

Welcome to the Inventors

Welcome to the Inventors room 😊 Where we will help your little ones become confident, resilient, independent little people all while providing learning rich experiences and teaching them the important skills needed for their next big journey to school!

We make sure we welcome children & their families into our inventor's room, with warm, friendly faces. Ensuring the classroom makes you feel at home and cosy; a home from home feel.

We are passionate about allowing children to be independent and not putting any limitations on their play & learning.

We understand the importance of life skills being taught to children from an early age & we focus on, self-regulation, social skills, communication & physical development - the vital core skills needed to be 'school ready'.

How will we settle your little one into our room?

Before your little one starts in our room - **If they are new to the nursery:** We will invite you in with your little one for some settling in sessions. During this time, we get to know you as a family. We will also spend time getting to know all the important things about your child, from who is part of their family/pets, their dislikes of foods, what their favourite activities/stories are and so on. All of this helps us to get to know your child before they start, which then will allow a smooth and positive settling in.

What we do when children move from the Explorer's room (toddlers): We will spend some time with the child's previous key person, getting to know them again, find out things such as, their likes, dislikes, favourite activities and so on. We will arrange settling in days into our room and make sure we take it at the child's pace. We will also always ensure we keep you, the parent informed of when this is happening, and communicate together about ideas we think will work well for your child.

Our key person system

Once the children have settled into our room, we allow time before we allocate a definite key person. This is because some children may spend more time with a certain member of staff and build a stronger relationship with that practitioner. It will also depend which member of staff works on the days that the child is in, as we like to ensure we get to spend quality time having meaningful interactions with our key children. Once we have decided we will let you know who your child's key person. Having an allocated key person is important as it allows us to know our children as well as we possibly can, we work closely with our families and support their emotional well-being. We ensure communication is of a high standard with our families, letting you know about your child's development, their day at nursery and share ideas and tips that may support you at home. We will always be there for a chat about anything, whether it is about your child's development, behaviour at home, a concern you have, or even if you just need to talk about something going on in your own life that you may need help or support with.

Where possible we will ensure key people will welcome the children in at the door and hand over at the end of the day. Becky works Monday to Thursday & Lina works Wednesday to Friday.



Our environment

You may notice that our environment is different from your typical pre-school & probably wonder why. No plastic toys, no bright colourful backgrounds on the walls; instead, real resources, loose parts, recycled objects, neutral colours, low lighting, and cosy furnishings. This is because we follow **the Hygge approach**; *feeling of cosiness, happiness, simplicity, comfort, and anything that brings that warm feeling of contentment*. Hygge in the Early years emphasises the home from home feel and has many benefits to how this supports a child's well-being and development in a nursery environment. We want children and parents to feel that they are coming into an extension of their home and that they will feel calm and safe in our room. All resources are at the children's level, so your little one can access these independently and choose exactly what it is they want to play with.

Areas which are embedded into our environment and will always be accessible in our classroom:

Our home corner - you will see we have real resources in our home corner, real pots, china tea sets, cutlery & real vegetables/herbs. This allows children to practice their skills, teaches them respect and allows them to feel confident and trusted. We always have a home corner available to our children as this is where children can develop their confidence, make sense of their immediate world, practice social & communication skills.

Real dressing up - in our dressing up area we provide the children with real shoes, real hats, scarves, shirts, and a variety of materials. This is because it then puts no limitation on what character a child wants to be. If it was full of superhero's & nurse outfits, then that is all they would be as it is putting a label on what they can be.

Loose parts/natural resources - loose parts can be anything- a tube a pine cone, a shell or a cardboard box. Loose parts put NO limitations on your child's learning and play. They are truly in charge and the leaders of their learning. This extends their imagination, thinking, problem solving and self-esteem. This approach was developed by **Simon Nicholson an Architect who developed the idea of how loose parts create more opportunities for creative engagement rather than static materials**.

A cosy/reading corner: We have a cosy area with soft furnishing, a beanbag, cushions, and snuggly blankets. In all our busy day to day lives we know that sometimes we may want a time during the day to just wind down, slow down and take some time to chill reading a book or have a cuddle. Again, inspired by the Hygge approach. We provide a wide variety of books that we know our children love and have lots of non-fiction books to support your child's curious mind. We also have story sacks of the favourite fairy tales; we spend time re-acting out these familiar stories and encouraging children to engage and show off their drama skills.

Art/creative area: We have an area with accessible paints, paper, pens, glue, and materials for the children to always access. Again, allowing them to be the leaders of their play and choose what it is they want to do at nursery. As Reggio Emilia says "Every child is an Artist".

We also have a variety of other resources that are implemented into our everyday provision, but these are rotational. Which leads us into our next box.....

Invitations to play & schemas:

In the Inventors room we set up invitations to play each day. We ensure that we base them around the children's current interests and schemas that they are going through in the current moment - this makes sure it engages the children and has meaning behind it. We are inspired by Reggio Emilia's approach to early childhood education. The Reggio philosophy "encourages children to learn through exploration, by providing materials that 'invite them to play' in a creative, non-directive way"; which matches our teaching approach. You can expect your little ones to come into nursery and see things such as 'playdough set up on the table with leaves, pinecones, and acorns to explore with, our light table set up with coloured water, jars and pipettes, an array of fruits with paint, a real china tea set with real fruit tea bags and warm water. These are just a few examples; it changes accordingly with the children's interests.

We will provide materials in the room to support your child's individual schemas that they are going through - schemas are repeated behaviours or patterns that children go through, which helps them to understand how the world around them works. Sometimes schemas can be mistaken for 'negative behaviour' such as repeated throwing, or moving all their toys to one end of the room (just a couple of examples), but we try to observe children's behaviour to understand it so we can provide opportunities and activities to support them, such as lots of bags and boxes, so children can transport materials around the room, balls, and hoops to allow throwing. (See hand out about schemas).



**Self-Regulation:**

When your little one reaches the age of 3, they are beginning to develop the skills to be able to self-regulate themselves; being able to manage their emotions and deal with challenges such as conflicts with friends, turn taking, rules & boundaries - they still need a lot of co-regulation from grownups - and that is where our important role comes in. In the Inventors room we really focus on children's independence, emotion coaching and creating confident little people that have their own voice. We do this by:

Independence: Always providing time and opportunity for self-dressing, toileting, self-hygiene, and every day routines. Although we focus on encouraging children to do these things independently, we are always there to 'co-regulate', there by the children's side to give a helping hand if needed. This allows a more positive outcome as children do not feel pressured and are more likely to meet these milestones at a faster pace.

Emotion coaching: As children's brains are developing it is very typical that we are going to see children express their 'big feelings' and we are skilled with the knowledge and understanding to help your little ones go through these 'big feelings' and understand ways to help your little ones manage them. We do this by accepting all feelings and validating them. We speak to children about their emotions and how it appears - for example - " I can see you are sad, because you are crying", " You seem like you are very angry because you are frowning and stamping your feet". We talk through the feeling with the child and try to help them express the reason why; guiding them not controlling them.

Every day resources for self-regulation: Every day we will ensure that the room includes - playdough, water, and sand. These materials are essential for children to regulate their own emotions. They allow your little ones to relax and focus their attention.

Inventors room rules & boundaries: In the inventor's room, children do have more of an understanding about what 'rules and boundaries are'. We ensure that our expectations are consistent. Becky & I work closely together and with the children to put these into place. We find out from the children what is important to them and we have made a 'rules' chart. The children have included things such as "Don't break friends' models" "Don't eat your friend's food". This allows them to make their own boundaries with people too and understand the meaning of 'respect'.



The wonders of Outdoors:

As you already know, we are a very outdoor based nursery. We know that outdoor play has so many benefits to children's development and mental health. Outdoor play encourages children to become aware of limits, challenges, and boundaries this also allows children to develop independence, experiment risk-taking, develop self-confidence and self-esteem, reduces stress all while investigating the natural world around them and burning off energy!

We usually go outside after snack time between 10 & 10:30am and spend the morning out there. We use our wonderful space which is again, full of loose parts and open-ended resources, such as cable drums. Tyres, planks of wood, piping, tubes, crates, cones, real pots and pans for our mud kitchen. Some days the children may create a role-play scenario using crates and cable drums to be their police car or they may turn the tyres and logs into an obstacle course for practicing their climbing skills, another day they might want to plant seeds and investigate the growing area. There is so much opportunity for rich learning and play out there with no limitations on it. We spend most of afternoon outside after lunch times. Invitations to play are also set up outdoors, such as playdough with natural materials from the garden to explore with, Dinosaur worlds on a larger scale, water and large piping with funnels and jugs (just a few examples of some of the things your little ones will explore with daily).

We also emphasise the importance of risk-taking when playing outside. Children learn so much more when allowed to access their own limits and begin to understand dangers and manage their own risks independently. This creates confident, resilient little people! Our outdoor play approach again, supports **Froebel's theory** on the environment, Froebel states that play allows children to relate to inner worlds of feeling and imagination. Children need ownership over their play to enable them to fully express themselves.

Each week we ensure that we go for a walk to the farm or woods. We are lucky enough to be in such a beautiful rural area, so we really do make the most out of it. Before we set off, we encourage children to risk assess the things that could be dangerous on our walk, each visit is different and unique with no set focus with what we discover or learn that day. Which is the real wonder of the outdoor environment.

We really do go out in all weathers, it adds to the fun - *"there is no such thing as bad weather, just inappropriate clothing"*. Please make sure your children are fully equipped with waterproofs, warm coats, hats and gloves for the colder months and sun hats/cream cooler clothing in the warmer months 😊



Preparing your little ones for their next big journey to school:

This is always a very popular topic; 'How are you ensuring my child is school ready?'. With many years of experience, we ensure we provide lots of opportunity to ensure children have the skills they need to be ready for that next big step to school.

Everything that is embedded in our day-to-day routines and activities are important opportunities that are helping children to meet the milestones and develop the characteristics that are needed for children to have a smooth, happy, and positive transition to school. It mirrors everything that has been said above and each box that is listed above is supporting your child in each way possible to 'be school ready'.

We also work very closely with our feeder schools when the time comes for children to start their transition to school; arranging visits for teachers to visit us here at nursery, reports and extra meetings made with teachers if necessary.

A few MYTHS busted:

"My child should be able to write their name before starting school" - This is a myth. If you speak to Reception teachers, they will say the same. What really is important are the skills needed to hold a pencil effectively. We focus on strengthening the muscles in your children's fingers and hands to be able to have good pencil control. We do this by providing playdough, lots of different mark making tools to strengthen those little muscles.

We provide lots of opportunity for developing 'core muscles', an important component for a child being able to sit on a chair at a table when writing!

"My child should be starting 'phonics' now" - This is also a myth. When children start school teachers would prefer them to start at the same level and know that it has not previously been done in a way that may not have been correct. Imagine learning something and then having to go back to it all again, this could be a little boring for your child and then they may lose interest at school. What is important are the skills needed to effectively learn phonics, which are - listening & attention skills - hearing initial sounds in letters, having awareness of rhyme and alliteration. These skills are practiced with lots of story and music times throughout the day. We talk about the sounds we hear in names and words and incorporate them into games during circle times.



Our teaching approach & how we cover other areas of learning?

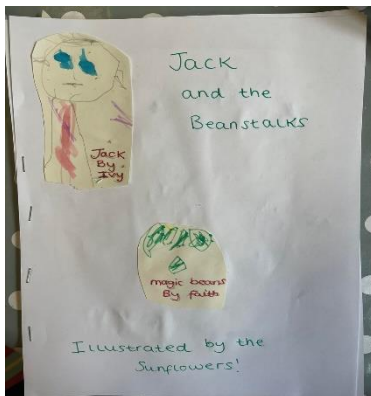
Our teaching approach is mostly inspired from Anna Ephgrave 'In the moment planning' & the Curiosity approach - which is all about inspiring your little ones to become curious and imaginative learners. After many years of experience and trying out different ways of planning for children's learning and development - Our current approach is our favourite and most effective.

Your little ones learning and development will be extended through their current interests and wonders all 'In the moment' and everything will stem from THEM, for example - if your little one had found bugs in the garden - this would then be pushed further by one of us by sharing that interest with the child, talking, commenting, sharing an idea of making a bug house, drawing a picture, singing a song. Or if your little one is creating a story around the small world people or animals they are playing with, we will offer to create and scribe a story with them. The possibilities for learning and playing are endless with this style of teaching and these are just a couple of examples.

Each child is at a different stage and age of development and we will meet them where they are at and provide activities and opportunities that are going to develop skills in all areas of learning.

The bug hunting activity from above covers many areas of learning; **maths** - counting bugs legs/spots, talking about the shape and size, **communication** - discussing as a group what we have found and seen **Personal and social** - working as a group to create a bug house, showing kind and care to animals, **literacy** - drawing and having meaning behind the marks they make all while **investigating the world around them**.

Your little one's key people will ALWAYS be interacting and engaged with them. Showing a real interest in their ideas and interests. Finding out what they individually need and what works to help them thrive in all areas of learning. What we do for one child may not work for another child and we tailor our care and teaching to each one in a nurturing, passionate way.



Snack time & Lunch times:

Snack time for your little ones is self-serve, if they are not hungry, they do not need to sit down and eat. But they will be encouraged to drink. We have a snack station set up in the hall way so this doesn't disrupt our play in the classroom. During snack we discuss the food we are eating, and talk about the health benefits and where the food comes from. We remind the children of ensuring there is enough snack for our friends and being 'fair'; not taking too much. Our main focus is allowing independence. Lunch times are in a calming environment, we try to create a 'cosy café' atmosphere, with table cloths and flowers on the table, acoustic music on softly in the background.

Before lunch we sit down in the classroom to unwind with a story of their choice.

The children can choose where they would like to sit and they can self-serve, from the food tray provided. This allows children to choose the foods they like, and select the amount they want. Not putting pressure and allowing children to be in control of meal times has a much more positive effect on healthy eating habits.

During lunch time; we sit with the children and discuss the foods they are eating that day. Things we discuss may be the health benefits of the food, where does the food come from or it could be what the children have been up to during the day. As you know 3-year-olds chats can go anywhere!

After they have eaten, the children independently scrape any leftovers into the bin and put their plates in the dirty basket. We provide flannels for the children to clean their own faces and hands.

Once lunch is finished, we have 10 minutes of 'calm time'. During calm time your little ones may listen to stories, do some yoga, choose to lie down with a cosy blanket and cushion, or have a cuddle with a grown up. They make this decision with a 'voting stone', allowing them to choose what they want to do.

