu.

For 51 week bookings a notice period of 6 weeks is needed to withdraw or change sessions of a child. Parents booking 51 weeks of the year are entitled to take up to 4 weeks holiday a year for which they will be charged at half fees as long as the manager has been informed at least a month in advance.

New pupils

New children in the nursery are always monitored very closely by the Room Leader prior to the allocation of the child's Key Person (which usually takes place within the first couple of weeks) The key person then takes over monitoring the child's needs, development and otherwise as stated below in our Key Person section. Children will have a baseline assessment completed within the first month of starting to ensure we know what the child can do and how we can help the child to progress through their time at The Folly.

Daily Registration

Attendance registers are completed daily for every age group via our online nursery management system Famly. When a carer turns up to collect a child, the child is signed back out of Famly by the staff member opening the door.

Nursery Attendance Registers are legal documents, and we are obliged to complete them fully and accurately, therefore:

- Parents/guardians should inform the nursery *in writing (the easiest way is through Famly)* of the reason for any absence for any period including any part of a day and continue to inform the nursery of a child's absence on a daily basis if the absence has not been approved in advance (e.g. annual family holiday)
- The Manager should check a note has been made for each period of absence, and messages will be sent to those who haven't informed us of reasons for absence.

Attendance

Children must attend at least 2 days a week. Once a child is 2 years old they may attend either 2 full days or 3 school days a week as a minimum.

We understand that families may want to have a holiday during times when their child is booked to be at nursery.

If your child is booked for term time only and you choose to take holiday within term time then we have no problem with that, but you will still have to pay full fees for this time.

If your child is booked for 51 weeks of the year then your child is entitled to take 4 weeks holiday at a reduced price of 50% as long as written notice has been given by the 20th of the month before.

If your child is poorly whilst meant to be in attendance, a message through Famly is required to alert nursery staff however fees are still required to be paid.

Nursery staff have a responsibility for the safeguarding of all children in attendance and long periods of absence without written notice, or frequent short absences may be reported to MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) as per our Safeguarding Policy.

Key Person Role

Every child at The Folly will be allocated a Key Person. This will usually be decided within the first couple of weeks. Until this time the role of the Key Person will be played by the Room Leader. The adult becoming

the child's Key Person will be decided by who the child and the parents have built the best bond with during the first weeks.

This member of staff will then take over from the Room Leader and will start compiling the child's records and imputing into the planning on their behalf. The child's Key Person will be responsible for making sure that their key children get to access all areas of the curriculum in a way that suits the child and is following their interests.

Even though children at The Folly all have a Key Person, every member of staff will work with every child, so that a child doesn't become too attached to one person as this can cause problems if the staff member is taken ill or on holiday, it also helps create healthy relationships and builds on a child's independence.

The child's Key Person will be your first port of call, along with the Manager, to discuss any aspect of nursery life.

Pastoral care

The welfare of each and every child is the prime concern of all employees of the nursery. We aim for our pastoral care to be second to none, as a child's happiness is fundamental to their fulfilment and development as rounded, successful individuals.

Emphasis is placed on the availability of all staff members to help children with individual problems. Staff meetings are held specifically to discuss children's progress and welfare.

In the nursery, your child's Key Person will be your prime contact and the Manager tries to ensure she is always available.

We are very aware that children often get bumps and bruises - this does happen at nursery, and on these occasions, we would inform you that it has happened and let you know the action we have taken. It does also happen at home. If your child has a bump/ bruise or other wound when arriving at nursery a pre-existing injury form will be completed on Famly by the member of staff whom you had informed, this will be for you to acknowledge. Bumps and bruises noticed on a child without being pre-informed will be recorded and if deemed appropriate reported to outside agencies and our Safeguarding Policy would be followed.

Records

All children have a file containing their Application form, medical details (of which we ask parents to inform us if any information changes), any correspondence from parents, health, welfare or educational professionals, and copies of any reports supplied by the nursery. These files are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office away from the children. Parents may ask to see their child's file if they so wish. All information of relevance is passed on to the next school. Application and medical forms are held by the nursery for six years and then destroyed. All other paperwork is destroyed when the child leaves the nursery.

When a child joins the nursery, we set the child up on Famly, an online nursery management system. This allows us to sign children in and out, send invoices, keep you informed of meals/ sleeps/ routines throughout the day and also where we record a child's learning/ development during their time at nursery. All parents will be emailed a log in for their account and we encourage parents to use this at home to inform us of and changes to the details we hold for their child and by uploading photos of their child's achievements/ special times.

Famly has many sides - it has the side that is individual to your child - where we record routines and their individual learning - but also has a group wall where we can inform groups of parents about upcoming activities.

The journal side is confidential and only the parents have access to it. It may contain photos, pictures of their work and written observations, and all of these are linked to the areas of the curriculum covered by the activities. These Learning Journeys give staff and parents alike an idea of where a child is in each area and allows staff and parents to put extra support in place in certain areas if needed.

These Learning Journeys can then be downloaded by the parents when their child leaves The Folly in the form of a PDF file which the parents can then print it off into a book or keep on their computer as an electronic reminder of their time at nursery.

The information from these records is sent on to the child's next school when they leave The Folly at school age, in the form of a 'Transition Document' which is part of their Learning Journey.

A 2 year old progress check is completed on every child attending the setting somewhere between the ages of 24 and 36 months. This is a written assessment undertaken by the child's key person along with the parents and a copy is kept at nursery and a copy is given to the parents to take with them to the health visitor for the child's health review. This check highlights a child's strengths as well as any areas for development.

If at any point during a child's time at nursery concerns were raised about any aspect of their development this would be shared with parents straight away and ongoing communication would continue whilst the child received the support required. If a parent has concerns about any aspect of their child's development, we would ask them to share with us as we know working together is the best way for all children to reach their full potential.

Contact with Staff

Effective and regular contact between nursery and parents is essential. Conversations may often be informal but appointments for more formal discussions can be made by contacting the Manager, who will decide who is best to deal with your concern.

For day-to-day queries and concerns Family is the best tool to use. Through Family you can contact the manager directly or your child's room to get messages through to us during the day.

You will also be able to see during the day what your child has been doing at nursery, reassuring you they are happy and settled.

The nursery is open between 7.45am and 6pm and there is always someone here between those times. Please feel free to call then. If no-one answers it is because all staff are busy with the children, so we'd ask you to leave it a short while and then try again. Emails are also answered regularly throughout the day.

Our contact details are: Telephone 01460 55488
E-mail the.folly@hotmail.co.uk

Communications

The nursery strives to make all staff accessible to parents and parents are encouraged to make contact should they have any concerns or wish to discuss any matter relating to their child.

Normally your first point of contact should be your child's Key Person for general problems or if you have a concern with some aspect of the curriculum. The Manager should be contacted if a parent wishes an interim review of a child's progress or an appraisal of his/ her ability and potential and they would complete this with the child's Key Person. The Manager has an overview of all issues and can always be approached on any matter.

Financial matters are dealt with by the Directors.

Absence notes should be written to the Manager. Requests for leave of absence for annual holiday requiring discounts should be made through an email to the office: the.folly@hotmail.co.uk at least by the 20th of the month before the holiday is due to take place.

If the nursery needs to contact you for any reasons, we will do so promptly but it is essential that the Manager is given your up-to-date contact details as well of those of anyone whom we should contact in case we are unable to reach you.

Sharing Information with Parents and other agencies

Information and concerns about children are shared between staff members and with parents informally on an ongoing basis. The Folly has an 'open door' policy and encourages parents to talk to staff at dropping off and picking up times about anything that concerns them. The Staff make a point of sharing positive experiences with parents and not only talking to them if there is a problem. If a parent wants to speak to a member of staff privately, there is always either an immediate meeting or an appointment made for another time convenient to them. These meetings are usually held in the Manager's office, away from the children.

There are times where it may be necessary to share information with other agencies, such as Health Professionals or other Educational establishments. When doing so Parents' permission would firstly be sought and our Data Protection Policy would be followed.

In the case of a safeguarding concern where it was felt that to gain parental permission would cause harm or further harm to a child or other persons, information would then be shared without permission and our Safeguarding policy would be followed.

Children's art work is stored in the children's individual boxes, these are sent home when they are finished or when they are dry. The children are encouraged to take their work home regularly.

For families who have English as an Additional Language The Folly will make every effort to translate letters into a language easier for the family to understand.

Letters home

Letters regarding routine nursery matters will usually be sent to parents through Famly. These letters may include details of a forthcoming trip or arrangements for a nursery event. In the event these letters include consent slips, permission will be asked over Famly through an invite to the event if your child is to be allowed to participate in the activity, paper copies will be available for parents unable to have access to technology.

Occasionally, the nursery will also send sets of letters via the Royal Mail.

Nursery News

Our nursery news is sent out via Famly a couple of times a week to each room with an update on what the children have been learning in each class, any upcoming events and any other news from the nursery. We welcome any information from parents to be included in these emails.

Appropriate clothing

It is essential that all children have the correct clothing with them every day. As a nursery we try to be out of doors as much as we are indoors and children will go out despite the weather - as long as they are appropriately dressed this shouldn't be an issue.

This means: a Folly T-shirt or sweatshirt (which are available to purchase from the nursery), trainers, daps or other sensible indoor shoes in which your child can move freely (soft indoor shoes for babies if required) Clothes which enable them to take part in physical activities and promote independence for toileting; a coat or cagoule during wet/ colder months as well as waterproof trousers for playing out of doors; a sun hat in Summer to reduce the risk of sun stroke and Wellington boots all year round as even on the hottest days, the grass can still be wet first thing, and children may be asked to change into their wellies for outdoor play.

All items of children's clothing brought into nursery must be named, including outdoor wear, shoes and wellies.

We will always try to find lost items in nursery, however the chance of finding items is much higher if they are named.

Money and personal possessions in nursery

Children should not bring money to nursery. On the infrequent occasion when children are asked to bring money to nursery for a collection or visit it will be collected on entry to the nursery. Responsibility for money lost at nursery cannot be taken by the nursery.

Although we like to promote children bringing in items of interest from home to talk about during circle times, we don't allow toys from home being brought in as this can sometimes lead to problems with sharing and toys designed for a child at home could easily get broken at nursery and for that we would take no responsibility.

Children's comfort objects required during the course of the day or for nap times are always welcome to be brought in.

Extreme weather/Sudden closure

In some, very rare, situations the nursery may be forced to close. These could be cases such as extreme weather, outbreak of disease or other unexpected events such as a terror threat or localised emergency. We do have an emergency plan which we would follow in the first instance but if after following that we cannot still operate safely we may be forced to close for a day or longer. Such actions will only be taken in extreme circumstances and in the interests of safety.

Early morning announcements concerning any closure will be made through Family to all parents and an update will also be put on our Facebook page.

Should extreme weather or an unforeseen emergency force the nursery to close during the day the nursery will telephone parents and inform them of the arrangements.

Once again, nursery policy is to remain open whenever possible, but a closure may be deemed unavoidable. In this very rare situation nursery fees would still be payable.

Policies and Procedures

These are contained in a separate booklet and can be found on the notice board with all the staff details. Own copies are available on request.

This Operational Plan was last updated in January 2025

By Jo Jeffrey

To be next updated January 2026 unless a significant change takes place before then.