

Our Outdoor Learning Opportunities

The philosophy of our Outdoor Learning opportunity was based upon the desire to provide young children with an education which encouraged appreciation of the wide, natural world and which would encourage responsibility for nature conservation in later life.

Allowing children out into this environment and allowing them to use real tools needs careful planning, high adult ratios and experienced leadership, as well as an outdoor environment which would enable the educational benefits to be fully explored.

The children are committed to spending the major part of their Outdoor Learning session in the outdoor – rain, shine, snow or forest. They explore and use natural materials found within the environment.

The children quickly learn boundaries, both physical and social, within which they must work. They respond to the sense of freedom and adhere to the few rules laid down for their safety.

Within this secure environment it is possible to encourage the children to move away from close adult interaction to become more responsible for each other and for themselves. There is also more emphasis on observation of nature as the children will see their environment in all the seasons. Follow up activities and discussions in the classroom include both recall and observational painting of items collected and treasured, and the outdoor pre-school environment helps to continue activities that reflect the Outdoor Learning practice.

Welcome to Yew Trees Pre-School



**Yew Trees Nursery, Yew Tree Farm, Tarnock
Nr Axbridge, Somerset BS26 2SA**

01934 750556

www.yewtreesnursery.co.uk

Welcome to Yew Trees Pre-School

Thank you for the interest you have shown in our pre-school provision and we hope that you find our prospectus to be useful and informative.

At Yew Trees we provide a safe, caring and educational environment in which the children are encouraged to learn through play.

We have experienced and qualified staff who are dedicated in providing excellent quality child care.

Our classrooms are purpose built with under-floor heating and double glazing they provide a bright and airy space in which the child can move around freely. As we are in a rural location the premises are surrounded by open countryside which the children access daily. We encourage outdoor play throughout the year whatever the weather.

We accept the Nursery Education Grant which is currently available to all children during the term after their 3rd birthday.

Please visit the Ofsted website to access our latest report - www.ofsted.gov.uk

A Guide to Your Child's Daily Routine at Yew Trees Pre-School

We believe that a routine helps children to feel secure and so is very important for all the children. However, we see our routine as a 'scaffold' around which we mould each day. This 'routine' will not be so rigid as to exclude some natural spontaneity. Some days will include gardening projects, cooking, nature trails around the fields at Yew Trees, and trips out to local attractions. This will depend on the time of year and the theme that we are working on.

8.30 am The morning provision will include a selection of planned activities that are adult-led as well as those that encourage the children to play freely both inside and out. Our basic provision includes arts and crafts, play dough, small world activities, construction, dance and drama, music, water and sand play, puzzles and games. During the first part of the morning a group of children will help prepare snacks for the café. We run a café that provides the children with free access to a selection of fruit or vegetables and a drink of fruit juice or water.

Outdoor play is available at all times of the day and in all weathers and includes the use of the playground, garden and surrounding fields. Children can use the climbing apparatus, ride bikes, play with bats, balls, and hoops, dig in the large sandpit, explore and create with natural resources, and prepare and cultivate flowers and vegetables in the garden and poly tunnel.

The children will be encouraged to join in with Circle games, physical activities, songs and news time – the children are able to sit quietly and listen to a story read by a member of staff or use audio tapes, puppets and story sacks. They also have the opportunity to share their news and special events, show and tell, sing songs and nursery rhymes.

12.15am Lunch time.

The afternoon provision begins and a further selection of educational and stimulating activities are available as per the morning provision. The afternoon café is available providing a drink of milk or water.

4.00pm Tea time.

Selection of quiet activities.

6.00pm Nursery closes

The Pre-School children are divided into three groups, Rabbits, Monkeys and Giraffes; this enables them to work in smaller groups. Each morning children are given the opportunity to work on a variety of projects and activities with their key families and are planned around the children's interests, these may include cooking, games, stories, portfolio building, art and crafts. (Children will have nappies changed, use the potty, go to the lavatory and wash hands according to their needs.)

Areas of Learning

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework sets the standard for learning, development and care for children from birth to five. We plan and deliver a curriculum that promotes the development in the seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas

- 1: Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- 2: Physical Development
- 3: Communication and Language

Specific Areas

- 4: Literacy
- 5: Mathematics
- 6: Understanding the World
- 7: Expressive Arts and Design

Our Long Term Plan (yearly) is based on a broad outline on the subjects or topics we wish to cover. The topics enhance our basic provision and will respond to the children's interest.

Our Medium Term Plan (half termly) will go into greater depth and detail with the aspects of development to be covered and will be drawn up using child's observations and records.

Our Short Term Plans (daily) will show the aspects that we aim to cover. They will be based on individual, group learning and the children's interests.

Each child will have a Personal Pathway which documents their progress and enables their Keyworker to plan for the child's individual needs. These documents are updated on a regular basis to ensure that all children have activities planned to encourage their next steps and all areas of learning and development.

Our Staff

The owner of the nursery, Wendy Griffin, holds an NVQ Level 3 in Childcare and Education. She has many years of childcare experience in a home setting along with experience in nursery care.

Our nursery staff are experienced in caring for children of a wide range of ages. They hold various Early Years Care and Education qualifications and are encouraged to continue their development through further specialist or in-house training.

Details of staff training and qualifications are situated outside the classroom.

Heidi Brook is the Provision Co-ordinator for the setting and the Pre-School Leader.

The Key Families are grouped as follows:

Giraffes Clare
 Teresa
 Sarah L

Rabbits Kirsty
 Lauren Hedges

Monkeys Becky
 Tracy

Class Room Assistant: Abi Snaden.

Key Worker

Your child will be allocated a key worker, who is responsible for a small group of children and they will spend time each day working with their group building a relationship between them. This may be at meal times or small group activities or perhaps whilst reading a story together. They will carry out observations, keep records and build up a detailed knowledge of your child to ensure your child's development whilst at nursery.

Key workers will also be someone for you to share your child's achievements and to discuss any concerns however small.

Settling in your child

We want your child to feel safe, secure and happy whilst at our nursery. As each child is different and has individual experiences we keep our settling-in procedure flexible to take this into account. We encourage you to visit with your child before they are due to start with us and join in our activities. Your child can bring along a favourite toy, comforter or item to remind them of home which they can keep with them.

We will then encourage you, the parent, to leave your child for short sessions at first, to enable you both to part from each other without distress, gradually building up the length of time your child is at nursery until you are happy and secure in the knowledge that your child is settling-in well. You are welcome to contact the nursery to check on your child at any time for your own reassurance.

Security

The safety of your child whilst at nursery is of utmost importance. No child will be allowed to leave other than with their parent or guardian unless we have prior notification. If you or the person leaving the child will not be collecting the child please notify a member of staff. For extra security if we have not met the person we will ask for an agreed password.

Activities

We provide a wide range of educational and fun activities for the children to choose and take part in. Our aim is to nurture your child's learning by providing the activities and opportunities for your child to learn through exploration, discovery and problem solving.

Children need plenty of first hand experiences or learning may differ from those anticipated but all learning, planned or unplanned, is a valid contribution to the child's development. The process is valuable and should not be undermined by an emphasis on planned outcomes. The adult's role is to support and not control the child's learning. Activities are offered but not imposed on the children.

For our basic provision we have activities such as the role-play area which becomes various different situations like a home, post office, travel agents, vets, doctors to encourage creative and imaginative play. There is water, sand and textured play, dough, clay and other malleable substances for building on physical and creative skills. We have construction of various sizes and types from Duplo, wooden bricks, Lego, magnetic blocks, tree logs and K'nex. We have lots of board games, puzzles, threading cards, sorting pots, peg boards and dominoes to encourage mathematical awareness. The children have a lot of opportunity to get involved in the preparation and cooking of foods and will even get the opportunity to try their hand at woodwork. This teaches them how to use tools safely and effectively and for a purpose.

There are quiet times with stories, singing and gentle music and energetic sessions with drama and physical movement. During craft sessions we provide paints, glues, collage materials and items for junk modelling to encourage self-expression.

The children have access to a lovely garden area with several raised beds and a polytunnel providing an excellent opportunity to experience growing fruit and vegetables which are often used for their meals. They also grow a range of spring and summer flowers.

We have a wonderful natural, outdoor play area which includes a Mud Kitchen, Den Building, Bug House and Pets Corner.

Early Education

An early year's curriculum is not a prescription. It can not be packaged into programmes of instruction or lists of activities....young children learn from everything around them including the environment, routines, ethos, the people and their expectations of achievement.

Education in the early years is much more than teaching colours, shapes, numbers and letters. It is about developing strong, curious, confident children. It is about extending their joy, fascination and wonder at the world around them, about developing concentration, commitment and deep involvement. It is about exploring real and imaginary worlds and forming positive relationships.

Children who acquire a sense of mastery, a willingness to 'have a go' and to learn from mistakes have a head start in learning.

Play is a central part of young children's learning. Through play children explore ideas, feelings and relationships. They can take risks, make mistakes and try things out without fear of failure. Play can push out the limits of what is possible and help children be creative, flexible and imaginative. Rich play promotes control, mastery, confidence and well-being.

A high quality nursery curriculum is one which enables children to enter school with a positive outlook, by developing self-esteem, commitment to learning and a belief that if they try, they can succeed. Appropriate early learning includes opportunity for:

- exploring, investigation, problem solving
- representing and communication ideas and feelings
- creating imaginary worlds and stories
- interacting and exchanging ideas with others
- talking, discussions, puzzling, wondering, reflecting
- watching, listening, repeating, practising

Illness

We encourage you to consider keeping children at home if they are unwell especially with any conditions that are contagious. Children recover far quicker if they are able to rest and recoup in their own home. If any illnesses occur at nursery a notice is displayed on the door for your information.

Chicken Pox - children must stay out of nursery until the spots have healed over, this is usually five to ten days after they appear.

Sickness and Diarrhoea – children will be sent home immediately and shouldn't return to nursery until 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Conjunctivitis – children will be sent home immediately and shouldn't return to nursery until the eyes are clear, usually 24 hours after treatment begins

Impetigo – children will be sent home immediately and shouldn't return to nursery until the wound is dry and has stopped weeping, usually 24 hours after treatment begins.

If you are unsure about any other conditions please check with a member of staff.

Show and tell

Children may bring in a special item such as a small toy, photograph, postcard etc that they can share with their key worker during small group time it should be kept in their drawer or bag. All toys need to be labelled with the child's name. Please note that Yew Trees is not responsible for the loss or damage of any toys brought in by the children.

Drawers

Each child has their own drawer in the classroom which will need to be checked daily for notes, bills and most importantly the child's work.

Sun cream

Please can the children bring in a high factor sun cream and sun hat. Parents need to apply the cream *first thing* in the morning as it is not reapplied by staff until after lunch. (If the children do not have their own sun cream we are not able to use anyone else's.)

Appropriate clothing

The children need to be provided with suitable clothing for the time of year. They play outside even in the winter so please can they come in with a warm coat, hat and gloves (named please) as well as raincoats and wellies if they have them, for when it is wet. All children need to be provided with spare set of clothing that can be left in a named bag on their peg.

Potty training

We are happy to follow and encourage any routines that are being undertaken at home with regard to potty training but it is not the responsibility of the staff to start the process. If the children are in the process of learning to use the potty please provide adequate spare items of clothing.

Concerns

Please feel free to approach any member of staff with any comments or concerns that you may have.

Parent's Evenings

These give you the opportunity to come in and discuss your child's progress with their keyworker and usually take place during the early part of the year.

Parent's notice board

This displays notices, information and is located in the main corridor. Daily plans are available for you to view and are located on the board to the left of the KG bathroom. All Forest School plans and information is displayed on the left as you enter the Kindergarten. They will explain activities planned for individual children as well as the whole class and also details of any trips off-site.

Uniform

Uniform is not compulsory but is advisable as it will prevent their own clothes becoming messy. It can be purchased from the office.

Meals

Our meal times not only provide a well-balanced healthy diet but a time to join together and share a happy social experience. Our meals are provided by an outside catering company who provide a well-balanced menu using a range of organic and local produce. Their website details are www.earlyyearscatering.co.uk.

Our menu contains a wide range of foods from a traditional roast, moussaka, pasta dishes, casseroles, stews to vegetarian ones. Puddings include fresh fruit crumbles, sponges, jelly and ice-cream, banana and custard. Fresh fruit, yoghurts and fromage frais are also available daily.

Mid-morning snacks consist of a range of fruit, both fresh and dried and vegetable sticks which the children help to prepare. A choice of drink is available which includes milk, water or fruit juice. Sometimes our snacks are linked with our topics to encourage children to try new tastes and foods from different countries.

If your child has special dietary requirements then please ask and they will be provided with a suitable alternative.

Jugs of fresh drinking water and cups are provided in each room in order for your child to have access at any time.