



Footsteps Nursery School

Parents Hand Book v3.0



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Opening hours

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Our website has lots of useful information including terms dates. There is a parent's section where resources and informative articles can be found.

Welcome to Footsteps Nursery School

As you join Footsteps, we would like to extend a big welcome. We want you to feel part of life at Footsteps and able to approach us at any time.

At Footsteps, our priority is to ensure all children are happy and settled, this allows them to develop as individuals. We support and guide them to develop emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually.

At Footsteps children grow in confidence and independence, important skills for school and life.



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Help with Nursery Costs

Funding for 3 and 4 year olds

All 3 and 4 year olds are eligible to receive nursery education funding until they reach compulsory school age. The funding is not means tested. It is payable to children attending a private day nursery, pre-school, children's centre, independent school or a child minder that is registered through Ofsted and included on the local authority's Directory of Providers to receive the funding.

When can my child get funded nursery education?

A child born on or between:	Will become eligible for a free place from:
1 st April and 31 st December	The start of the term beginning on or following 1 st September after the child's third birthday
1 st September and 31 st December	The start of the term beginning on or following 1 st January after the child's third birthday
1 st January and 31 st March	The start of the term beginning on or following 1 st April after the child's third birthday.

Universal offer

Your child is able to claim up to 15 hours each week, over a minimum of 2 days, during school term times (to a maximum of 38 weeks per year). If your child attends for more than 15 hours per week, you will have to pay the difference to your nursery education provider.

Extended Offer

Parents of three and four-year olds will need to meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for an additional 15 hours of childcare, bringing the total to 30 hours free childcare:

- They earn or expect to earn the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum or Living Wage over the coming three months.
- This equates to £120 a week (or c.£6,000 a year) for each parent over 25 years old or £112.80 a week (or c.£5,800 a year) for each parent between 21 and 24 years old.

- This applies whether you are in paid employment, self-employed or on zero hours contract
- The parent (and their partner where applicable) should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
- Where one or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or if they are on statutory sick leave.
- Where one parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work.
- Where a parent is in a 'start-up period' (i.e. they are newly self-employed) they do not need to demonstrate that they meet the income criteria for 12 months.
- If a non-EEA national, the parent must have recourse to public funds.

A parent will not meet the criteria when:

- Either parent has an income of more than £100,000
- Either parent is a non-EEA national and subject to immigration control (and has no recourse to public funds)

What happens if a parent loses eligibility?

- Parents will receive a "grace period" – this means they will be able to keep their childcare for a short period. Once the "grace period" has elapsed, the parent may be entitled to the universal 15 Hour Entitlement.



Policies and Procedures

Family

We use a great app called Family to keep in touch and for you to communicate with us. It is great and has many features. Have a look at this video for a bit more information.

https://help.family.co/en/articles/4915100-parents-welcome-video-guide#h_fa7e1130e9

It is vital that you check your Family app every day and share with us any information that will help us provide the best care for your child.

It's also very important that you use the app regularly to pass on information to us about your child to make sure your keyworker receives the information. Drop off and pick up times can be busy and verbal messages can be forgotten or incorrectly remembered.

Please be aware we check messages from parents on Family first thing in the morning.

If you send messages after 9am that are important and need to be read, please send a brief text alerting us to the fact that we need to read your Family message.

Collection of your child

Please inform us if anyone different will be collecting your child. We also need to know if there is anyone we should not release your child to. We place the safety of the children first and if anyone different comes to collect a child that we have not been informed of we will not release your child to them. Ensure anyone collecting your child has your security password and is aged 18 years or over. We reserve the right to request I.D.

Mobile phone free zones

To ensure the safe guarding of the children in the nursery it is a requirement that parents, carers and visitors do not use their mobile phones when on the nursery premises.

Policies

Footsteps policies are available for you to read and can be found on the nursery website. Anyone who does not have access to the internet can request a paper copy.

Safe guarding

We strive at all times to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm whilst in our care and have safeguarding policies and procedures in place to support this. A copy of our safeguarding policy is included with our policies.

Birthdays

In accordance with our Celebrations Policy we ask that birthday cakes/sweets are not brought to the nursery. The nursery celebrates your child's birthday by lighting candles on a pretend cake for your child to blow out and by singing Happy Birthday. However, if you feel that you would like to further mark the occasion your child could hand out small items such as stickers, pencils or balloons.

Prior injury book.

We need to be informed of injuries which have occurred before children come to the nursery. These may be things from minor cuts, bruises and grazes to major cuts. This information ensures we are fully informed if we notice injuries during a session. Should a child become ill whilst with us we are then fully informed and able to take the correct course of treatment.

In such an instance please let staff know you need to make an entry in our prior injury book when dropping of your child.

Sun protection

On sunny days your child will need sun cream applying before the session starts. If your child attends for a whole day we will apply sun cream (supplied by yourself) half way through the day. We will ask you to give us permission for this via the Family app. More information regarding this can be found in our sun care policy.

General information

Clothing

We access the outside area every day regardless of the weather. Its very important you ensure you child always attends with appropriate outdoor clothing. Wellingtons are required for water play through the whole year and sunhats during the summer.

Please bring your child with a complete change of clothing each session, down to underwear, and leave it in their nursery bag on a peg. Although we do keep spare clothes children prefer their own things and we have a limited supply.

Please ensure children come dressed in clothing suitable for active play and independence. So, things such as difficult belts, buttons and dungarees are not advisable. They will also get messy when they are in nursery so clothing which don't matter when they come home covered in paint and grass stains are necessary.

Finally, we cannot emphasise enough how important it is to name shoes, Wellingtons, coats and clothing as young children can find it very difficult to identify their own things.

Bags

Due to lack of space please bring in your childs spare clothes in a drawstring bag and place an empty "wet bag" inside for any wet clothes if we need to change your child. Both bags can be purchased from the Nursery.

Toys

Please leave children's toys at home and only bring in a toy if it is to help settle a new child or a sleep aid such as a teddy bear.

We do not have the space to store toys from home and they are liable to breakage and loss.

Food and Milk

Snacks

At snack time the children are offered a range of fruit and vegetables and milk and water is offered to drink. Water is always available for children to drink during the session.

Meals

Meals available are early breakfast and a hot cooked lunch, both provide a healthy balanced diet. Your child will only be given an alternative to drinks and food offered in the nursery if they have a diagnosed medical dietary condition or due to religious or cultural beliefs. Our menus can be found in the foyer on the notice board.

We encourage children to be as independent as possible and help them to pour their own drinks, feed themselves and wash up their cup and plate after snack.

Milk for babies

Please provide empty sterilised bottles and a pre-measured out container of milk powder. If you prefer you may rather use liquid formula in a carton. Footsteps will provide cow's milk when your child is ready to move on to it.

Mothers who are breast feeding are welcomed at any time to feed their child. Expressed milk can also be stored at the nursery.

Weaning

Please provide your baby with your own food unless you are happy for them to eat the standard food provided by the nursery.

Learning at Footsteps

Our ethos

At Footsteps we use the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, which is set by the government. This is for children from birth to five years of age. You can purchase your own copy from DFES Publications, PO Box 5050, Sherwood Park, Annesley, Nottingham, NG15 0DJ. It can also be downloaded from the following websites: - www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications and www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

This Ofsted quote from their document Teaching and Play July 2015, is also a good definition for the way children learn at Footsteps.

“Early education is about every aspect of a child’s development. It is about more than imparting knowledge. It is about providing a wide range of experiences and opportunities so that every area of development receives attention. Essential physiological routines, such as being able to recognise and go to the toilet, social and emotional skills needed to form relationships and adapt to next experiences, the building of receptive and expressive vocabulary to understand and communicate effectively and well, as well as characteristics of learning, such as “having a go’ or ‘persevering when faces with a tricky task are all of prime importance.”

The main focus when a child joins us is to ensure they are settled and happy. From this basis we can then look at where they are developmentally and take their learning forward. We build a strong foundation in preparation for the more formal learning that takes place later at school. As a result, you will not see children sitting and filling in worksheets or suddenly being forced to cram in a lot of formal learning before they go up to school. Learning at Footsteps is an on-going process that children enjoy. Children learn more when they are interested and motivated.

The most important thing to remember is that for a child learning in a fun way through play is the best way. This is the basis of our ethos at the nursery. The learning-taking place is set at the child’s ability and pace; interaction and observation from adults, plus the environment and planning, all work together to further the child’s development in all areas.

Key carer system

Our key carer system gives parents a person they can link to and liaise with about their child. They will keep your child's records and oversee their welfare and development. A list of the key carer groups can be found in the foyer on the notice board.

Family

Footsteps Nursery uses our online system Family to observe and record your child's progress. Observations are sent to you as they happen and you will receive daily diary entries at the end of your child's session. Family also allows you to share observations, photos/videos and any news to contribute to your child's records as well.

Two-year-old progress checks

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requires that parents and carers must be supplied with a short, written summary of their child's development in the three prime learning and development areas of the EYFS. These are Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Communication and Language. This is completed when a child is aged between 24-27 months.

School readiness

Between the ages of four and five children leave the secure and familiar environment of their nursery to go to school. This can often feel like a daunting experience and you may worry if your child is ready or how they will cope being in a new environment.

Staff at the nursery liaises with your child's school to help make the transition as easy as possible for both you and your child.

School readiness is defined by the following: -

Children should be

- Prepared to be separated from their parent or main carer.
- Be able to clearly demonstrate their ability to listen and follow age appropriate instructions.
- Should show an interest in a variety of subjects, paying attention to the subject or activity they are taking part in
- Should have enough of a range of vocabulary and language to express their needs, feelings, thoughts or ideas

- Should be able to identify themselves by name, age, and state factors in their life, name family members etc.
- Should be able to interact in an age appropriate way with another child or adult
- Should be able to interact, share and play, taking responsibility for their actions, understanding repercussions for their actions
- Should be able to focus on and also show interest in the work they are undertaking
- Should be able to observe, notice, discuss and ask questions about their environment and experiences
- Should be able to engage with books, have some understanding of words and language
- Should be able to respond to boundary setting
- Should be able to vocalise their needs such as toileting, thirst, hunger illness etc

Promoting positive behaviour

We believe that by managing behaviour we create an environment for children to feel safe and secure, where they can learn to respect themselves, others and their surroundings.

At Footsteps should unwanted behaviour occur staff react sensitively and calmly explaining to the child why this behaviour is unacceptable. If necessary, staff work with parents to support the child finding the reason for the behaviour in order to eliminate it.

At Footsteps, we have a positive approach policy. This involves positive re-enforcement, saying what you want to see. For example, if you want a child to walk instead of saying "don't run you may fall" say "walk and you will stay safe."

Below are the strategies used to promote desirable behaviour.

Strategies

- Use a positive approach, looking for positive behaviour and praise this.
- Provide positive role models for the children.
- Ensure that the children know and respect the goals and boundaries of the nursery
- Remove identified triggers, before the start of a session, such as a single toy which is known to cause disputes.
- Give the children clear information on nursery activities and changes in routines.
- Use the golden rules to address issues that arise.

Golden rules

At Footsteps we have a set of rules known as “The Golden Rules” which were written by both the children and staff. These are introduced to the children during circle time where the children talk about what they mean and how to keep them. You can help by discussing these with your child.

- We are kind
- We use kind hands
- If you are sad tell a grown up
- We use “walking” legs and “indoor voices” inside
- We use walking legs on the decking
- We listen to adults and do as they ask
- To stop someone, hold up your hand and say “stop”
- We look after things



Toilet training

Children are able to control their bladder and bowels when they're physically ready and when they want to be dry and clean. Every child is different, so it's best not to compare your child with others..

When to start toilet training

It helps to remember that you can't force your child to use a toilet or potty. If they're not ready, you won't be able to make them use it. In time they will want to use it – your child won't want to go to school in nappies any more than you would want them to.

In the meantime, the best thing you can do is to encourage the behaviour you want. Most parents start thinking about potty training when their child is around 18 to 24 months old, but there's no perfect time. Do it over a period of time when there are no great disruptions or changes to your child's or your family's routine.

You can try to work out when your child is ready. There are a number of signs that your child is starting to develop bladder control:

- They know when they've got a wet or dirty nappy
- They get to know when they're passing urine and may tell you they're doing it
- The gap between wetting is at least an hour (if it's less, potty training may fail and at the very least will be extremely hard work for you)
- They know when they need to pass urine and may say so in advance

Toilet training is usually fastest if your child is at the last stage before you start the training. If you start earlier, be prepared for a lot of accidents as your child learns.

How to start toilet training

- Leave a potty where your child can see it and can get to know what it's for. If you've got an older child, your younger child may see them using it, which will be a great help. It helps to let your child see you using the toilet and explain what you're doing.
- If your child regularly has a bowel movement at the same time each day, leave their nappy off and suggest that they go in the potty. If your child is even the slightest bit upset by the idea, just put the nappy back on and leave it a few more weeks before trying again.
- As soon as you see that your child knows when they're going to pee, encourage them to use their potty. If your child slips up, just mop it up and wait for next time. It takes a while to get the hang of it. If you don't make a fuss when they have an accident, they won't feel anxious and worried and are more likely to be successful the next time.
- Your child will be delighted when he or she succeeds. A little praise from you will help a lot. It can be quite tricky to get the balance right between giving

praise and making a big deal out of it, which you don't want to do. Don't give sweets as a reward, as that can end up causing more problems. When the time is right, your child will want to use the potty and they will just be happy to get it right.

Toilet training at nursery

Being in the nursery environment is very different from being at home. Your child needs to be exhibiting successful potty training at home before we continue their training at nursery. This will enable us to support them successfully and make the experience a positive one.

Because the nursery is such a busy and stimulating environment, they will probably take them a little longer to be clean and dry at nursery as they may well become distracted and forget to go to the toilet.

Your child will need to be aware of when they need to go to the toilet and go for a period of at least one hour before needing to use the toilet. Taking the child to the toilet more frequently will not support successful potty training; you are just “catching” the child before they have an accident.

To ensure toilet training is a positive experience if your child is having lots of accidents and is not yet at the stage where potty training is sufficiently established we will discuss this with you and put the child in pull ups until they are more ready.



Advice on leaving your child

Starting at nursery can be an anxious time for both you and your child. For some children this is the first time they may have been left in the care of someone other than family. For this reason, we feel that it is vital to ease children gently into nursery life. To achieve this, we have found these steps work well.

Footsteps settling in policy

We want children to feel safe, stimulated and happy in the nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners with the nursery. We aim to make the nursery a welcome place where children settle quickly and easily because consideration has been given to the individual needs and circumstances of children and their families.

We recognise the importance of attachment to the child's wellbeing. Our key carer system allows the child to form the secure attachment necessary for their emotional and physical wellbeing.

Before a child starts to attend the nursery, we use a variety of ways to provide his/her parents with information about the setting. These include written information (including our prospectus and policies) and information about nursery activities. We allocate a key carer to each child and his/her family, before she/he starts to attend; the key carer welcomes and looks after the child and his/her parents.

The steps below detail the procedure we use to help children to settle in to the nursery. These procedures are flexible and depend on individuals. A plan of action for settling individual children will be discussed at the play session with your key carer.

Footsteps Settling in Strategy

Play Session

This session allows you and your child to spend time together exploring the nursery and getting used to it. Your key carer will talk to you to discuss settling in and make sure everything is in place for your start.

During this session You and your child engage in activities and your key worker will also become involved. This allows the child to become used to them and allow you to gradually withdraw and take a back seat as your child becomes settled.

Session One Onwards

If work and commitments allow we recommend very short sessions initially. Ideally start with leaving your child for an hour then returning and taking them home. Depending on how well this works build on this gradually increasing the time your child is left. Ideally you will return each time to a happy child, by building on this gradually your child will have a happier experience as they settle rather than leaving them for a long time and they become upset, its better to leave the nursery with a happy child who is looking forward to returning. Discuss this with your child's keyworker who will advise you on how your child is progressing and the best strategy for your child.

Working closely with your key worker and following this process of gradually steps and returning whilst your child is happy and taking them home happy makes for a much more successful process in the long run.

Helpful tips for settling

- Some children feel more secure if they are allowed to bring a "little piece of home" with them. This could be a favourite cuddly toy or a blanket etc. Please make sure that all items are clearly named.
- It is important that you inform us of anything which may affect your child whilst they are in our care. A disturbed night might mean that your child could be tired or that a family celebration may make them excitable.
- Always demonstrate a positive attitude when talking about the nursery with your child. If you are anxious and nervous your child will be too.
- When finally, able to leave your child, it is best to say goodbye and go straight away. Prolonged goodbyes are harder in the long run. Your key carer will work closely with you and if they feel your child is unduly upset, they will ask you to come back earlier.

Illness and absence

Illness	Minimum Period of Exclusion
Diarrhoea and vomiting	48 hours after last episode, child eating again and if well
Whooping Cough	48 hours exclusion after antibiotic treatment starts and if well
Intestinal worms	One day for treatment
Conjunctivitis	Exclusion until 24 hours clear period after symptoms have ceased. Nursery will not administer medication.
Verruca's	No exclusion, verruca's must be covered
Impetigo	48 hours after starting antibiotics and until lesions are crusted or healed
Chicken pox	Five days from onset of rash, all lesions crusted over and if well
Hand, foot and mouth	Exclusion 5 ull days after onset of rash and if well
German Measles	Five days from onset of rash and if well
Mumps	Five days after onset of swelling and clinically if well
Slapped cheek	No exclusion if clinically if well
Tonsillitis	Exclude for 48 hours after antibiotics have started and if well
Scarlet fever	24 hours after antibiotic treatment starts and clinically if well

If your child is unwell please keep them at home. In the case of a communicable illness they should be kept at home until the infection has cleared and they are completely well and able to take part in all nursery activities. The nursery also needs to be informed of the nature of the illness at the earliest opportunity.

Please be aware that if you are giving your child medicine for pain relief or fever or because your child is generally unwell then your child needs to be kept at home until they are completely better.

When children come to Footsteps, they must be well enough to access both the indoor and outdoor environment. If you feel that your child shouldn't be outside then you need to keep them at home until they are fully better.

Raised Temperature

NHS guidelines state "a temperature of 37.5 is classified as a fever in children." Therefore, it is the policy of the nursery, in the interests of the children, to send home any child with a temperature of 37.5 or above.

NHS guidelines also state "Some people think that teething causes other symptoms, such as diarrhoea and fever, but there's no evidence to support this." Therefore children with temperatures or diarrhoea need to be kept at home.

Accidents

We make every effort to ensure that child is safe whilst at Footsteps but if your child does have an accident a form will be sent to you via your Family app

If child requires medical intervention or suffers a significant head injury then you will be contacted immediately.