

The Nurture Nest Parent Handbook

“Our aim is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where every child feels happy, cared for, and understood.”

Date: January 2026

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Section 1: Welcome to The Nurture Nest

Welcome to *The Nurture Nest*, a unique early year's setting designed to help every child flourish.

We are delighted to share our ethos, values, and approach with you, and we look forward to working in partnership with you on your child's journey of growth and discovery.

The Nurture Nest specialises in supporting children with emerging special needs, social communication delays, and behavioural differences through a therapeutic, holistic, and play-based approach.

"Every child deserves to feel safe, happy, and understood."

Section 2: About Us – Our Story and Purpose

The Nurture Nest was born from both passion and purpose — a shared dream brought to life by three professional women with over 30 years' combined experience in education, early years, and childcare.

For many years, we have each worked with children who needed just a little more — more understanding, more patience, more specialist support — and we saw first-hand how early intervention can truly transform lives.

The Nurture Nest has been a dream of ours for a long time. It represents everything we have been working towards — a setting where we can bring together our knowledge, experience, and shared values to create the **best quality specialist provision** possible.

We believe every child deserves the right start in life. Our mission is to make sure that early intervention is available for those who need it most, delivered with compassion, expertise, and consistency — ensuring no child is left behind in their early years.

Each of us brings our own unique strengths and perspective:



Zoe has supported SENCOs and families across the early years sector, helping them navigate the complex systems around care and education while training practitioners to make the right referrals and support plans.



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Michaela has worked with neurodivergent children from nursery through to secondary school, gaining deep insight into transitions and the importance of nurturing independence and emotional wellbeing from the very start.



Leanne is a fully qualified teacher with a PGCE specialising in Special Educational Needs. She has over a decade of experience in SEN and SEMH schools, leading nurture units, and supporting children and families through the EHCP process, when mainstream provision could not meet their needs.

Together, we've seen — and felt — the gaps in the current system, and we're determined to create something better: a place where **every child is truly understood**, where support is proactive rather than reactive, and where families feel empowered, included, and hopeful.

The Nurture Nest is more than a setting — it's a promise.

A promise that every child who walks through our door will be seen, valued, and supported to reach their full potential in a calm, nurturing environment designed just for them.

"This is more than a nursery — it's a dream fulfilled, built from passion, purpose, and love."

Section 3: Our Ethos, Values, and Aim

Our Ethos

At *The Nurture Nest*, we believe that every child is unique. Each child deserves to be understood, nurtured, and given the right environment to reach their potential.

Between birth and five years old, a child's brain has the greatest ability to form new connections. At this critical stage, positive, nurturing experiences have a lifelong impact on how a child learns, relates, and grows.

Our ethos is rooted in:

- **Nurture** – Building trusting, safe relationships that form the foundation for learning.
- **Understanding** – Recognising each child's communication style, learning pace, and sensory needs.
- **Support** – Providing consistent, compassionate care alongside families and professionals.
- **Growth** – Helping children develop confidence, independence, and resilience through play and connection.



Our Values

<i>Value</i>	<i>What It Means to Us</i>
Respect	Every child is an individual with their own voice, preferences, and potential.
Compassion	We approach every child and family with empathy, care, and understanding.
Inclusion	We celebrate diversity and create a sense of belonging for all children.
Partnership	We value open communication and collaboration with parents and professionals.
Independence	We encourage children to develop self-confidence, curiosity, and autonomy.
Playfulness	We believe that play is the most natural and powerful way for children to learn and grow.

Our Aim

Our aim is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where every child feels happy, cared for, and understood.

Each child's learning programme is individualised and delivered by highly qualified, experienced staff who understand early development and additional needs. We are equally committed to supporting families — helping parents to understand their child's unique profile and to feel confident supporting their development at home.

Section 4: Our Philosophy – A Therapeutic, Play-Based Approach

At *The Nurture Nest*, we believe learning can only take place when a child feels **safe, secure, and happy**.

Our philosophy blends education, therapy, and play to create a holistic experience that nurtures the whole child — emotionally, socially, and cognitively.

Children are **at the heart of their learning**.

We follow a **child-led** approach, encouraging discovery through curiosity, imagination, and exploration.

Practitioners tune into children's interests, observing closely and asking open-ended questions that spark thinking and communication.

We see play as the child's natural language — a powerful tool for expression and growth. Through play, children explore relationships, develop resilience, and learn to regulate emotions.

Our team uses a **therapeutic and relational approach**, ensuring that interactions are calm, consistent, and attuned to each child's individual needs. This helps build trust, supporting emotional wellbeing and long-term development.

"We don't teach children what to think — we guide them to discover, connect, and grow."

Section 5: Our Learning Environment and Facilities

Our environment is carefully designed to meet the needs of children with developmental differences, social or emotional challenges, and sensory sensitivities. It is calm, structured, and filled with opportunities for play, exploration, and growth.

Our facilities include:

- **Sensory Room** – A soothing space for regulation and emotional balance.
- **Small Group Learning Zone** – For focused teaching and supported play.
- **Free-Flow Play Zone** – For creativity, independence, and social exploration.
- **Charming Front & Rear Garden** – A natural outdoor space promoting curiosity and physical development.
- **1:1 Therapy Room** – For individual sessions and intervention.

Every space is designed with purpose — to support engagement, communication, and confidence through sensory experiences and play.

"Environment is the third teacher — every corner whispers an invitation to explore."

Section 6: Our Curriculum – The Seven Areas of Learning

Our curriculum is rooted in the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** and enhanced through therapeutic and sensory-based approaches.

We believe that learning happens best through play, connection, and exploration — when children feel safe, happy, and understood.

The Seven Areas of Learning

1. **Communication and Language** – Supporting children to understand and express themselves through words, gestures, and play.
2. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** – Building relationships, confidence, and emotional regulation.
3. **Physical Development** – Encouraging movement, balance, coordination, and self-care skills.
4. **Literacy** – Fostering a love of stories, symbols, and sounds through playful experiences.



5. **Mathematics** – Exploring patterns, shapes, and numbers through hands-on problem-solving.
6. **Understanding the World** – Discovering people, places, and nature through observation and exploration.
7. **Expressive Arts and Design** – Encouraging creativity, imagination, and self-expression through art, music, and movement.

“Learning begins with curiosity, grows with confidence, and blossoms through play.”

Section 7: Therapeutic Support and Interventions

At *The Nurture Nest*, therapy and education work hand-in-hand.

Our programmes combine education and therapy to promote progress in communication, emotional regulation, social skills, sensory processing, and independence.

We offer access to a range of specialist therapies (available at an additional cost):

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Sensory Integration Occupational Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Art Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Animal Therapy

Therapies are delivered by qualified professionals and integrated into each child’s daily learning plan to ensure consistency and balance.

“Therapy is not separate from play — it lives within every smile, every story, and every discovery.”

Section 8: Admissions

We welcome families who share our belief that every child deserves the best possible start in life.

Our admissions process ensures *The Nurture Nest* is the **right setting** for your child and that we can provide an environment where they can thrive.

In line with our Admissions Policy, we meet and assess all children before enrolment to ensure we can meet their needs and provide an enabling environment for growth.

Our Assessment Process

- Conversations with parents about your child's history, needs, and personality.
- Observations and informal play-based interactions.
- Reviewing existing professional reports (e.g., SALT, OT, EHCPs).
- Using the **Early Years Outcomes** and **Progress Check at 2** to identify developmental stages.

These assessments help determine whether *The Nurture Nest* is the **most suitable setting** for your child and form the foundation for an **individual support plan**.

Following assessment, we develop personalised **SMART goals** and next-step targets following the **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** model (SEND Code of Practice 2015).

Funding and Fees

We accept government-funded early education hours (15 or 30 hours for eligible 2–5-year-olds).

As a specialist early intervention setting with enhanced staff ratios and integrated therapeutic support, government funding alone does not cover the full cost of each child's personalised programme.

An additional **SEN** fee will be applied to ensure our enhanced 3:1 staff ratio is maintained and be accessed to help support your child's individual programme and

All fees and funding arrangements are discussed transparently prior to enrolment, and families receive a clear written breakdown of costs so there are no unexpected charges.

“Every child deserves a setting where they can truly belong, learn, and flourish.”

Section 9: Attendance and Absence Procedures

Working Together

Consistent attendance helps children develop secure attachments, routine, and confidence — all vital for emotional growth.

We understand that absences are sometimes unavoidable, and our approach is always compassionate and supportive.

If your child will be absent, please notify us as soon as possible **by telephone** so we can plan for the day.

 **To report an absence, please call us directly.**



If your child has a contagious illness, please let us know so we can take appropriate measures.

If we have not heard from you by mid-morning, we may contact you to check your child is safe and well.

Children should return only when they are well enough to participate fully in the day's activities.

"When home and nursery work together, children feel secure and cared for."

Section 10: Curriculum and Learning Environment

At *The Nurture Nest*, learning happens through **experience, discovery, and connection**. A child must feel safe and happy before meaningful learning can take place.

Our practitioners act as guides, following children's natural interests and asking **open-ended questions** that deepen understanding and imagination.

The curriculum is flexible and child-centred.

We plan purposeful activities that reflect each child's strengths, needs, and pace of learning. Children develop at different rates, and we celebrate every achievement while carefully observing for next steps.

"Every child's journey is unique — our role is to nurture it with patience, curiosity, and love."

Section 11: Assessment, Progress, Do and Review

At *The Nurture Nest*, assessment helps us understand and celebrate each child's progress. We use the **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** model to guide individualised targets and ensure support remains responsive.

This process runs continuously, promoting consistency and collaboration with families and professionals.

Our Cycle Looks Like This



Figure 1: The Assess–Plan–Do–Review Cycle



- **Assess** – Understanding the child’s current stage through observation and collaboration.
- **Plan** – Setting targets and strategies that build on strengths.
- **Do** – Implementing plans daily through play, teaching, and therapeutic activities.
- **Review** – Evaluating progress, celebrating achievements, and refining goals.

Progress is shared with families through daily updates, review meetings, and joint planning. We work closely with therapists and specialists to keep assessment and intervention aligned.

“Every small step forward is a milestone worth celebrating.”

Section 12: Inclusion, SEND and Multi-Disciplinary Support

Inclusion at *The Nurture Nest* means every child feels safe, valued, and part of our community.

We follow the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)** and **Equality Act (2010)** to provide equitable access and personalised support.

We collaborate with parents, nurseries, schools, and professionals such as health visitors and therapists to create a joined-up network of care.

Where needed, we support families through **EHCP** applications and specialist referrals.

Our multi-disciplinary approach ensures that speech and language, occupational therapy, and play-based strategies are embedded within daily routines.

“It takes understanding, teamwork, and heart to help a child truly thrive — and we are proud to do all three.”

Section 13: Wellbeing and Emotional Development

Emotional wellbeing sits at the centre of our practice.

When children feel safe and connected, they are ready to explore and learn.

We promote wellbeing through:

- Predictable routines that promote security.
- Emotional-literacy activities.
- Calm sensory spaces.
- Positive behaviour guidance rooted in understanding, not punishment.

“When a child feels emotionally safe, the possibilities for learning are endless.”



Section 14: Safeguarding and Child Protection

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do.

We are fully committed to protecting children from harm and ensuring their right to grow up safely.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs):

- Zoe Horan (Lead)
- Michaela Horan (Deputy)
- Leanne Mooney (Deputy)

All DSLs follow **Ealing Local Authority** guidance and attend regular training.

All staff hold enhanced DBS checks and complete annual safeguarding and Prevent training.

“The greatest protection we can give a child is a community that truly sees, listens, and cares.”

Section 15: Health, Illness and Medication

We promote health and wellbeing through proactive care and clear communication.

Children who are unwell should remain at home until they are fit to return.

We follow **Public Health England** and **Ealing LA** exclusion guidelines.

Medication and Health Care

Prescribed medication can be administered only when:

- A **Medication Consent Form** is completed.
- The medication is labelled correctly.
- Two staff members check and record each dose.

Individual Health Care Plans are created where required.

All staff hold **Paediatric First Aid** certification.

“A healthy child is a happy learner — and a cared-for child is a confident one.”

Section 16: Daily Routines and Practical Information

A predictable, nurturing routine helps children feel safe and confident.

Our daily rhythm balances structure with flexibility to meet individual needs.



Typical Daily Routine

Time	Activity
09:00-09:45	Free-flow and settling activities
09:45-10:00	Circle time and learning songs
10:00-10:30	Focused play and small group activities
10:30-11:00	Snack, story, brush teeth
11:00-12:00	Outdoor play and exploration (<i>End of AM session</i>)
12:00-13:00	Lunch, sensory regulation and relaxation
13:00-13:30	Free-flow and settling activities
13:30-14:30	Focused play and small group activities
14:30-15:00	Snack time, story, brush teeth
15:00-16:00	Outdoor play and exploration

We adapt routines to meet individual sensory, emotional, and developmental needs.

Term Dates

Term dates will be published annually on our website.

Uniform

Children should wear comfortable, practical clothing suitable for play. Uniformed jumpers with *The Nurture Nest* logo can be ordered directly through the nursery. Please ensure all spare clothes and belongings are clearly labelled.

“Consistency builds security — and security builds confidence.”

Section 17: Partnership with Parents – Summary and Commitment

We believe parents and practitioners are partners in every child’s journey.

How We Work Together

- Open communication daily updates. Real time updates are updated on a parent friendly app called, EYParent. Here you can access updates on your child's learning, including photos, videos, learning journals, and diaries. It enables two-way



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communication, allowing parents to contribute home observations, and track development milestones

- Regular meetings to discuss progress.
- Parent workshops on communication, sensory regulation, and behaviour.
- Home learning ideas to ensure consistency.
- Collaboration with external professionals.

“When home and nursery work in harmony, children feel seen, supported, and strong.”

Section 18: Policies, Procedures and Feedback

All policies are available on request and on our website:

👉 www.thenurturenesteic.com

They include safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion, health and safety, equality, data protection, medication, attendance, accidents, and more.

Each policy reflects our ethos of nurture, understanding, and professionalism.

We welcome and value parent feedback to continually improve our practice.

“Listening to families helps us nurture better, together.”

Thank you for choosing *The Nurture Nest*.

By trusting us with your child’s care, you’ve joined a community built on compassion, understanding, and hope.

“In every child, we see endless potential. In every family, we find partnership. And in every day, we discover something wonderful.”