



Nursery Information for Parents



2017- 2018

Welcome to our Nursery

Dear Parents and Carers,

This booklet has been written to give you some information about our Nursery so that you and your child can get the most out of your time with us. We are aware that there is a lot of new information for you to absorb; you should find everything you need in this pack. If you require any further information, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

In our Nursery we aim to help the children develop physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and creatively. We believe that the main way in which children grow in these areas is through play and so we aim to provide an environment that encourages children in their play, encourages independence and facilitates their learning.

We really want the time that your child spends with us to be a positive, stimulating and enjoyable experience. We aim for them to grow in confidence and independence as they begin to learn new skills and develop socially and emotionally.

● Communication

We can provide the best Nursery experience for your child if there is good communication between home and school.

Home/School Liaison Book

Every child will be given a small book which is one way of communicating between home and school. The book should be sent to and from home each session in your child's book bag. Please write anything that you feel your child's Key Worker would benefit from knowing, for example, if your child has not slept well or they are going home with a different adult. There is a designated space in the Nursery classroom where you can put the book in if you have written a message. Once we have read it we will return it your child's book bag.

Session Times:

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Morning session	8.45 am - 11.45 am
Lunchtime (in the Community Room)	11:45 am - 12:15 pm
Afternoon session	12.15 pm - 3.15 pm

● About our Nursery

● Lunchtime

The children eat lunch from 11:45 am-12:15pm in the Community Room which is situated opposite the school office. If your child is joining us for the lunchtime session please take them directly to the Community Room. If you have opted for your child to stay at school for lunchtime and bring in a packed lunch, there will be a charge of £2 per day payable to help cover staffing costs. This must be paid weekly at the school office or half termly – cheques made payable to St Matthew's Primary School, please.

● Attendance:

The school is keen to encourage the habits of good attendance and good punctuality right from when the children start in Nursery. Please endeavour to bring and collect your child on time. Children who arrive after the start of the session often find it harder to settle. Likewise, at the end of the session it is important that children are collected on time so that they don't become anxious when the other children have left. If the gate to Nursery is closed please report to the office to sign your child in.

It is important that you let your child's Key Worker or the school office know if there are any changes to your collection arrangements. We will not hand over children to adults unless we have been informed of who they are going home with. Furthermore, if your child is absent please inform the school as soon as possible. You can contact the school on:

Contact Details:

St Matthew's Primary School

19 Norfolk Street,

Cambridge CB1 2LD

Telephone: 01223 568838

Fax: 01223 568839

E-mail: office@stmatthews.cambs.sch.uk

● Key Workers

Once your child has been given a place in our Nursery we will assign them to a Key Worker. The role of the Key Worker is to build up a safe and secure relationship with your child to ensure that they can develop both socially and academically in our Nursery. If you have any concerns about your child please speak to your child's Key Worker. It is often possible to see them very briefly at the beginning or end of the Nursery session but do make an appointment to be sure that they are available if you need more than a few minutes.

One of the benefits of our Nursery is that we have a fully qualified teacher working with the children. In addition to this we have two very experienced Nursery Nurses. All Key Workers plan together. The planning is based on 'Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage.' This document underpins all the learning that occurs in our Nursery by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children's development in all areas of learning but with a key focus on the Prime Areas. These are explained in more detail later in the booklet.

● Session Content

During the sessions the children have access to a variety of learning opportunities encompassing The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum through first hand and direct experiences. The Nursery operates a 'free flow' system with the children. The children select from carefully structured independent and adult led activities both indoors and in our garden. The children are encouraged to move purposefully and freely between these areas and they also have access to our bicycle track.

During the session, the children participate in a Key Worker circle time. This is when they gather together to sing, have a story, play maths or language games or discuss something related to our theme. At the end of each session children help to tidy up and then join together as a whole class for a range of activities including singing, finger rhymes and stories to finish the session.

Settling in

- **Individual Home Visits:**

This is a chance for you and your child to meet with their Key Worker and the class teacher in your home environment. The visit will last for approximately 15- 20 minutes and provides an opportunity for you and your child to ask any questions. Furthermore, it is a great opportunity for us to get to know your child on an individual basis. The visits are optional but highly encouraged. There will be a sign-up sheet available at the 'Meet and Greet' session, alternatively you can contact the school office to arrange a visit. Please note, you will **not** be signed up automatically for a home visit. If you have any questions regarding these and would like to ensure you do receive a visit please make sure you have spoken to your child's Key Worker or contact the school office to arrange a visit. If you would prefer to have a meeting at school then please talk to a member of the Nursery team to arrange a convenient time.

- **'All About Me' book:**

Your child will be given an 'All About Me' book. This is an important book that we ask parents/carers to fill in. The information you provide will help us ensure that we are supporting your child at Nursery. Please fill this in and return it to your child's Key Worker either at the home visit or once your child has started with us.

- **Your child's first session:**

Our Nursery class is your child's introduction to school life so we really want to make their start as smooth as possible. On their first day, children stay for just one hour. This can either be with a parent or carer, or if you feel your child is able to settle independently they may stay by themselves. If you do choose for your child to stay by themselves please ensure that you are able to be contacted by the school in the event of your child becoming unsettled during the session.

If both you and your child's Key Worker feel that your child has settled well during their first session, they are allowed to start their following session full time on their own. However, every child is unique and it may take some children longer to settle at Nursery. If this happens, your child will be invited for another one hour visit with a parent/carers and then the sessions will be gradually increased and the level of parental involvement reduced. Our transition process is flexible to suit the needs of your child. If you have any concerns or queries about your child settling in please talk to your child's Key Worker either at the home visit or once your child has started Nursery.

● **Contact Details and Medical Information:**

Please ensure that you have completed the contact details for your child and returned them to the school office as soon as possible. If any contact information changes throughout the year please ensure that you update the office immediately.

If your child has any medical requirements that we need to be aware of please make sure you have discussed these with your child's Key Worker as well writing all the relevant information on the contact forms.

We prefer not to administer prescribed medicines to children in Nursery. However, if it is essential, please inform your child's Key Worker **and** the school office who will give you a permission form to sign. Prescribed medicines will only be administered by nominated staff. The nominated staff will supervise the taking of medicine, when possible, provided that:

- the medicine has been prescribed by a doctor
- full written instructions are enclosed with the medicine
- the medicine is clearly labelled with the child's name.

All tablets and medicines must be handed in at the school office and will be kept there.

The only sure way of guaranteeing that medicine is administered is for parents to come into Nursery and give it to the child themselves. The school will make its best effort but cannot be held responsible if medicines are not administered.

● **Illness and Absence:**

If your child is absent from Nursery, please send a brief note to explain the absence, telephone the school office (01223 568838) or send an email as soon as possible office@stmatthews.cambs.sch.uk

If you are wishing to take your child out of Nursery during term, an application must be made in advance. Please collect the form from the office. Please note, if your child joins the Reception class, St Matthew's School will not grant leave of absence during term-time unless there is an exceptional circumstance.

● **Returning to Nursery after Illness:**

Please do not send your child back to Nursery until they are fit and well. Too often we see children return too early and then they suffer a relapse. Children who have been vomiting or have had diarrhoea should not return to Nursery until they are completely better. The chance of them passing the infection on to other children is extremely high. They should stay off Nursery for **48 hours** after the symptoms have cleared up and are well enough to attend school.

Supporting your child at Nursery

What will my child need at Nursery?

- **Clothes** - Please don't dress your child in their best clothes - Nursery can get messy! We particularly enjoy gardening, painting and spending time in our mud kitchen.
- **Easy to fasten clothes** - Please be sure that your child is dressed in clothes that allow him or her to be independent both indoors and outdoors. We want the children to be as independent as possible so please think carefully about buckles, buttons and laces.
- **Clearly Labelled Clothes** – Please clearly name **all** items of clothing, including hats, scarves and gloves.
- **Spare Clothes** – Please leave a spare pair of clothes on your child's peg. We do have spare clothes should an accident happen at Nursery. However, it is easier if the children have spare clothes on their peg. If your child does borrow any of the Nursery clothes please wash them and send them back in as soon as possible.
- **Water bottles** – Your child should bring a water bottle into Nursery. Please ensure this is clearly named and place in the water bottle box. Juice and squash are not permitted in their water bottles, although it is fine to have juice in their lunch boxes.
- **Toilet Training** – If your child is not yet fully toilet trained please speak to your child's Key Worker. We can support both you and your child with this. If your child is using pull-ups/ nappies, please send in a pack which we can use at Nursery.
- **Wellington Boots and Rain Coats** - Outdoors is an extension of the indoor classroom and will be accessed on a daily basis by the children in all weathers. Please ensure that they have a pair of named wellington boots and ideally an all in one rain suit to store at Nursery. It would be beneficial if you could leave them at Nursery as we cannot predict the weather. However, please feel free to take them home when they are needed.
- **Punctuality & Communication** - Please inform us if someone other than the regular parent/carer is coming to collect the child. We will not allow them to leave with someone we don't know or haven't been told about. Your child must always be brought and collected by an adult. Please collect your child and drop them off on time.



Key Nursery Information

Love of Books: From the moment your child starts in our Nursery s/he will be encouraged to develop a love of books. The staff plan for the development of your child's spoken language in many ways – through drama, singing, telling stories and rhymes. There is a selection of books available from the Nursery which your child may borrow. Once you have shared the books with your child, it will be up to you and your child to change the books to read at home.

Children's Work: The children are encouraged to place their artwork into their Key Worker Box until the end of each session. The children will then be encouraged to check through this box so they can take their work home.

Book bags: These are given to your child when they start in Nursery. You can use them to put any books you may have borrowed as well as keeping their home-school liaison book inside.

Fruit and milk: We have a snack table in the classroom where the children can access fruit, milk and water all day.

Sun protection: On sunny days, particularly at the start and end of the school year, please put sun cream on your child and send in a hat to wear outside. Please ensure that all clothing is named. Please note that we cannot put sun cream on your child unless we have been given written permission.

Birthdays and Celebrations: We love to celebrate special occasions in Nursery. If you wish to send in something we would appreciate individual buns or cakes that can be easily cut up rather than sweets. We hope you will be able to share the celebrations with us.

Contact Information: Please ensure that the school office has your child's up to date contact information. This includes all telephone numbers and any medical conditions or allergies that your child may have. If your child needs any medication to be administered you will need to provide us with a protocol from your GP and medication for the medical condition. We will also need you to sign a consent form which you can get from the school office.



St Matthew's Term Dates 2017 – 2018

Autumn Term 2017

Monday 4 th September, 2017	Training Day - school closed
Tuesday 5 th September, 2017	Training Day - school closed
Wednesday 6 th September, 2017	School begins for children in Years 1 to 6 (note staggered entry procedures for Nursery and Reception Children)
Half Term Holiday School closed – Monday 23rd October – Friday 27th October, 2017	
Tuesday 19 th December, 2017	Last Day of Autumn Term

Spring Term 2018

Wednesday, 3 rd January, 2018	Training Day - school closed
Thursday, 4 th January, 2018	School begins for children
Half Term Holiday School Closed - Monday 12th February to Friday 16th February, 2018	
Thursday 29 th March, 2018	Last Day of Spring Term

Summer Term 2018

Monday, 16 th April, 2018	Training Day - school closed
Tuesday, 17 th April, 2018	School begins for children
Monday 7 th May, 2018	School closed
Half Term Holiday School closed – Monday 28th May – Friday 1st June, 2018	
Monday 4 th June, 2018	Training Day - School closed
Tuesday 5 th June, 2018	School begins for children
Tuesday 24 th July 2018	Last day of school year

• Nursery Curriculum

We aim to provide a broad, balanced, stimulating and supportive environment in which each child can grow and develop. One of our goals for the children is to help them become as independent as possible. This means giving them lots of opportunities to make choices, including freedom to access the resources they would like and the freedom to play inside and outside.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum which is very holistic. It has seven areas of learning and we plan our activities carefully in order to meet the needs of children within this framework. There are three 'Prime Areas' and four 'Specific Areas'. The Prime Areas focus on the relationships, experiences, communication and the children's physical development. These are the foundations for children's development. These then run through and support the learning in the Specific Areas. The Specific Areas focus on supporting the children's development, skills and knowledge. The areas of learning are as follows:

Prime Areas

○ **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This area covers Self-Confidence and Self-Awareness, Managing Feelings and Behaviour and Making Relationships:

- Promoting a positive disposition to learning
- Building self confidence and self esteem
- Making relationships, developing a sense of community and learning how to function in a group outside of their family
- Developing behaviour and self control and increasing independence

○ **Communication and Language**

This area covers Listening and Attention, Speaking and Understanding.

- We learn to communicate with others in a range of ways by listening to others and taking turns speaking.
- We develop a wider vocabulary and descriptive language
- We learn to listen attentively to stories, songs and rhymes and respond to what we hear
- We learn to follow instructions and answer questions
- We learn to communicate our own ideas and stories

○ **Physical Development**

This area covers Moving and Handling and Health and Self-Care:

- We enjoy climbing outside on the apparatus and during our weekly movement session
- We use PE equipment like hoops, balls and beanbags to play games
- We develop our fine motor skills by learning to tear, cut, sew, and manipulate objects
- We handle tools and equipment effectively, including pencils and pens
- We learn the importance of physical exercise and a healthy diet and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe
- We learn to manage our own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently

Young children's physical development is inseparable from all other aspects of development because they learn through being active and interactive.

Specific Areas

○ Literacy

Reading and writing - We help children take the first steps towards reading and writing. We aim to foster an enjoyment of books by sharing them with the children and making them readily available, as well as making other examples of writing available in the classroom, such as labels, signs and lists. We give children opportunity to "write" using lines, symbols, pictures and letters in such contexts as the home corner and the playground. We also introduce the children to the Letters and Sounds scheme to trigger an interest in the sounds letters make.

○ Mathematics

This area covers helping the children to grow in confidence and competence in using key skills in maths. This includes counting, sorting, matching, seeking patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures. This comes through stories, songs, games and imaginative play, so that children can enjoy using and experimenting with numbers.

○ Understanding the World

In this area of learning children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This includes helping children develop the skills of observing, predicting, exploring, investigating, interpreting, discussing, decision-making and using tools and materials appropriately. Through this they learn about themselves, other people and the broader world around them. It provides a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.

○ Expressive Arts and Design

This focuses on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and express ideas and feelings in creative ways through art, music and movement. We use paint, dough, singing, material and many other media to give the children opportunity to develop creatively.

Creative development is fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. This area of learning includes art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play.



What if my child needs extra support at Nursery?

We have lots of support on offer for your child to both help them with their learning and also any social or emotional support they may need throughout their time in our Nursery. Some of the support on offer is outlined below:

- We have excellent links with the Local Children's Centre, Romsey Mill. The Children's Centre provides information, advice and support to parents of children under five. They promote well-being, healthy living and effective parenting, and encourage children's development in their early years. They offer this through :
 - one-to-one support for families
 - new baby and toddler groups and activities
 - drop-in sessions and advice for parents
 - links with Jobcentre Plus and health services
 - information on childcare and early years provision.

You can contact Romsey Mill Children's Centre on 01223 566102, or email for more information. Please fill out the Children's Centre card in your pack and return it to your child's Key Worker.

- If you feel your child has any SEND (Special Educational Needs) please speak to your child's Key Worker who will put you in contact with our SENCo, Zoe Shuler.
- If you are worried about your child's Speech and Language please ask your child's Key Worker for details about the Romsey Mill Speech and Language Drop in clinic.
- If your child has English as an Additional Language and your child's Key Worker feels your child needs extra support our EAL specialist Lina is able to offer support in class.
- Our Social Emotional Support worker Julie Mark is able to offer children support if your child is struggling to manage their feelings or having social difficulties either in school or at home.
- Our Early Intervention Family Worker Zoe Dennis is able to offer support and advice to parents when necessary. You contact her through your class teacher or directly on 01223 699867, 07824 569789 or email her at zoe.dennis@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Ways you can help at home

Things you can do before your child starts Nursery:

- It is a good idea to allow other family or friends look after your child so that they get used to having time away from you.
- Be open and honest with your child and talk to them about where they are going, what they might do and who is picking them up.
- Please inform us before the beginning of term what your child likes to be called to ensure that we can label their storage trays and pegs correctly.
- Fill out all the contact information forms and hand them back to the office including all medical information as soon as possible.
- If your child has not had one, take them for an eye test and hearing test.
- Sign up for a home visit if you would like one.
- Talk positively about Nursery to your child.
- Encourage independence - We are there to support your child with toileting, however it is a good idea to encourage your child to try and do things independently, for example you might want to ask your child to have a go at taking their trousers down on their own before they go to the toilet.

The Importance of Play

Play is a child's way of learning. It is the most natural way in which children make sense of the world around them, develop their skills and understanding and make sense of themselves and others.

During each session your child will have opportunities to play with sand, water, puzzles, constructional toys, paints, scissors and glue. Imaginative role-play, music, movement and dance are also highly valued nursery activities. Sometimes the children play on their own, sometimes alongside other children and at other times with their friends.

Play gives children opportunity to learn through first hand experiences, for example to discover capacity through pouring liquid from jug to jug in the water tray. They can explore their environment, be creative and experiment to see how things work.

It is vital that children have chance to direct their own play, without constant guidance from adults. We need to give them time and space to immerse themselves in their play, whether it is quiet and reflective play or more boisterous and energetic.

Our role as adults is to provide an environment that stimulates children's play and to give your child the opportunity to explore and talk about what they are doing. We must support and scaffold their play. We can do this by observing and recognising what the child is attempting to do in their play and interact to help them progress by suggesting, commenting, questioning and playing with the child.

"Play that is well planned and pleasurable helps children to think, to increase their understanding and to improve their language competence. It allows children to be creative, to explore and to test their own conclusions."

HMI - "The Education of Children Under Five"

We do hope that you have found this booklet useful. If you have any other queries or questions then please do not hesitate to come and talk to us.

The Nursery Team

