



Hummingbirds Nursery

BESPOKE EARLY YEARS EDUCATION

Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Welcome to Hummingbirds Nursery

We are delighted that you have chosen Hummingbirds to care for your little one. We aim to provide a kind, caring environment with the highest standards of professional practice where every child can flourish. We hope this handbook will act as a guide to help you settle your child into Hummingbirds as well as provide a reference point for practical information for the future.

Dedicated staff at Hummingbirds will get to know your child extremely well and will encourage them to develop a strong sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. Staff are committed, experienced and passionate in caring for your child within a safe, stimulating and homely environment.

At Hummingbirds Nursery we believe that children learn best through playing and exploring. We are lucky to benefit from a beautiful, purpose-built building in the heart of the South Downs National Park, surrounded by fields and neighbour to a 12th Century Church. We have direct access to the countryside providing daily opportunities for nature walks and bug hunts.

We look forward to building a close and positive relationship with your family.

Ali and Nat



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Before starting at Hummingbirds

Settling In

We understand that starting at a new nursery can be an anxious time for both parents and children. We recognise that some children will settle on their first visit and others will take a little longer and we therefore tailor our approach to suit each child.

All children will be initially offered two sessions of one hour each which we have found to be the ideal duration for the child to explore a new environment and understand that their parents/carer quickly return. During one of the settling in sessions, we spend some time with a parent/carer in the office to complete your child's profile on our Nursery software. Home visits are available on request to help your child get to know staff in their own environment.

The Key Person Approach

Your child will be assigned a 'key worker' who will be their 'special person' at nursery. As well as forming a close relationship with your child, the key worker will be responsible for planning your child's learning and development and making assessments on progress. Our staff work as a close-knit team and your child will forge bonds with everyone in our team. You will therefore see observations and do handovers with different members of our team which reflects our family ethos.

What to bring?

In a single, named bag:

- Change of clothes or multiple changes if toilet training.
- Named water bottle which will be sent home for cleaning every day.
- Appropriate clothing – warm coat, hat, gloves for Winter and sun hat, loose, covering clothing for Summer.
- In Summer, we apply SPF 50 sensitive suncream unless you choose to bring your own labelled bottle.
- Pair of wellies which can be left at Nursery if possible.
- Supportive footwear – no laces or flip-flops please
- Children will often be involved in messy play and gardening/outdoor play so please do not bring them in their 'best' clothes!
- Toys – children are welcome to bring a named, soft toy or comforter to Nursery to help them feel settled. If a child wants to bring another toy

they must be willing to share it with others and accept it may get damaged. Please do not allow children to bring toys with small parts as this presents a danger for others.

- No jewellery please!

Labelling

Please label ALL your child's belongings! It's always a surprise how many children own the same clothing and toys, please help our team by making sure your children's possessions are clearly marked. Unfortunately, we cannot take responsibility for lost, personal items so please don't bring anything that will cause great upset if lost or damaged.

Lost Property

There is a lost property box within the reception area. Please look through this box as unnamed items may be put in there. Unclaimed, unnamed items will be sent to the charity shop or kept for Nursery spare clothing.

Partnership with Parents

Communication with parents is a vital part of helping us to care for your child and make their early years experience as positive as possible. At Hummingbirds, we care about your family, and it is important that you let us know of any significant changes at home that may affect your child's wellbeing; a parent working away from home, moving house, death of a pet etc.

We will always try to give you a short update about your child's day on collection. However, please understand that this is not always possible when multiple children are being collected at the same time.

Parents are always welcome to make an appointment to speak to a member of our team and our office has an 'Open Door' policy. A concern can often be resolved by talking about it at an early stage so please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Communication

Most of our communication with parents is done through our online software called Blossom. Parents install the Blossom app on their device and will then be able to access instant messaging, news posts from Hummingbirds, observations of your child in their learning journey and formative reports. Blossom also handles all the invoicing and daily diaries for our youngest Hummingbirds children. If you need to make the team aware of something during the day, please send a message via Blossom as this will appear on all the iPads used by staff in the rooms.

For administrative issues or other queries please e-mail the senior management team at: office@hummingbirdsnursery.co.uk

Formal feedback happens at the following points across the year:

- Short report around Christmas
- Face to face meeting around Easter
- Full report in the Summer

When your child is between the ages of two and three their formative report will be a Two-Year Check. This gives details of how your child is developing and learning in each of the main areas of the Early Years Curriculum. It will also give clear information if your child is not reaching their expected milestones at this point.

We will provide information about how we will give additional support and whether it would be appropriate for your child to be assessed by an outside agency such as a paediatrician.

A full staff list can be found on our website, along with key policies and documents.

Social Media

Social media is an increasingly important medium for us to recruit staff. We have an Instagram account and Facebook page that we use to showcase our lovely Nursery. Photographs are always appropriate and reflect our ethos. On enrolment, you will be asked if you are willing to give permission within your child's Blossom profile for us to use their image in this way.

Password system

At Hummingbirds Nursery we quickly become like an extended family and get to know the people who regularly collect your child(ren). However, there may be occasions when it is necessary for someone new to collect your child.

In this event, we operate a 'Password' system for parents to give to any other adult collecting your child. Parents must give the password which is held on file. We will never hand over your child to an unknown person without your permission and they must know the password. If you are running late, you must contact Nursery via Blossom or the Hummingbirds mobile informing staff of the details. We understand that things do happen however parents will be charged for persistent lateness as per our contract.

Curriculum

At Hummingbirds we follow the government's Early Years Foundation Stage guidelines.

Please see the guides below for a guide for parents:

- [What to expect in the early years – a guide for parents](#)
- [Birth to five matters – introduction](#)

Our own Hummingbirds Curriculum has been written by the team to outline our key aspirations for your children that are unique to our setting.

By the time the children leave Hummingbirds to begin school, we aim for them to:

1. Be independent with self-care skills. Going to the toilet independently, dressing and undressing and being able to enjoy a meal with friends using cutlery to eat with.
2. Be able to play co-operatively and imaginatively with other children for a sustained time.

3. Be able to enjoy the beautiful rural setting around Hummingbirds and understand the importance of caring for our environment by encouraging curiosity and respect for the natural World.

Nursery Events

Throughout the year we hold a variety of events including Harvest, Christmas and a preschool leaver's "Songs and Scones" show! Parents will be notified of upcoming events via a news post on Blossom.

Equal Opportunities

At Hummingbirds we ensure all children, and their families are treated equally, regardless of their background including gender, race, ethnic origin, abilities, culture, religious beliefs and family circumstances.

Screen Time at Nursery

The television may be used for a short time during the day as a different medium to support learning. The videos, photos and programmes the children watch are carefully selected, age appropriate and educational. It can be invaluable to show the children a short film related to a topic such as, a Chinese Dragon dance at Chinese New Year or a volcano erupting.

At the end of a long day, other children leaving for home can be unsettling and over-whelming for a small child anticipating their own collection. An educational programme such as Numberblocks or nursery rhymes can help as a distraction at this crucial time. However, there are always other activities on offer and encouraged.

We understand that some parents will be concerned about any screentime, but we are confident that the use of the television at Hummingbirds is never excessive and is used in a beneficial and appropriate way.

Recycled Materials

Hummingbirds' children love junk modelling. We would be delighted to receive any boxes for model making.

However, no toilet rolls or boxes that have contained nuts please.

Specialist Teachers

Specialist teachers visit throughout the week to provide focused activities for the children.

Playball Petersfield and Soccer Skills UK coach the children in small groups and Chloe from Debutots gives a weekly drama and storytelling workshop. These complement our in-house specialist teachers in music and dance.

Food and Nutrition

We have fantastic chefs that cook fresh meals in our kitchen for the children and staff each day. Our aim is to avoid ultra-processed foods wherever possible and to provide a balanced, nutritious and seasonal menu which is appealing to all. Individual dietary requirements will be met, and all staff made aware of allergies and intolerances. If your child suffers from an allergy, we will work with you to ensure that appropriate plans and procedures are in place. Our menu is displayed on our chalk board in reception for the week ahead.

- Lunch – freshly prepared ‘home cooked’ meal consisting of a main course and pudding. Served between 11.30-12.15.
- Dinner – a second, home cooked meal and pudding which is usually fruit or yoghurt. Served between 4.15-5pm.
- Mid-morning and afternoon snacks – include fruit, vegetable sticks, pitta and humus, toast, cheese or plain biscuits.

- Drinks – water is available throughout the day; all children will also be offered milk with snack.

Sometimes children haven’t managed to eat breakfast and parents send this in with the child. We are very happy to accommodate this but ask that you do not send any items that contain nuts as we do not use nuts or nut products in our foods. Due to allergies, we are sadly unable to accept shop-bought or homemade cakes brought into Nursery to celebrate birthdays. A watermelon, strawberries or a favourite fruit is a popular, welcome alternative and works just as well with a song and a party game!

Food Allergies and Intolerances

If your child has an allergy or an intolerance this will be discussed at your settling in visit and all the details will be recorded on Blossom. Our chef is aware of children with dietary requirements and ensures they are catered for.

Accidents and Illnesses

Accidents

Accidents sometimes happen. If your child is hurt or falls ill whilst at Nursery our staff will complete an 'Accident form' via our online platform 'Blossom'. Parents will be asked to read and sign the 'Accident Form' upon collection of your child. All our staff are First Aid trained. Parents will be contacted immediately for more serious incidents. In extreme cases, we would call 999 for support.

In the event of a significant bump to the head you will be informed immediately by telephone. Your child will be monitored and, in most cases, will be able to continue with their day as normal. In the event of an accident causing concern, you will be asked to collect your child and seek medical advice.

Illness

Please see the link to this useful booklet developed by researchers at Cardiff University which may be of use if you are concerned about common childhood illnesses: www.whenshouldiworry.com

At Hummingbirds a priority is to minimise the spread of infection. Please see our guidelines (in the table on page 12-13) for you to follow regarding Nursery policy.

We are happy for children to attend if their illness will not affect other children or staff, illnesses such as: coughs, colds, running nose, teething, eczema etc. Your child must be well enough that they will not require 1:1 attention and are able to participate in the routine of the nursery.

We do understand how frustrating it is if your child becomes unwell and you are contacted to collect them from work however your child's well-being is of the highest importance and if they are unwell the best place for them to recover is at home.

Medicine

At Hummingbirds Nursery, if the child is well enough to attend, we will administer prescription medication when required. This may be short term such as antibiotics or long term such as an inhaler or eczema cream.

All medicines brought into Hummingbirds must be recorded in our prescription medicine form and signed for at drop off. All medicines must be in their original packaging, labelled with your child's name, the required dosage and the date it was prescribed. We cannot administer alternative remedies.

Calpol

A supply of Calpol is held at Nursery to use if a child becomes ill with a high temperature during their day at Hummingbirds.

We will always contact you prior to the medicine being administered to guard against double dosing and you will need to send written permission via Blossom.

We do not routinely give out Calpol and unless there is a known reason, such as teething, we would typically ask you to come and collect your child so that they can recover at home quickly.

Pre-Existing Injuries

If your child has an accident whilst at home or at a time outside of our care, we really need to know about it. Please inform staff by sending a message via your Blossom App or telling us at drop off because this will need to be recorded appropriately. Please give full details of how the injury was sustained.

Illness	Symptoms	Exclusion
Chickenpox	Small red spots initially which spread and become fluid-filled blisters. Fevers, aches, generally unwell.	Until all lesions have scabbed over which is usually around 7 days from onset. Staff may ask to check your child to ensure they are clear
Mumps	Swollen glands below jaw. May develop headache, joint pain, tummy pain, fevers.	Until 5 days after onset of symptoms.
Hand, foot and mouth	Initially fever, sore throat, off food. Then develops mouth ulcers and raised rash on hands and feet.	Until your child is feeling better which is usually at least 5 days after onset of symptoms.
Diarrhoea and/or vomiting	Loose, watery stool or vomiting for any reason.	Until 48 hours after last episode, regardless of the cause of D+V.
Conjunctivitis	Sticky eyes	None
Slapped Cheek (5th disease/parvovirus)	Fever, runny nose, sore throat, headache. Red cheeks. A few days later a spotty rash on body.	Until your child feels better. Please let us know as this can be dangerous from pregnant women.
Fevers	Temperature >37.5C	Until fevers have settled without requiring anti-pyrexials (paracetamol or ibuprofen)
Impetigo	Classically golden crust over red sore or blisters. However, can be brown.	Until 48 hours after starting treatment or the lesions have dried out/healed.
Scarlet Fever	Flu-like symptoms - sore throat, fever, swollen glands. "Sandpaper" rash and can have a bright red tongue with white spots	Until 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

COVID 19	Cough, fever, sore throat, generally unwell	Until 5 days after positive swab.
Flu	Cough, fever, sore throat, generally unwell	Until recovered
Measles	Initially fever, runny nose, cough with red, itchy, watery eyes. Small white spots inside cheeks may then develop and a widespread blotchy raised rash.	Until 4 days after onset of rash and feeling well.
Rubella (German Measles)	Spotty rash starting on face then spreading. Fever, cough, headache, sore throat, aching joints. May have swollen glands in neck or behind ears.	Until 5 days after onset of rash. Please let us know as this is very dangerous for pregnant women.
Scabies	Small, very itchy, raised red bumps classically between fingers or toes. Can appear in lines. Can scab.	Can return after the first treatment. Whole household should be treated.
Whooping Cough (pertussis)	Initially cold-like symptoms then after about a week may develop bouts of coughing particularly at night. May have "whoop" sound (gasp) between coughs and/or difficulty breathing.	Until 2 days after starting treatment, or 21 days from onset if no antibiotics.
Diphtheria - rare in the UK but can be caught abroad and serious.	Thick grey-white coating covering back of throat, nose, tongue. Fever, sore throat, swollen glands in neck, difficulty breathing. Skin infection can occur.	We would be guided by the local health protection team but exclusion is essential.

Support

From time to time, parents may need additional support and staff at Hummingbirds will always offer their advice and expertise when requested. We have many years of experience in sleepless nights, food issues, toilet training and unwanted behaviour and we're very happy to share our approach and provide a friendly ear over a cup of tea.

Toilet Training

We work in partnership with parents to support the children to be fully independent with using the toilet when they are ready.

Hummingbirds Top Tips for Toilet Training:

- Children become ready to begin toilet training at different ages. In our experience this can be anything between 18 months and 4 years.
- Don't make talking about the toilet a taboo subject! Talk to your children about the process and regularly offer them the chance to try out

the toilet. Bath time and just before bed is often a good time to start.

- If your child is showing an interest in using the toilet, talk to us and we will reinforce what you are doing at home during nursery time. We will encourage them to use the toilet at different times of the day while they are still wearing a nappy.
- Through communication with parents, we will agree when the child should make the move to pants at nursery! We ask that children have been successfully wearing pants at home for at least 2 days before removing nappies at nursery as repeated accidents are unhygienic in a nursery environment and it can also be upsetting for the child.
- We don't accept potties into nursery. We have very small toilets and believe that it is far better for children to avoid the use of potties whenever possible. If a child can learn on a toilet, this removes the need for families to always travel with a potty in tow.

- Buy lots of underwear. Hummingbirds will always throw away heavily soiled underwear. This complies with PHE Infection Control.
- In the early days we will remind children regularly throughout the day and celebrate with them when they have been successful!
- Toilet training is a natural process and no two children are the same. We will work closely with you to achieve the journey to a life without nappies!

Behaviour Management

We work hard to promote positive and kind behaviour. Young children are still learning social skills and therefore need clear rules and boundaries to help them understand what is expected of them. If things go wrong, as they sometimes do, staff will listen and talk to the children to find out why they are upset. Staff will deal with the situation calmly, sensitively and respectfully. Our team reinforces good behaviour for children to model whilst understanding that children should be allowed to express themselves.

We use positive strategies for managing any conflicts by helping children find solutions in ways that are appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development, for example, discussion, distraction and praise. We praise and endorse desirable behaviour, such as kindness and willingness to share. We avoid creating situations in which children receive adult attention only in return for undesirable behaviour.

If a child continues to display unwanted behaviour we work with the parents to create a 'Care Plan' which may include support from outside agencies. A Care Plan outlines strategies for staff to use at Nursery to support the child and will be written in consultation with parents. It will also include ways that home can work with us to promote positive behaviour and ensure there is consistency between home and Nursery.

Staff and children should be able to work, learn and play without fear from a child who is showing unwanted behaviour. In extreme cases parents may be requested to remove their child for the safety of the other children and staff.

Special Requirements

At Hummingbirds we make detailed observations and assessments of your child which means that we are well placed to pick up on areas in which a child may need additional support.

We understand that some children may require extra support and staff are committed to give every child the opportunity to ensure they reach their full potential. To ensure this, Hummingbirds has a named SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) who can offer support, advice and liaise with outside agencies if required. Staff are kept up to date with current practice and information.

Our SENCO officer is: Susie Brine. (Supported by Sharon Rose - Nursery Manager).

At Hummingbirds we make reasonable changes to allow all children with an additional requirement to be able to attend our Nursery.

If we feel it may be necessary to seek further advice and assistance from outside professionals, we will obtain your consent to do so. In this eventuality, we respectfully request that you seriously consider this input, as we are all working towards supporting and encouraging your child. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and no decisions will be made without your consent.

English as an Additional Language and Dual Language Children

At Hummingbirds Nursery we believe strongly that all families should be welcomed within our environment. We work closely with Hampshire Early Years team in supporting families which require additional help for their child to manage at Nursery. Please let staff know upon registration if your child requires additional support. This also includes families that have another home language

Safeguarding

Safeguarding the children in our care is of paramount importance to us. More detailed information can be found in our safeguarding children policy, procedures and guidelines. However, we would like to draw your attention to our responsibilities within this.

All children have the right to grow up in a safe, secure and nurturing environment. They should feel comfortable that their individual needs will be met and not live in fear of harm or neglect.

If we have concerns regarding your child, we will act upon them. Any staff member who has a concern will raise it with our designated safeguarding lead, Sharon Rose. Wherever possible, the concern will then be discussed with you. From this discussion, a decision will be made as to whether further action should be taken.

Where it is decided further action is necessary, this may be to seek advice or make a referral to children's social care, the designated social worker or, if appropriate, the police. Confidentiality will be maintained as far as possible. However, the degree of confidentiality will be governed by the need to protect your child.

All staff in the nursery are aware of their responsibilities regarding safeguarding children and receive regular training in safeguarding. To ensure that our staff are suitable to care for your child, they all undergo disclosure and barring service checks prior to being allowed unsupervised access to the children. In addition, no member of staff is permitted to commence employment until two satisfactory written references have been obtained.

Nursery Contract

Please ensure that you have fully read and understood the terms and conditions of your nursery contract. Speak to us if you have any questions. The terms and conditions are not negotiable, and we would draw your attention to the following key points:

- Fees - We invoice monthly on the first of the month for the month ahead. Payments are due by the 8th. You will be charged for each session that you have booked, regardless of whether your child attends. Refunds or replacement sessions cannot be given for unattended sessions and booked sessions cannot be swapped for alternative sessions. The nursery is closed on all bank holidays and fees will be charged as normal for these days. We are also closed for up to 5 working days between Christmas and New Year when no fees are payable.
- Fees are also payable if the nursery is closed for any event beyond our reasonable control,

including, but not limited to, lack of essential services or weather conditions.

- One month's written notice is required to cancel your child's nursery place or reduce sessions. If insufficient notice is given, you will be liable to pay fees in lieu of notice.

Extra Sessions

Please note that Hummingbirds will always try our best to book extra sessions as and when you may require them. This will only be possible if there is a free space and staffing ratios allow. Unfortunately, we are not able to swap sessions.

Absences

Parents are asked to contact Nursery via Blossom instant message if your child is going to be absent including holidays, lateness and sickness. Please refer to your contract for further details about charges during periods of your child's absence and note that full fees are due if your child is absent.

Late Collection of a Child

At the end of day both children and staff are tired and everyone is looking forward to going home. At 6pm we will not be able to have a detailed discussion at handover so please ensure you arrive in time for the collection process. If you are going to be late collecting your child, please let us know as soon as possible. We may make a charge of £5 for every 15 minutes you are late.

If you do not collect your child by the normal closing time, two members of staff will remain with your child. After thirty minutes, if we have been unable to contact you or any of the authorised persons named in your nursery contact, the nursery manager and/or the senior manager will assess the situation and contact social services.

Tax Free Childcare

Fees may be partly/fully paid using Tax Free Childcare, whereby the government will contribute £2 for every £8 of childcare costs. This enables you to claim up to £2,000 per annum for each of your children.

To access Tax Free Childcare, please follow these steps:

- Go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk
- Scroll down to the 'Tax-Free Childcare' section and click on 'Apply Now'. This will redirect you to the tax-free childcare page of the gov.uk website where you will be able to apply online and check your eligibility.

Funded Hours for Early Years Education

We accept up to 22 hours per week of Early Years funding as we are open for 51 weeks of the year and the offer is 'stretched' - not just term time. Funding rates and rules do change so please ask us for further information on how to use your allowance.

Compliments and Complaints

At Hummingbirds, we aim to provide a safe, secure and happy environment for children to thrive and develop. We accept that despite our best endeavours, there may be occasions when you feel we have been less than perfect, and we will always adopt a sympathetic but fair approach in dealing with your concerns.

We love to hear when you feel a particular member of the team, or indeed the staff team itself, has performed really well and therefore deserves a little praise.

However, should you have any compliments or concerns regarding the care or any other aspect of the nursery, please in the first instance raise them with a member of our team who will be able to direct you to the senior management in charge.

If you feel your concern or query has not been fully addressed, then please do not hesitate to contact us or write to us at:

Hummingbirds Nursery,
College Farmyard,
Church Lane,
Bramdean,
Hampshire,
SO24 0JS

Tel: 07983 213 871 (this is not manned out of hours)

Email: office@hummingbirdsnursery.co.uk

All written complaints will be acknowledged by return and once a full investigation has been carried out, we will provide you with a detailed response within 28 days.

We trust you will afford us the opportunity to resolve matters. However, if you are not satisfied with our response and/or conclusion, you may of course contact Ofsted on 0300 123 1231.



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