



Skyswood Nursery Prospectus 2024



Exciting times ahead for you and your child

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Dear Parent/Carer

We are pleased to welcome you and your child to Skyswood Nursery and look forward to working in close co-operation with you in furthering the all-round development of your child. It is hoped that the children will have the opportunity to:

1. Feel happy members of a group in a secure learning environment.
2. Develop a respect for, and a caring attitude towards others and their surroundings.
3. Develop the powers of concentration and the ability to listen to others.
4. Develop independence.
5. Acquire the skills which help them reach and exceed their potential in later years.

The education and care of your child is a joint venture between home and Nursery and we look forward to working with you.

The Skyswood Nursery Team

The Sculptors

I dreamt I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors there.
The clay they used was a young child's mind
And they fashioned it with care.
One was a teacher - the tools she used
Were books, music and art.
One a parent - with a guiding hand
And a gentle loving heart.
Day after day the teacher toiled
With a touch that was deft and sure.
While the parent laboured by her side
And polished and smoothed it o'er.
And when at last their task was done,
They were proud of what they had wrought.
For the things they had moulded into the child
Could neither be sold nor bought.
And each agreed they would have failed
If each had worked alone.
For behind the parent stood the school,
And behind the teacher, the home.

Anonymous



Organisation

The Nursery is a class of Skyswood Primary & Nursery School, having its own access and enclosed play area.

For the academic year 2024/2025, all children born between 1st September 2020 and 31st August 2021 continue to be eligible to receive 15 hours of Nursery education in the form of 5 Nursery sessions of 3 hours each per week.

We offer 'morning only' places for 30 children, Monday to Friday from 9 am to 12 noon each day.

We also offer a Lunch Club from 12 noon – 1 pm each day. A packed lunch and drink need to be provided and a charge of £4.00 per session is payable. The fee is reviewed annually.



Staff

Headteacher	Mr Bob Bridle
Assistant Headteachers	Mrs Caroline Rich/Mrs Lisa Spiller
Nursery Teacher	Mrs Emily Jones BSc PGCE * Key Worker
Early Years Practitioner	Mrs Loraine Orde NVQ 3 * Key Worker
Early Years Practitioner	Mrs Fiona Wilbraham NVQ 3 * Key Worker

Lunch Club Staff

Senior MSA Mrs Fiona Wilbraham *
Senior MSA Mrs Loraine Orde *
MSA Mrs Marina Cocarca

Trained Paediatric First Aider *



Academic Year

Please visit the school website for information on Term Dates.

Key Worker

Each child has a Key Worker. This allows us to spend individual time with each child, our aim being to meet the individual needs and well-being of the children as well as developing a close bond with them.

The role of the Key Worker is to communicate with parents regularly about your child's welfare and individual needs. The Key Worker will work closely with a group of children (colour groups) ensuring they are secure, happy and reaching their full potential. The Nursery teacher will oversee all of the three key worker groups and liaises daily with each Key Worker. The teacher will continue to be available if you need to discuss any matters concerning your child.

Areas of Learning and Development

Research shows that young children learn most effectively through play. The learning in the Nursery is play based and informed by the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS). In the early years there are three prime areas of learning and development and four specific areas:-

PRIME AREAS

Communication and Language

- Listening, attention and understanding
- Speaking

Physical Development

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Self-regulation
- Managing self
- Building relationships

SPECIFIC AREAS

Literacy

- Comprehension
- Word reading
- Writing

Mathematics

- Number
- Numerical Patterns

Understanding the World

- People and communities
- The World
- Technology

Expressive Arts and Design

- Exploring and using media and materials
- Being imaginative



Four Guiding Principles Shape Early Years Practice

A Unique Child

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships

Through positive relationships children learn to be strong and independent.

Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and where there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.

Children Learn and Develop in Different Ways and at Different Rates.

The framework covers the education and care of all children in the early years including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

(Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage DfES 2021)

Assessment and Observation

Our observation and assessment are ongoing. Each child is an individual and we observe and assess to discover their interests and what they are able to do, to enable us to plan their next steps. We share the learning journal with you at parents' evenings and discuss the individual targets for your child. We also have a once a term parent and child journal sharing session where your child can also talk about their achievements. Observations on every child will be emailed weekly via Evidence Me.

We encourage children and their parents to contribute to the learning journal and to share their experiences, initially with their group and building up to the whole class, to enhance their personal development as well as their language and communication skills. During the term we would like to share their holidays, skills they have gained, new pets they have, family who are visiting and places they have visited.



DAILY TIMETABLE WITH APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

Morning	Activity
8:50	Doors Open Self-Registration/ Fine Motor – Busy Fingers Children come into Nursery, self-register, find their peg and hang up their coat and store their book bag.
9:30	Whole Class Carpet Time Children share and celebrate their new skills and learning.
9:35	Small Group Time Welcome and activities based on the EYFS curriculum.
9:45	Child Initiated Learning – “Choosing to Learn” Time Children choose from a wide range of activities both inside and outside Nursery.
11:45	Songs, “Read, write, ink” or Storytime
12:00	Children are called to lunch club or go home
13:00	Lunch club ends – all children go home

What the children do?

We follow a predictable daily routine. This helps the children’s growing awareness of time and sequence as well as providing security (Mummy will be here after story time). The Nursery Team may adapt their routines from time to time on special occasions but the routine is generally organised as above. The room is organised into distinct learning areas and equipment is arranged, labelled and displayed so that the children may learn to make choices, use the materials efficiently and replace them independently.

Self-Registration

The children come in, select their name card which they place on their colour group board to show they are here today and hang up their coat and store their book bag. We work at promoting independence.

Fine Motor Skills

The session starts with a selection of fine motor skills activities such as threading, lacing, drawing, puzzles, tap tap, peg boards etc. These activities develop the children’s fine motor skills in order for them to later hold a pencil correctly and mark make. We welcome parents to stay and engage with their child at this time.

Whole Class Group Time

All the children gather together to complete the daily calendar and celebrate each other’s new skills and learning through sharing experiences from home.

Small Group Time

Welcome - The children move into their Key Worker groups to count their self-registration, which provides the opportunity to check against the count of how many children are here today.

EYFS activities - This is the part of the daily routine, lasting no more than 20 minutes, which covers the seven areas of learning each week to give the children access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Working in small groups (red, blue and green) allows all the children to contribute and participate and is an important time for the Key Worker to observe and assess the children's interests and needs. At the end of group time, each child is able to talk about what he/she would like to do and how they will go about it.

PE – Group Time

Once a week the children have a PE lesson in the school hall. The children do not change their clothes but do remove their shoes and socks. They are able to enjoy the freedom of the space and participate in movement and dance, parachute games, ball games, drama etc.

Child Initiated Learning – “Choosing to Learn” Time

This is the longest single period in the daily routine. During this time children are introduced to new activities. The children are free to choose in any area of the room (for example: reading, writing, construction, malleable, mathematical, small world, listening, musical, knowledge and understanding, creative and technology) or to go outside in any area of the nursery garden.

Outdoor Area

Outdoor learning is using our outside space to deliver the curriculum and extend children's learning. We aim to ensure there is continuous free flow provision allowing the children to move freely between inside and outside environments independently. We therefore request that children are provided with appropriate clothing for all types of weather. This includes a coat, hat, wellington boots and gloves for the cold and wet weather and a sunhat during the warmer weather. Additionally, during the hot weather please do not put your child in strapless, backless tops as they are more vulnerable to get sun burn. Please apply sun cream in the morning before your child comes to Nursery.



There are areas where children can experience the natural world, enjoy imaginative play, build and construct, climb, play music, explore the sand, write and mark make etc.

Snack Time

We sit down together to enjoy our snack and chat with our friends about our day. The children can have a drink of milk (if pre-ordered each term via the school office) or water from their water bottle. There is a snack provided - a piece of fruit or vegetable. The children's water bottles are available throughout the session.

“Read, Write, Ink”, Story, Songs and Finger Rhymes

After Choosing to Learn time, the children help to tidy up inside and outside Nursery.

The children are introduced in a fun and lighthearted way to the “Read, Write, Ink” phonics scheme.

At story time children are able to enjoy a wide range of good quality, developmentally appropriate literature, both fiction and non-fiction, through books, story sacks and storytelling tapes.

The session ends with songs, number rhymes and finger rhymes.

Lunch Club

Skyswood Nursery offers a Lunch Club at a cost of £4 per session (price reviewed annually). A packed lunch including drinks needs to be provided. We ask that the food items included are wrapped in foil or put into a small lidded container which the child can open unaided. All lunchboxes and other containers should be clearly named. Food which is uneaten will be returned in the lunch bag so that you are able to monitor how much your child has eaten.

Nursery Library

We have a large and extensive collection of books in Nursery for the children to borrow one at a time. Library books are loaned on a weekly basis to the children so that these can be shared with parents at home.



Collection

If your child is to be collected by an adult other than the usual parent or carer, parents are asked to discuss the relevant details with a member of the Nursery team. We will not release a child without prior notification. This system means Nursery staff can ensure that children only leave the premises with an authorised person.

Nursery Admissions Policy

To apply for a place, please fill out the nursery admissions form the Skyswood website.

Children are normally admitted as follows:

Those children with birthdays between 1 September and 31 August inclusive will start in September.

If places allow, we may be able to offer children who are 3 years old by 31st December a start date in the January and children who are 3 years old by 31st March, a start date in the April.

School Admissions

During the year of Nursery education, the separate admissions process for a primary school place occurs. This will be explained in the Hertfordshire County Council's admissions brochure. Admission to the Skyswood Nursery class does not give any right or priority to a school place at Skyswood Primary & Nursery School, although we will be pleased if you consider us.



Starting Nursery

Before your child starts Nursery you will be invited to a new Parents' meeting at the school. There you will have the opportunity to learn more about the school and Nursery from the Headteacher Mr Bridle, as well as have the opportunity to meet and talk to the Nursery Team. Parents are encouraged to come and visit the Nursery with their child towards the end of the term before they are due to start.

We also carry out home visits before the children start Nursery. We have found that these have been particularly successful in ensuring a smooth transition for the children starting with us. These visits provide us with the opportunity to get to know the children as well as talk with parents and discuss any questions or concerns.

Children have a staggered entry into Nursery during the first couple of days to allow them the opportunity to explore the Nursery setting. On their first day, the children stay for the whole session so they become familiar with routines from the very beginning.

On the rare occasion that a child experiences settling in difficulties, we work with the parents to plan an individual settling in programme to suit the individual child.

Transferring to Reception

Before admission to primary school, those children who have a school place at Skyswood Primary & Nursery School pay visits to the Reception Class and similar arrangements will be made for the other receiving schools.

During the course of the year, the Nursery children will enjoy interacting with our Reception class children and staff during special events such as outside visitors, the Christmas play and fundraising activities. This direct link to the wider school environment particularly supports the children with their transition into Reception class.

Uniform

Uniform is not compulsory at Nursery but many children choose to wear it. The Skyswood Primary & Nursery School uniform can be purchased from the school suppliers (Stevensons, Victoria Street, St Albans). Second-hand school uniform with a logo can be purchased through the school. Uniforms can be purchased from other suppliers, apart from Stevensons, as long as they reflect the appropriate school colours as identified within our School Uniform Policy. All articles of clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name:-

Boys

- Navy blue sweatshirt, with or without light blue school logo
- Light blue polo shirts, with or without school logo
- Grey school trousers or shorts
- Long hair must be tied back for safety reasons
- Black, well-fitting school shoes

Girls

- Navy blue sweatshirt or cardigan with or without light blue school logo
- Light blue polo shirts, with or without school logo
- Grey school skirts, grey trousers or pinafore dress (winter)
- Light blue and white checked school dresses (summer)
- Long hair must be tied back for safety reasons
- Black, well-fitting school shoes

Jewellery

The Nursery respects that some families want their children to wear jewellery, but for health and safety reasons the Nursery strongly advises that children do not wear necklaces, bracelets or hoop earrings as these can easily get caught and cause an accident or injury.

Shoes

Nursery children should wear sensible and appropriate footwear. Crocs, open toed sandals and party shoes are not safe nor appropriate for the activities we do in Nursery. Wellingtons are available for the children to change into in the garden when necessary; (please feel free to supply your child's own wellingtons); it increases your child's independence to change their footwear in inclement weather. PE is done in bare feet. It is therefore essential that children are able to put on and take off their own shoes unaided. Velcro fastenings are particularly suitable. Please ensure that all footwear is named.



Parent Partnership

The Nursery Team are always available to speak to parents briefly at the end of a session or in an emergency.

We also hold formal parents' evenings twice a year when parents are invited for a short consultation with their child's class teacher and key worker to discuss their progress. We also invite parents in once a term for the children to share their learning journal with them. We put on a Christmas Nativity with Reception in the Autumn Term and Nursery holds its own sports day in the Summer Term.

Book Bags

Colour coded book bags are provided as per your child's group so each child can carry home their learning, letters and library books.

Change of Clothing

We ask that each child brings in a change of clothing in case of accidents.

Photographs

Nursery practice includes taking photographs of children during their daily experiences. The photographs may be included in Nursery wall displays, in your child's learning journal, AND (with parental permission) on the school website and in local publications.

Parking

The school car park is for the use of staff only. We ask that if you do drive to school that you are considerate of our neighbours. We also ask that the school gates are closed behind you.

Friends of Skyswood School (FOSS)

Every parent of a Nursery child automatically becomes a member of the FOSS and is welcome to join in the many varied activities that are organised throughout the school year.



Illness

If a child becomes ill at Nursery we will endeavour to contact a parent and failing that, alternative contacts from your registration form. All accidents and injuries are recorded. Please do not send a child who has been sick or had diarrhoea to Nursery for 48 hours from the last episode of illness.

Behaviour

Positive behaviour is promoted throughout Nursery where we show, kindness and consideration for each other. Children are made aware of the Nursery rules and the expectations of them and are encouraged to share and take turns, to be polite and to respect each other and the environment. Should a problem arise, then staff will discuss the problem with the child to help them resolve the conflict.

In the case of a more serious problem, a child may be removed from an activity for a short period of time to sit quietly and reflect on what has happened and how it has affected others whilst being supported by a member of the team. Parents will be made aware at collection time.

School Closure

In the cases of extreme weather parents are asked to check the school website to ensure school is open before they set off.

Medicine

If a child requires medication then a form will need to be completed and the medicine/inhaler brought into Nursery in a named container.

Mobile Phones

Staff and parents are asked not to use mobile phones in Nursery.

Policies

All policies for the EYFS can be found on the school website at

www.skyswood.herts.sch.uk/policies.



What can you do to help your child at home?

Talk to your child positively about:

- Coming to Nursery and the activities they will be able to do there.
- Being with other adults who will help look after him/her. Use the team's names so that the children become familiar with them.
- Playing and sharing with others.

Let them:

- Ask questions and answer as best you can.
- Help you and get involved when you are cleaning, shopping, cooking etc.

Please explain:

- Why things happen.
- About shapes, colours, sizes.
- About going to the doctor, dentist, clinic.

At home please:

- Read to your child
- Share pictures
- Share television programmes
- Sing Nursery rhymes
- Show an interest in your child's models and artwork
but do not expect them daily; many activities cannot be measured by the number of pictures brought home.

Please speak to a member of our staff if you have any further questions.