

# Nursery

Oakleigh House School



# Introducing us

Welcome to the Nursery at Oakleigh House.

When children join us our main aim is to make them feel happy and secure and to provide them with an exciting learning environment.

We lay the foundations upon which children build their school careers and indeed, their adult lives. The staff at Oakleigh House School are committed to supporting and encouraging children's development by providing the very best possible start.

Young children learn through **playing and exploring, active learning, as well as creating and thinking critically**. They learn from each other as well as from adults.

Our Nursery is split into two age groups. **Nursery 1** is for children aged 2 ½ to 3 ½ and **Nursery 2** is for 3 ½ years old to 4 ½ years old children. The groups work closely together with joint sessions and free play time.

**In Nursery 1** we focus on giving children a full sensory experience in a vibrant well organised learning environment preparing them for future learning in the school.

**In Nursery 2** we prepare children ready for a full school day in Reception with a greater focus on writing, reading and numeracy skills.

We provide a challenging, stimulating and sensitive environment which **encourages** and **supports children's** exploration, in an environment where they will:

- explore boundaries for the first time
- recognise and respond to others needs
- make decisions
- experience independence
- Learn to problem solve and to think critically.

Time is allocated for children to choose their own activities. This fosters a **sense of independence** and a **willingness to participate** in new experiences while we give appropriate help and encouragement.

Our curriculum is a mix of structured teacher-led activities and topic-specific play activities. We encourage the children to experiment, imitate, explore objects and materials in a multi-sensory way, to express themselves and attempt mark-making with a variety of media. They are also encouraged to interact, imagine and create as they seek to learn about the world around them.

Play is also a powerful means of **experimenting with language**. We encourage role play both improvised and in our themed role play area.



Sand, water, cooking and construction, all provide opportunities for **mathematical and science language development**. Children learn the concepts of bigger / smaller, full / empty, longer / shorter etc.

Rhymes and songs, poems and stories are essential foundations for **recognising the patterns in language and sounds**. There are, therefore, lots of opportunities for the children to listen to and join in with favourite books etc.

Nursery children have the opportunity to visit the library each week and to select books to read at group time in their class or to look at independently.

**Physical development** is encouraged through PE and Games lessons and the use of the outdoors. They also participate in gymnastics and ballet lessons both of which are taught by specialist teachers.

In addition, the groups make use of the adjacent Cwmdonkin Park where they can physically explore on a much larger scale.



# Getting Ready

When you arrive at school please help your child to locate his/ her peg, and hang up their school bags, and then encourage your child to put his / her own things away and his/her name onto the self-register. Hanging up coats and putting away bags is part of the daily routine and something the children can take pleasure in doing independently.

Children will be welcomed in to Nursery from 8.00 am. It is very helpful if parents leave as soon as their child has settled in order to create a calm start to the day.

As they become more confident, we encourage your children to become more independent. All the simple procedures we take for granted like going to the toilet, using toilet paper and flushing the toilet, washing and drying hands, using a handkerchief and dressing and undressing are major milestones at this age. Children feel a real sense of achievement if they can complete these tasks independently. You can help by practising these skills at home.

Let us know of little things that are important – a special name, a favourite activity – these will enable us to ensure the transition from home to school is as easy as possible. Please read and write in the home school diary, these are checked every day and if there is anything you would like to inform us of, this is a great way to communicate. There are plenty of opportunities to meet us both formally and informally to discuss your child's progress and we are always happy to answer questions you may have.

# The First Day

**Bringing your child to Nursery** can be a very big change for both of you! Although you may both feel a little apprehensive, with our reassurance your child will soon settle and begin to enjoy the variety of activities on offer.

You can help by ensuring everything is ready for the big day and by talking about the exciting things to be done and the new friends to be made.

We offer 'taster sessions' for new children which will help them to adapt to nursery life. The Teacher in Charge will arrange times for this to suit individual parents.

**Coming to collect your child:** Nursery morning sessions finish at 12.30 pm and the end of the school day is 3.00 pm. Nursery children are collected directly from their classroom via the main door to Nursery. Starting school, or just a change of routine can be very tiring at this age, so don't be surprised if your child is very tired after the first day!

## Medicines and Illness

If your child is absent from Nursery due to illness, a telephone call is appreciated. If your child requires medication during the day, the medication and dosage details must be delivered to, signed for and collected from Miss Barguss, the school Administrator. If a child becomes ill during the day, we will contact parents immediately, so please ensure that we are aware of emergency contacts and that they are written in the front of your child's diary.

## Clothing & Personal Property

The children are often involved in messy activities and whilst every effort is made by the staff to protect clothing, some paints and materials may stain. Please provide a change of clothes in case of little accidents. Even children who are toilet trained have accidents. Suitable clothes should also be provided for outdoor play. The Nursery does not accept any responsibility for lost or damaged property.

- Please ensure all clothing / footwear worn to Nursery is clearly marked with your child's name.
- Please ensure your child does not bring money, other valuables or sweets to Nursery.



## Meals

The Nursery will provide:

09.00 am	Breakfast – cereal   yoghurt and fruit   toast/croissant and fruit
11.25 am	Full cooked lunch – 2 courses from a varied and carefully chosen menu from our own kitchen
2.30 pm	Milk & fruit
3.30 pm	Snack tea – e.g. sandwiches, toast fingers, cake, biscuit or fruit.

We include fresh fruit in at least two meals or snacks each day.

All meals and snacks are prepared daily from fresh ingredients in the school kitchen. The weekly menu is displayed at the entrance to the kitchen. We endeavour to accommodate all dietary needs, both medical and cultural.

Parents are not required to provide any food or drinks

## Changes to agreed days

We recognise that there may occasionally be a need for you to change the days that your child attends Nursery. Please check with a member of staff for available spaces and we will aim to accommodate changes whenever possible providing that the changes do not adversely affect the number of children in Nursery in any particular session. Additional charges are made for extra sessions.

## Concerns/ Complaints

If ever the occasion arises where you have a concern regarding the service we are providing, please speak to the Teacher in Charge of Nursery in the first instance. Should she not be able to bring a satisfactory conclusion to the matter, please ask to be referred to the Headteacher who will then deal with the matter.

### Further Information

If at any time you wish to know more or have anything you wish to discuss about any aspect of work practice or policies within the Nursery, please feel free to speak to the Teachers in Charge, Mrs. Slee (Nursery 1) or Mrs. Wanless (Nursery 2), or to the Headteacher, Mrs. Rhian Ferriman. We will be happy to assist you in any way possible. Oakleigh House Nursery is part of the Early Years Department of Oakleigh House School.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for placing your children with us and hope that they will be very happy here.



*Best for your child....best from your child*



# A day in Nursery

Our Nursery rooms are large and airy with areas designated for different learning experiences. Emphasis is also placed on using the outdoors as a learning area, with many opportunity for the children to be active, climb, slide and enjoy other physical activities.

We follow the curriculum areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage, which include:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Mathematical Development
- Understanding the World
- Physical Development
- Expressive Art and Design

The day starts with 'carpet time' where we sing our Welcome song, choose the day's 'Helper' (Nursery 2 only) and take registration. The children find their own names, we sing the days of the week song, discuss the weather and display this information. Birthdays are also celebrated at this time. Following this, all the children sit down to have breakfast.

Morning sessions last until 10.15 am when the children have a drink if needed before we continue with our lessons. After break the children participate in further activities until they have lunch at 11.30 am. All the Nursery children enjoy their lunch together in the dining room. They are encouraged to use a knife and fork and to taste food that may be unfamiliar to them. The morning session ends when lunch has finished at 12.30 pm.

The younger children will have the opportunity to rest after lunch.

At 2.30 pm the children tidy the room, have a further drink and snack before ending their day with a story. The short day sessions finish at 3.00 pm. The remaining children have a light tea at 3.30 pm when they are joined by pupils from the school who are remaining on site for after school supervision. School closes at 6.00 pm daily.

We record the children's achievements and work in a Learning Journey book. We also use a computer program called Tapestry to record observational pictures and videos of the children engaged in practical activities and learning through play.



# Contents of our Nursery curriculum

For you as a parent it is quite useful to know which steps your child will be taking during his/her time in **Oakleigh House Nursery**.

We have set out below an outline of the contents of our Nursery curriculum.

## 1 Communication Language & Literacy

### 1.1 Speaking and Listening

Children are encouraged to listen attentively and talk about their experiences and to ask questions through a variety of activities such as circle time, news work, listening to stories, group, class and individual discussions.

**Stories, poems and rhymes** – children are asked to listen to and respond in a variety of ways to these, such as predicting what may happen next, or in the case of poetry children may be asked to think of an appropriate rhyming word to finish the poem.



### 1.2 Reading

**Phonic work** – children are introduced to the letters of the alphabet and their associated sounds. They start to become familiar with the written symbols.

Children are encouraged to enjoy and handle books appropriately and there is always a variety of books to choose from daily for the children to look at individually or share with peers or adults. The children choose books from the library each week that we take to the classroom for group reading.

Children are introduced to the concept of reading through pre-reader books. They are encouraged to 'read' the pictures, discuss what is happening and are encouraged by open questions to discuss stories further. This activity is carried out both at home with you and at school with their teachers.

**Names** – Children are encouraged to recognise and read their own names. We do this through a variety of ways, such as books, drawers, and pegs etc.

Through **verbal work and listening to stories** children begin to see how books and writing are organised, understand that words and pictures carry meaning and that print is read from left to right and top to bottom.

### 1.3 Writing

**Names** – children practise writing their name with appropriate upper and lower case letters. At first, they will explore with mark making using a variety of methods, sand, shaving foam and more conventionally with paper and pencils. They start to trace over the letters and at their own pace they will be encouraged to copy and then eventually write their name independently from memory.



Children are encouraged to 'write' words and letters to accompany pictures. This is emergent writing and as children become increasingly familiar with letters and their shapes it will start to look more like real writing. Some children may be able to build and write simple and familiar words when they leave the Nursery.

## 2 Mathematical Development



Children are offered many opportunities to play simple **sorting games**. They are asked to sort using many different criteria and also to make their own criteria.

They become familiar with **two-dimensional shapes** and their names through class work and playing with a variety of toys. They also explore **three-dimensional shapes** and are introduced to the language of this through play with a variety of building bricks.

Children participate in pattern work. They are able to use a variety of toys that encourage **pattern building** such as lacing beads and a variety of **building toys** such as star shapes and building bricks.

Children are introduced to **number symbols**. They start to become familiar with their formation through a variety of ways – making play dough, numbers, finger painting the numbers or drawing them in the sand.

Children are provided with early **capacity experiences** which will help to develop appropriate language – full / empty etc.

The children are also encouraged to learn all about numbers, size and shapes through songs, ICT and stories. We also enable the children free time to explore mathematical development whether it is playing in the role play area or outdoors.

### 3 Personal and Social Development



Children are encouraged **to be independent**. A ‘helper’ is appointed each day (Nursery 2 only) and is responsible for taking messages, helping with ‘jobs’ in the classroom etc. The children are encouraged to get their *own* books, pack their *own* bags, hang up and put on their *own* coats etc. The children in Nursery 1 learn to go to the toilet independently, find their belongings and we select a leader who leads us to activities around the school.

They will **develop independence** in dressing and undressing by doing up their *own* shoes, coats, overalls etc. Games in free and supervised play, show the children how to **take turns and to share**.

Individual and group work helps children to **establish good relationships** within the classroom both with their peers and with their teachers.

The **general ethos of the school and classroom** helps children to establish the difference in right and wrong, how to behave appropriately and to consider the feelings of others.

Children are encouraged **to share their cultural backgrounds** with others, which helps to establish sensitivity to different cultures and beliefs. Children are also introduced to different cultures through stories.

## 4 Understanding the World



Children are introduced to the idea of **pattern in nature** through nature work relating to the seasons. They look around them and notice the changes in their environment through activities such as nature walks.

General class discussions on a variety of subjects both planned and those that naturally arise enable the children to **talk about their environment**, their family and past and present events in their lives.

The children are introduced to many **different ways of designing and making things**. They make models during play activities with construction toys and are given the opportunity to experiment with different ways of cutting, sticking and model making with a variety of media.

Children have regular access to ICT and the interactive whiteboard using a variety of programs to develop their skill and help increase their confidence on the computer.

## 5 Physical Development

**PE** helps children to learn to move confidently, with increasing control and an awareness of space and others. In PE children use both small and large apparatus. They work initially in small adult supervised groups working up to using the equipment independently. All the nursery pupils participate in Leap Frogs **gymnastic sessions** led by



Louise Carter from West Street Gymnastic Centre and in **ballet sessions** with Sara Richards from Turning Pointe Ballet Academy.



**Outdoor play** encourages children to use the large apparatus with increasing skill and dexterity. **Fine motor skills** are fostered through activities such as cutting, threading, design technology work, paint brush use, use of construction toys, pencil use, getting dressed and undressed.



The children also practise various movements – such as skipping, jumping etc. They start to move creatively and imaginatively to music.

**Lunchtime** allows children the opportunity to learn to use cutlery with increasing skill and control, this is modeled by their teacher who joins them for lunch each day.

## 6 Creative Development

Imaginative and creative play is fostered within the classroom through activities such as **role-play, home corner and small world play** and in **Music**.

Music sessions encourage children **to explore sound and rhythm** and to become expressive when using simple percussion instruments. Singing sessions help children to **listen to music, join in with songs and participate in singing games**.

Children are **able to express ideas and feelings** through a wide variety of artistic mediums such as paint, dough, drawing, collage, printing etc. They **explore colour** in a variety of ways such as colour mixing and adding water to paint.



We hope that you have found this booklet useful, we welcome any feedback. Please remember that there are opportunities for parents and guardians to meet and discuss their child's progress throughout the year, both informally and formally. Oakleigh House recognises that parents are the main educators of their children and we strive to work in partnership with parents in order to provide the best environment for each child so that they can develop and learn.

We look forward to welcoming you to Oakleigh House School

*Mrs Wanless and Mrs van Hooijdonk*