



Children First

Welcome to Dovecote Nursery 2025-26



Take some time to visit our nursery. We are always happy to show you around and answer any questions that you have. We hope you choose Dovecote Nursery for your child.

Dovecote Early Years Policy

“To rise above the ordinary and give our pupils wings”

Intent in the EYFS

At Dovecote our intention is to provide the best start to the children's education. They are at the centre of everything we do and we want the best possible outcomes for each individual child so that:

- The children are safe, happy, feel valued and special. Each child, their individuality and what makes them unique is celebrated by all adults and children to build respect, relationships and understanding.
- The children develop resilience, confidence, independence, resourcefulness, self-motivation and an ability to problem solve, so that they can interact with the world around them and are prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The children are excited to come to school, their learning is enjoyable, builds upon curiosity and their interests.
- Children are confident, have a good sense of self, build strong friendships and are kind.

We strive:

- To support and challenge the children during their learning, through high quality interactions, questioning, modelling and encouraging the children to produce work they are proud of.
- To be innovative and teach in ways which stimulate and engage the children through well thought out independent play activities as well as structured, taught sessions.
- Provide a learning environment that is inviting, well resourced, accessible to all, promotes exploration and independence.
- To put high value on the Prime areas of learning to equip the children with transferrable life skills and learning strategies to apply into year 1 and beyond.
- To encourage children to consider their own choices and responsibilities in all that they do, building empathy, self-regulation and forethought into their actions and behaviour.
- To set aspirational targets for our children to achieve by the end of Reception, building on their nursery experience and promoting a smooth transition into Year 1.

Implementation in the EYFS: In order to achieve our intentions we provide:

- High quality indoor and outdoor learning experiences that are well resourced. Learning in different ways, through play, in small groups, from each other, from adults in the wider community, gaining an expanse of experiences, new vocabulary, opening up their world.
- Provide opportunities for revisiting and talking about their learning, to embed knowledge and skills and promote metacognition.
- Apply their vocabulary to play, to interact with friends, build relationships, apply to their writing and increase their ability to read for pleasure.
- A fun, broad and exciting curriculum, that challenges and develops skills, imagination and stimulates children to become life-long learners.
- Opportunities to observe, explore, question, enquire, reflect, adapt, build vocabulary and transferable learning skills.
- A story rich environment that develops oracy and extends the children's vocabulary, to grow an understanding of the world they live in, enable their deeper thinking and confidence to question, share thinking and explore.
- A strong partnership with families to offer the best start to their learning at home and at school.

Impact in the EYFS

- Children who are internally motivated and excited to learn, take ownership of their learning, have enquiring minds and a thirst for knowledge.
- Independent learners who are resilient, reflective, independent and resourceful.
- For all children to make good progress and feel a sense of achievement regardless of individual starting points.
- Children who have a good emotional awareness, can self-regulate, play cooperatively, are kind and considerate to others and have good emotional wellbeing.
- Children who can express themselves using a broad vocabulary, use their imagination in their play and their writing, tell stories and hold conversations.
- Children who play in a purposeful way, enjoy to be challenged, are willing to take risks, try new things, persevere and reflect on their learning.
- Children who understand how to care for themselves, can take care of their own belongings, the environment and can make informed choices about their health and wellbeing.
- Children who develop passions and have aspirations for their future.

Thank you for applying to Dovecote Nursery!

We are looking forward to having you in our nursery. Here is some information to help you to feel ready to start with us.

Session Times and Funding

We offer Morning or Afternoon nursery places, or full time to children who have 30 hours funding.

Morning sessions run 8.45-11.45am

Afternoon sessions run 12.20-3.20pm

30 hours full time places 8.45-3.20pm

Lunch Arrangements:

If your child stays all day there are 2 options for lunch.

Option 1

Healthy Packed lunch from home. Suggestions include:

Sandwich/wrap/crackers/pasta, fruit/veg sticks (please cut grapes in half length-ways), a bar, a yoghurt. Please put in what you know your child will eat whilst also trying to keep it healthy and balanced. We are a **nut-free** school so please do not include any foods that contain nuts.



Option 2

School dinner See the menu for your meal choices. Each day there will be a green, yellow and red option. Yellow is vegetarian and the Red option usually varies between a sandwich, panini, or jacket potato. You can decide each day what you want it to be and let the teacher know on the door.

School dinners need to be paid for in Nursery

Please talk to us about any dietary requirements or allergies and we will be happy to assist.

***Payments for school meals must be made via the Arbor app or parent portal on the website.**



Before your child starts Nursery



We aim to encourage children to be independent in as many ways as possible, therefore it is helpful if your child is able to go to the toilet, flush it and wash their hands on their own. Children should also be encouraged to put their own coat on and hang it up – **as coats are often alike, we recommend that you put your child's name in them.**

Learning Activities in the Nursery

At Dovecote Nursery we plan our learning activities according to the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' curriculum, and provide experiences in the seven areas of learning. All our planned activities are taught through fun, play-based activities and we try hard to tailor things to tap into the children's interests so that they will be highly motivated to engage with what we offer.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We support the transition from home into nursery and provide opportunities for each child to become a valued member of our school, so that a strong self-image and self-esteem are promoted and others are respected. Children are encouraged to recognise and express their own emotions, develop an understanding of others and build friendships. Children are supported to become independent in managing their personal needs and learn to care for their own bodies.



By the end of Nursery, your child should be able to build positive relationships, share and negotiate peacefully. They should be able to speak about themselves positively, their opinions and set themselves some goals. They should be able to talk about how they are feeling and be able to regulate themselves and demonstrate some impulse control. They should be able to talk about the class rules and follow them.

They should show some understanding that good practices with regard to exercise, eating, sleeping and hygiene can contribute to good health. They should be able to look after their own bodies, including independent toileting and personal hygiene.



Communication and Language

This includes reading and sharing / telling stories, talking with the children and encouraging a wide range of communication and language skills. We provide many opportunities for your child to develop and extend



their speaking and listening skills and their understanding. Collaborating and creating talk friendly spaces, dens and promoting imaginative play.

By the end of Nursery, your child should be able to speak in full sentences and link thoughts using a variety of conjunctions, such as 'and,' 'or,' and 'because'.

They should be able to introduce a story line in their play and use language imaginatively to recreate roles and scenarios. They should be beginning to understand 'why' and 'how' questions, respond to two- part instructions and explain clearly for others. When approaching age-related activities, they should be able to maintain attention and concentration. They should be using new vocabulary that they have heard in stories in their play.

Physical Development

We aim to help your child improve their gross motor skills, co-ordination, strength, balance and agility. We support the



children to use a range of equipment, including climbing frames. The children will learn to link movements with ease, move safely and with grace. We help the children to develop their fine motor skills and their ability to use tools and equipment, including scissors, paint brushes and pencils.



By the end of Nursery, your child should be able to write some recognisable letters from their name and begin to form some other letters holding their pencil in a tripod grip. They should be able to handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely



and with increasing control e.g. using playdough tools and scissors with one hand. When approaching the more physical activities, they should be able to negotiate space and travel confidently and skilfully around, under and over climbing equipment.



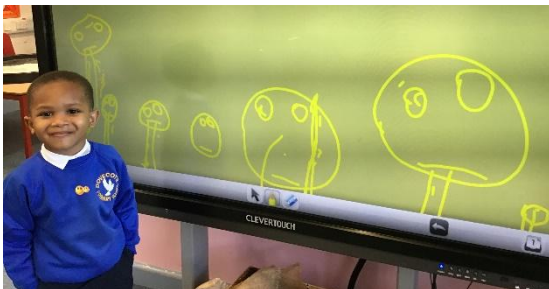
under and over climbing equipment.



Your child should be able to put their coat on independently and take responsibility for staying dry and clean during the day. For example putting an apron on for creative and wet activities. When handling equipment, they should show an understanding of safety and practice some appropriate safety measures without direct supervision, such as transporting large blocks.

Literacy

This includes development of early reading comprehension skills; sharing and talking about stories, as well as word reading and mark-making skills. Your children will develop their awareness of print, phonics, letter recognition and formation and foster a love for books. We teach the children to distinguish between sounds, recognise rhyme and alliteration. When they are ready we begin to introduce them to 'Read Write Inc' (RWI) phonics, introducing letter sounds and shapes along-side pictures. We teach the children to write their name using a capital letter for the first letter. We have lots of fun learning, retelling and comparing stories. See the parent section on the website for a link to phonics information.



By the end of Nursery your child should be able to read their name and familiar logos in the environment. They should be beginning to identify the initial sound in a word and begin to match it to a letter shape. They should be able to orally-blend

words. They should also be able to recognise when words rhyme and continue a rhyming string. They should be able to draw recognisable pictures and label them using writing-like marks and some letter shapes that they know. Some children might be beginning to read and write some simple CVC words (such as 'm-a-t'). Most importantly, they should have a love of stories and choose to look at books often. Reading is central to developing an understanding of the world, themselves and other people. It is key to developing a broad vocabulary and good imagination. We are sure you will support this by reading to your child daily at home.



Mathematical Development

We provide your child with a range of fun practical activities through which they will develop and apply their understanding of many mathematical concepts. This will help them to form a sound basis for later mathematics. We will help the children to apply their maths knowledge in the learning environment. We work on mastering numbers to 5.



By the end of Nursery, your child should be beginning to use the

vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting. They should be able to find one more and one less from a group of up to 5 objects. They should be able to accurately count a small group of objects and match it to the correct numeral and begin to estimate how many objects they can see. They should be able to subatise up to three items. Their interest in number problems should also be increasing and they may create their own practical problems.



Understanding of the World

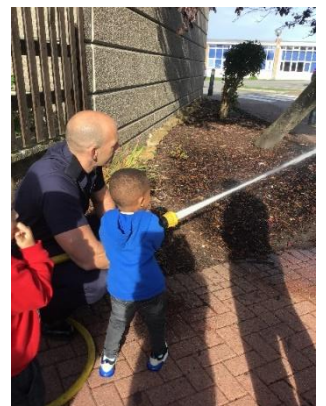
We help the children to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through practical activities, to help them make sense of the world. We encourage them to be curious, to ask questions and find things out for themselves; noticing similarities, patterns, changes and differences. This area of learning is *divided up into 'Past and Present', 'People, Culture and Communities' and 'The Natural World'*.



By the end of Nursery, your child should have an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time. They should be able to talk about their observations of the world, including plants,

animals and other natural objects and start to recognise similarities, differences, patterns and change in the environment.

They should know some of the things that make them unique and should be able to talk about some of the similarities and differences in relation to friends and family. They should be able to recognise and talk about special times with family and friends. They should have an awareness of occupations and the people who help us in the world, such as firefighters.



Expressive Arts and Design

We offer the children a wide variety of creative experiences on both a small and large scale to help them develop their own creativity by responding to things



through art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. We also model and demonstrate key skills, which children need in order to be able to engage with creative activities. We will also learn and perform poems and stories.



By the end of Nursery, your child should be able to use a variety of materials effectively when constructing e.g. a box model. They should be able to use simple tools and



techniques competently and appropriately in order to achieve a planned effect. They should have built a repertoire of songs and dances and be able to tap out simple repeated rhythms. Your child should also be able to play imaginatively with other children engaged in the same theme, using props to support their role-play.



Assessments

During your child's time with us in the Nursery we continually keep a check on progress by observing their play. We refer to a document provided by the government called 'Development Matters' and use it as guidance on if the children are working at the expected level for their age. This document is available on the school website. We will take photos, observe and write down direct speech from your child. Their observations collate and we are able to create a clear picture of your child's holistic development and what their next steps are. We will collect some of their work, photos and direct speech to show progress and inform our planning and teaching. This will be shared with you at parent meetings and sent home at the end of the year.

If you need any further information about the Nursery curriculum, please speak to a member of staff. We are always happy to speak about your child's development.

Clothing

Activities can often be '**messy**' so it is advisable to dress your child in clothes that are easily washable! School uniform is ideal for this, so that your own clothes are not spoilt. We encourage your child to wear an apron, but they sometimes forget. Please be assured that lots of learning has taken place in the process of becoming wet or dirty.

We also go outside every day, whatever the weather so please consider this when getting dressed in the morning.



Trousers, such as jogging bottoms or elasticated waist trousers, are ideal. Jeans and dungarees are not suitable, as they can be difficult for small fingers to undo in a rush when toileting! Footwear should be well fitting, low heeled and comfortable with soles that are suitable for climbing, e.g. trainers or school shoes or similar, but please not fashion shoes or clogs. Please avoid shoelaces, in a large setting such as ours, doing shoes laces repeatedly, wastes precious learning time! Velcro is ideal for independence.

School Uniform



School Uniform is available to purchase from the main school office or online at '[just schoolwear.co.uk](http://justschoolwear.co.uk)'. Please ensure that all items clothing are **named**. We try our best to keep items safe, but with the best intentions, items still become lost. Named items are much more likely to be returned to you safely.

For safety and to avoid disappointments over loss or damage, jewellery **should not** be worn – thank you. Please see the website for school uniform information.

Summer sun

On the rare occasions when we have a summer, please send your child to the Nursery in clothing that will help to protect them –i.e. short-sleeved T-shirts and not bare shoulders. Also could you please apply sun cream and provide a named sun hat. If your child has particularly fair skin you may wish to bring a named sun cream container for a member of staff to apply.



Milk and Fruit

Milk is free for all children under five years of age. Your child will also be offered a piece of fruit each day, which is also free of charge.



We sometimes provide additional snacks for the children, do food tasting and bake cakes, bread etc. as part of the curriculum. Please ensure school is aware of any allergies.

How you can help us

Absences – Please inform us by telephone if your child is absent for any reason. If your child has a sickness bug or has diarrhoea, please keep him/her at home for at least **48** hrs after the last bout of illness; this helps to stop the spread of infection. We follow the NHS guidance for contagious infections. The school number is **0115 9152953**. You have the option to leave a message. If we haven't heard from you we will contact you.



Head lice – This can sometimes be a problem in all schools, so it is **very** important that you check your child's hair regularly to reduce the spread. We recommend tying long hair up.

Attendance at the Nursery – It is very important that your child attends regularly; this enables your child to become familiar with routines, and make new friends as well as ensuring that they do not miss out on any of the activities. Good attendance has a direct link with good learning outcomes and we all want our children to do the best they can in school. Poor attendance may result in your place being offered to someone else on the waiting list.

If for any reason you cannot pick up your child, please let us know as soon as possible. For safeguarding reasons, we need to hear directly from you if it will be someone different. If we have not seen the person before, we will always call you, before allowing your child to leave with them, even if they are a family member.

Please be on time when dropping off children. If you arrive after 8.50am the door will be closed, registers will be completed and you must go through the office to register your child as present. Please collect your child on time at 3.20pm.

Questions

If you have any questions, want to apply or want to visit our nursery, please contact the school office and our Nursery Leader will get back to you.