

# Sinclair Primary and Nursery School

SINCLAIR PRIMARY &  
NURSERY SCHOOL



## The Nursery



## A handbook for our families

*Working together to give children the best start*

## *Our Philosophy*

**These statements explain the thinking behind what we do at Sinclair Nursery.**

- We believe that the best way to prepare children for their future life is to build strong foundations and give them what they need as children.
- We recognise that children are complex individuals who have feelings, ideas and relationships with others. They need to be physically, mentally, morally and spiritually healthy.
- We know that young children learn in an integrated way and not in neat tidy compartments.
- Everything they do and experience helps them learn and develop.
- We respect children as independent learners. We give them responsibility, allow them to take risks, make errors, decisions and choices, at an age appropriate level.
- We value and praise the efforts of all children. We support their self-esteem and help them become self-disciplined individuals.
- We understand that children develop at different rates; they learn things at different times as they grow and develop. We offer experiences that are suited to their needs and stages of development.
- We start with what children can do rather than what they cannot do. We build on their strengths and celebrate their achievements and progress.
- We foster imagination, creativity and curiosity and encourage all kinds of symbolic behaviour like reading, writing, drawing, dancing, music, numbers, role play and talking.
- We aim to create the right kind of conditions for children's learning to thrive.
- We believe that relationships with other people are of central importance in a child's life. We promote and nurture good relationships between everyone in our nursery community.
- We know that quality education is about three things: the child, the context in which learning takes place and the knowledge and understanding that the child develops and learns as a result.

**Based on and adapted from 'Ten Principles of Early Childhood Education' (Tina Bruce 1996)**

# Everyone is Welcome at Sinclair Nursery

At Sinclair Primary and Nursery School, we want to work with all our families to ensure that every child gets the best start.

This booklet has been created to help share information about our nursery and to answer any questions, we hope you find it useful.

We look forward to getting to know you and your child as we work together.



## ***Who will be teaching and caring for my child in the Nursery?***

<b>Kirsty</b>	Teacher in charge
<b>Becky</b>	Nursery practitioner (Qualified to CYPW Diploma Level 3)
<b>Kluska</b>	Nursery practitioner (Qualified to CYPW Diploma Level 3)
<b>Joe</b>	Nursery practitioner (Qualified to CYPW Diploma Level 3)
<b>Jess</b>	Nursery practitioner (Qualified to CYPW Diploma Level 2)
<b>Lisa</b>	Nursery snack/lunch assistant

Your child will be cared for and supported by **all of the nursery staff**. These adults become very important people in your child's life. They all support your child as they learn and develop.

### **This is what ALL staff do to support children -**

- they help them to become familiar with the nursery and feel confident and safe within it.
- they develop a genuine bond with children and offer settled, close relationships.
- they help them feel happy and secure so they are confident to explore and to try out new things.
- they meet the needs of each child in their care and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- they make observations about children's play and learning that contribute to planning for children's learning and development.

### **Will my child have a key person?**

Yes, each child is also allocated a dedicated **KEY PERSON** from within the team of adults. This means that one member of staff will be the main link person for you and your child.

**They will do all the things listed above but will also be the person who -**

- you can talk to, to make sure that your child is being cared for appropriately or share any information about your child.
- maintains records of your child's development and progress and shares them with you.

## *What session times do you offer?*

Your child may be entitled to up to 30 hours free nursery provision, the term after their third birthday.

You can choose and register for one of the following options -

### **Mornings**

Monday-Friday 8.45am - 11.45am

### **Afternoons**

Monday -Friday 12.45pm- 3.45pm

### **Day Sessions**

8.15am – 3.45pm (breakfast included)

### **PLEASE NOTE**

Where childcare is not required due to work needs, morning or afternoon sessions will be allocated.

Day Sessions will be allocated to parents that are working or studying. For Day Session children we will provide a simple, healthy breakfast and parents/carers must provide a healthy packed lunch. We can also offer the children a hot lunch provide by the school kitchen - this comes at an extra cost of £2.50 per meal.

We have a Healthy Lunchbox leaflet to assist you in selecting things for lunch boxes and a hot lunch menu.

**We will discuss ways to meet individual childcare needs as part of our application process.**

## ***Application process for starting at Sinclair Nursery***

You can apply to Sinclair Nursery at any time.

You will need to complete the initial registration form, which can be found at the main school office.

A member of the nursery will be in contact when an application form has been completed. This will be to arrange an opportunity for you and your child to visit.

This visit will give you and your child time to look together at our environment, meet the staff and ask as many questions as you need. It is important to ask questions so you can make the important decision about 'where is best for your child?'

It is important for families to have an opportunity to visit our nursery before they complete the application forms

Once you have visited and you have made the important decision - 'where is best for my child?' – you can complete a application form.

This form, is where you can give details of your session needs.

You will be contacted during the term before your child is due to start their nursery experience to discuss the admission process.



## ***Admission process for starting at Sinclair Nursery***

This is how we gradually introduce children and their families to the nursery.

We want to ensure all children make a happy and smooth transition from home into nursery life.

It is important that all prospective families understand our induction process before starting with us.

### ***What happens?***

During the term before your child is due to start we will contact you to confirm that you would still like a place.

We will then write to you to with an appointment for a **home visit**, your child's **settling sessions** and **arrange a start date including** your child's **session allocations**.

### ***What is a home visit?***

A home visit is when we come to visit you and your child at home.

This is the first step towards a smooth transition from home to nursery. It helps to start building positive relationships that support your child as they settle into nursery life.

You and your child get to meet two members of the nursesey team in your own familiar surrounding.

The home visit is an opportunity to get to know not only your child but the whole family.

It's a time when we let you, tell us all about your child, as well as discuss the paperwork that will need to be completed.



### ***What is a settling session?***

Settling Sessions are an opportunity for your child to come along and play with the nursery staff before they start. Each child will be supported by their key person.

Settling Sessions are very important as they help children become familiar and confident with the new surroundings of the nursery.

Settling Sessions last for one hour

These will take place before your child is due to start.

**All children need to attend these settling session at nursery.**

At these sessions you can return the completed paperwork that we left with you at the home visit.

### ***What happens when my child starts at nursery?***

On the agreed start date, you and your child will arrive together and be greeted by a member of the nursery team. We will encourage a smooth transition from you the parent to us the practitioners using the bonds and friendships we developed during the settling sessions to encourage this.

Your child will then continue to attend the agreed pattern of sessions that they have been registered for.

All children are different and some may take longer to settle happily. Anyone who finds settling more difficult may need to have an individualised plan made to help settle them in. This would be agreed in discussion with you.

If there is any part of this process that you would like more information on or want to discuss, please contact us.



## *How important is my child's attendance?*

Good attendance at nursery is very important. We want your child to have the best start. Children who attend regularly and arrive on time do better than those who have low attendance and poor punctuality.

It is encouraged that children attend nursery for every session they are allocated unless they are unwell.

*If your child is absent due to sickness or any other reason, please let the school office know by calling 02380 736663*

## *But, what if my child is ill?*

If children are unwell, their emotional well-being is affected. Children that are ill, feel unhappy and in need of individual comfort from their parent/carer. Illnesses are easily passed on to other children and adults.

**ALL parents must be contactable during the sessions your child attend in case of an emergency or illness. Please make sure alternative contact numbers are added to your child's registration form.**

Children who are unwell or who have an infectious illness **must** be kept at home until better. Please advise us if your child is off sick with something that is infections, like chicken pox or measles.

Children that have been sick or had diarrhoea **MUST** remain at home for **48 hours** before returning to nursery.

If a child has had a high temperature during the night, or morning before a session, they should be kept at home until well again.

If your child needs Calpol or similar medicine, then they are not well enough to be at nursery.

**Please do not give them Calpol and then send them in to nursery. Please keep them at home until they are better.**

### *Will you give my child prescribed medicines?*

If your child has a medical condition such as asthma we can administer inhalers.

We will ask you to complete a form to give details about what is required.

We need to know about any medical conditions that may affect your child. You can tell us about this at the time of registration. **We need to know about allergies and medical needs.** A member of the nursery team will discuss this further before your child starts and a healthcare plan may be needed to be completed



### *What if my child is seen by other professionals?*

If your child has been seen by other professionals such as speech and language therapists, health visitors, paediatrician, social services etc it is very important to let us know as soon as possible. We will require copies of the paperwork given from these professional to help us provide the support for your child to have the best start to their early education.

We will also be working with other agencies such as 'Pickles Coppice' to help support families who need further guidance/support/advice on the best way to support a child's learning and development. We will talk to you about collecting paperwork/evidence to help support your child's experience in our nursery setting.

## UNDERSTANDING THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE AT SINCLAIR NURSERY

The **EYFS** consists of four principles that shape the practice at Mansel these are; every child is a **unique child**, children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationship (adult and child and adult and parent)**, children learn and develop well in **enabling environments** support and teaching from the nursery adults, children develop at different rates with an importance for **learning and development**.

The **EYFS** consists of 7 areas of learning. These are split into prime and specific areas. Prime areas of learning help develop the curiosity and initial building blocks to begin their learning adventure. The prime areas are the foundations to learning and are **Communication and Language, Physical development and Personal, Social and Emotional development**.

The specific areas are additional areas to be developed that broaden their knowledge and skills ready for their next step in their learning adventure. These are **Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the world and Expressive arts and design**.

*'The development of language and the ability to communicate effectively is an important milestone. Although acquiring speaking and listening skills may be considered cognitive learning, they only develop fully when children share a social connection and understanding with people who care about them' (Debbie Chalmers, 2015)*



## *Characteristics of Effective Learning*

Alongside the 7 areas of learning and development there are also the **characteristics of effective teaching and learning**. These describe how your child learns best. The three characteristics are known as; **playing and exploring, active learning and creating and thinking critically**. At Mansel we will use these to aid our planning of activities and we will make note of these when making an observation of your child.



## *How will I know how my child is getting on at nursery?*

At Sinclair, we will spend our time playing with our children and getting to know them. We know that this is the best way to support them and understand them as individuals. While we play, we notice things they do/say. We may make notes of these things to help us understand children's learning. This is called an observation.

The relationships we build and the observations we make help us plan for your child's needs and build up a picture or '**Learning Journey**' about your child. This helps us to see how they are developing and shows the progress they are making.

## *What is a 'Learning Journey' at Sinclair Nursery?*

A 'Learning Journey' is a way to help build a 'story of a child's learning and development'. It is not a product but a process that celebrates your child's experiences, achievements and progress. Through talking, making occasional notes, taking a photo and sharing information from you, we grow to understand each child's needs and then provide appropriate learning opportunities for them.

Throughout the year, we will organise opportunities for you to discuss your child's learning journey, contribute to and discuss your child's achievements and development. We call this a 'parent chat'.

During your child's time at Mansel we ask that you, the parents, contribute to your child's learning journey through our **WOW!** vouchers. A **WOW!** voucher is an opportunity for you to email or write about your child's special achievements or experiences. These are then shared and placed in our 'wow woods' for all to see.

Your child's learning journey will include photographs, observation notes, your child's masterpieces (creations) and a termly next step in learning update.

At the end of your child's early years this 'learning journey' will be shared with you electronically and you will receive half-termly updates.

## *How can I be involved in my child's learning journey?*

Your child's Learning Journey has already begun with you at home. We will ask you to complete a booklet all about your child. This is called '**My Unique Child**' – '**All about me**'.

This is the first opportunity for you (the parent) to tell us (the practitioner) about your child. It will help us to get to know your child, giving us your view of them and other important information as they start with us.

## ***What do I need to do to help my child learn?***

Helping children learn and develop is a joint process between your child, us (the nursery) and you (their family).

We really need you to be involved by...

- **talking to us** about your child, telling us about things they like and are interested in.
- **keeping us updated** about anything related to your child's needs, changes in home circumstances or anything that may affect your child.
- **meeting with us** each term to discuss and celebrate your child's progress and development.
- **using "WOW! Vouchers" and "WOW! Photos"** to tell us about the things your child is doing at home that shows their learning and progress. Please see the separate leaflet.

## ***What else do I need to do to help support my child?***

You need to do things like....

- talk with your child
- read stories to them regularly
- get out and about and be active
- let them be involved in helping you do things
- encourage their independence

By talking with your child and doing simple things together, you help develop all their early skills which are essential to future success in life. **Children who are talked with, read to and whose families support and encourage them, make the best progress.**

## *Do you have rules at nursery?*

Yes, we have three, simple, **positive** rules. They are about creating a happy place to be and are to help children learn about being part of a group. We use these to support children's understanding about caring, sharing, turn taking and interacting with others

### **OUR GOLDEN RULES "How to be happy?" Nursery rules**

1. Be kind and friendly to everyone.
2. Share the toys and play nicely with them.
3. Talk to your friends and listen to what they say.



Children are encouraged to understand the 'how to be happy' nursery rules through regular opportunities to talk about them and relate them to things that happen. We use the rules to help children sort out any conflicts or problems they may have.

We also expect all the adults in the nursery to follow these rules too, acting as good role models for children.

You may like to use these simple rules at home too, encouraging the understanding of why rules are important.

## ***What happens at nursery? What will my child be doing?***

Our nursery provides high quality play and first hand experiences so that children can learn and develop in a child-centered way. Play is their 'work' and the way that they learn.

### **We offer...**

1. A well planned and well-resourced **environment**, inside and out.
2. A simple **daily routine** that puts the child at the centre of what they do.
3. Professional, trained, experienced **adults** who care for the children. They play and talk with them to support their learning and development.

### **The Nursery Environment**

The spaces inside and out, have been planned, resourced and set out to ensure there are a wide range of opportunities for children to explore. We have invested a great deal of thought and time to create the right space for children's play. The way that the nursery is organised supports children's independence. Good quality resources are accessible so children can get things for themselves and use them creatively in their play. We encourage children to make choices for themselves. They can move between inside and outside freely.

### **The key experiences we offer include -**

- ⌚ Sand and water play
- ⌚ Paint, collage, dough, modelling
- ⌚ Exploring drawing/writing through making marks
- ⌚ Building play
- ⌚ Small world play - play people, animals, cars, trains
- ⌚ Music, dancing and sound exploration
- ⌚ Role play
- ⌚ Books, stories, songs and rhymes
- ⌚ Food based activities
- ⌚ Puzzles, games and manipulative play
- ⌚ Opportunities for exploring the world
- ⌚ Physical play

**Children can choose to go outside in all weathers.**





## *Our Daily Routine*

The nursery day has a simple structure. It is based around our knowledge of what young children need to learn and develop to their full potential.

The majority of our day is what we call **Busy Bee Time**. This is when your child will make a choice about what they do, where they want to play and who they want to play with. They find the things they need from the environment. During this time our nursery **Café** is open for children to have a snack and drink if they want one.

ALL children are encouraged to help tidy away the toys at **Tidy Up Time**.

There are also times when children may gather together as a group. **Hello Time** is when we greet everyone near the start of the session. **Story and Singing Time** is when we come together at the end of the session to share a story, sing songs etc.

We have daily **Team Time** which is when children take part in an activity planned and led by an adult. This is often in small groups or may sometimes be as a whole class.

## *Active Learning*

Please be aware that we offer a practical, play based, approach to learning, so there are times that **we do get messy!**

We do encourage children to wear aprons and wet weather clothing but they still may get wet or messy. This is part of being 'a child' and engaging in a play based approach.

We thank you for understanding our approach to active play and learning.

## *The adults role*

Our main role is to support children's choices and interact in their play, to encourage their learning and development.

We...

- listen to things children say,
- watch what they do,
- join in with or play alongside the things they choose to do
- talk with children as they play, modelling language
- help them if they want us to
- ensure their safety
- sometimes suggest things that may support or extend their learning
- sometimes lead an activity that we have planned for them
- make occasional notes about what they do/say to help us understand their learning and development

We encourage children to see the adults as another resource to use alongside the things they choose to do and explore.

## *Book at Bedtime*

We provide all children with the opportunity to take books home to share with parents. Studies show that children who are read to regularly by their families, do better with reading and writing than those who do not experience books at home. Books are changed regularly.

**We provide every child a book bag. If you can afford a donation of £3 towards the cost of the book bag we would be very grateful.**



### ***Where do I drop off and pick up my child?***

The nursery is at the back of the school site and is accessed around the side of the school building. There is a side gate which is only open at the start and end of the day. At other times a buzzer and intercom operate on this gate. Please continue around the outside of the school building to the nursery door.

Parents/carers do not need to come through the main school unless picking up early (see below).

### ***What if we are late at the start of the session?***

All late arrivals will need to be taken to the main school office where they will be registered and brought round to the nursery.

### ***Where will I collect my child?***

When collecting your child, you come around the side of the school to the nursery and wait outside. We will then hand over your child to you as we see you.

### ***What if I need to collect my child early for an appointment?***

Please do let us know if you are needing to collect your child early. They will need to be collected from the school office.

### **IMPORTANT -**

**We need to know if someone different will be collecting your child. Please tell us when you drop your child off or call the school office and let the office staff know. They will tell us who will be picking your child up. We will not send children home with people we do not know.**

**Nursery Children must be collected by a responsible person over the age of sixteen.**

## ***What does my child need to wear? Is there a Nursery uniform?***

We encourage families to dress their children in a 'nursery friendly' version of the school uniform. Children love to feel part of the school community. Wearing our simple uniform helps foster this sense of belonging.

### **We encourage you to dress your child as follows -**

- Blue/white polo top/T-shirt
- Grey or black joggers/shorts that they can pull up and down by themselves
- Grey skirts/pinafore dresses (or a Blue and white check summer dresses)
- Royal blue jumpers/sweatshirts/cardigans (sweatshirts/cardigans with the school logo on are available from the school office)
- Suitable shoes that your child can manage for themselves/with a bit of adult help if needed. Children are outside a lot and therefore need shoes suited to outdoor play.

### **IMPORTANT**

Children need to be able to manage clothing for themselves when they go to the toilet so please dress them in things they can manage independently

**PLEASE name/label all items of clothing so that we can identify which belong to your child!**

## ***Can my child wear jewellery?***

If your child has pierced ears they may wear plain gold studs, but not sleepers or pendant earrings. These can catch on clothing as children play and this is dangerous. Other jewellery is not allowed.

If your child wears jewellery for religious reasons, please let us know. Nursery staff cannot accept responsibility for the safe keeping of jewellery.

**The safety of our children is our first priority.**

## *What will I need to send with my child?*

Please send a spare set of clothing, including pants and socks, so that your child has spare items should they need them.

**Don't forget to label all clothing**

## *Does my child need to bring a snack?*

We promote healthy eating at nursery and this is encouraged through the Early Years Foundation Stage. We provide some fruit each day and we also ask parents/carers to provide two or three pieces of fruit or vegetables a week to add to the nursery snack basket if they are able to. This is shared out with everyone as part of our Cafe snack time.

We also sometimes offer other things like cereals, breads and crackers. We offer milk or water as a drink at café.

Any food **allergies** or **dietary needs must be recorded** on our registration forms. A healthcare plan may also be needed, a member of staff will discuss your child's dietary needs with you prior to them starting. Please let us know if your child develops a food allergy.

We do not use meat or meat products (foods containing animal products) in any food activities that we provide as part of our nursery session.

**We are a NUT FREE nursery.**

**Nuts and sesame seeds or foods containing nuts or sesame seeds are not provided or permitted due to child and staff allergies.**



## *What if my child attends all day?*

### *Do I provide a lunch box?*

Yes, you can provide a healthy packed lunch in a labelled lunchbox. Please **no nuts/nut products, boiled/egg mayo, sesame seed products**, sweets, chocolate bars or fizzy drinks in lunch boxes.

You may wish for your child to eat a hot lunch provide by the school kitchen run by Southampton city catering. A hot meal can be ordered daily by informing a member of the nursery team and will cost £2.50

Please read our **Healthy Lunch Box** leaflet to help with selecting lunch box items. This leaflet also contains the hot meal menu for nursery children if this is something you wish your child to have.



### *Do you provide breakfast?*

We will provide a healthy breakfast for children attending whole day sessions from 8:15.





### ***What if my child is not toilet trained?***

By the age of 3 most children will be toilet trained or showing signs this transition to happen from nappies to .

We need to know if your child is not toilet trained before they start nursery. We can then work with you to discuss ways forward.

If you are finding toilet training difficult and your child is struggling, please talk to your Health Visitor who will be able to help you.

### ***What if I am worried about my child at nursery?***

We understand that going to nursery is a big step for your child. The transition from home to nursery can be daunting for both the child and parent., but you don't need to worry.

We are very experienced and only want the best for every child. We are here to make sure your child gets the best possible start to their early education and aim to meet every child's individual needs.

***If there is any further information you require or questions you may have, please get in contact via email or telephone.***

***Working together to give children the best possible start.***