



Welcoming | Involving | Evolving

Oxhey Early Years Centre

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OUR KEY PERSON APPROACH

Your child will have a KEY PERSON who will be your first and foremost link with the Centre. They will partner with you to help your child learn and make progress, building a strong relationship with your child and you. Our key people have been recruited, selected, inducted and supported to meet the needs of young children. He/she will help your child to settle into the nursery and will get to know your child really well.

Your child's key person will put together a Learning Journey which is a working record of your child's learning and progress, including photographs of what your child has been experiencing and observations about what she/he has been learning. This helps us to assess your child within the Early Years Foundation Stage and monitor the progress in his/her learning. *Sometimes this 'journal' will be in note form, or written quickly, it is not meant to be 'perfect' because it is a practical, hands-on working record of progress and achievement which helps the teaching team to plan for your child's next steps in learning.*

We invite you to contribute to your child's learning journey by using our "Sharing Moments" sheets, sending us a photo and comment via our sharing@ email and coming along to a stay and share session and completing a sticker for your child's book.

It is important that we all work together & share together for your child's play, learning and progress to help him or her make as much progress as possible.

- You will have had chance to meet your key person at a home visit and/or during settling visits. The room's routine and procedures will be explained to you at settling sessions. You can ask your key person questions about your child's care and learning.
- The Head of Centre (Rachel Fagan) and other staff will always try to greet you on arrival. We have an 'open door' policy here for speaking about concerns or compliments so we do our best to make ourselves available for you. Please ask at Reception if you need to make an appointment to speak to the Head or other Senior Leaders.
- Information provided by you about your child will be kept confidential and treated on a strictly need to know basis. However, what needs to be shared for the best for your child is shared with those that 'need to know'.

- It is important that you **always tell your key person** about anything which might affect your child and his or her wellbeing - including a new baby, an accident or incident at home, change of bedroom, moving house or other family change or event. Any change is significant to a child - so please let us know.
- It is also important to share about other personal things, like if you had Post Natal Depression, experiences of loss, separation or bereavement, or if your child has come from a foster home or other care setting. All these things can affect a child's learning and progress and the more we know, the more we can help, support and make a difference. We hope you will feel able to trust your keyperson and to share information when you can. They might need to pass it on to those that NEED to know, in order to help your child. If you have other confidential information of a very personal nature that you are not happy to share, but is important about your child, please address it to the Head of Centre and put in a sealed envelope. The Head will keep the information in the strictest confidence, but will talk with you about the impact on you and your child and how we can best support.
- If you speak a language other than English at home please share a few important words with your key person as this may help her/ him to communicate with your child. It is important that you continue to use this language at home with your child.
- Please tell your key person if you are celebrating a festival or significant family event. With your permission we can use this information in our planning to enrich the curriculum. You may be able to help by providing photographs or objects to bring it all to life.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Promoting the welfare of children and protecting them from harm is everyone's responsibility. It is:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Everyone who comes into contact with the children has a role to play.

The two key principles are:

1. **Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part**
2. **A child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.**

Everyone has the right to feel safe and to be able to talk to anyone at any time. We may ask to speak to you if we have concerns, if we have noticed something or if your child tells us something. This is part of our **Child Protection Policy**. We may give you advice, ask you to work with us or take further action (for example, taking part in a CAF or referring to Children's Services), to ensure your child becomes safe, continues to be safe, or stays safe.

For more information please read our Child Protection Policy (on our website) and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' March 2015.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

SETTLING YOUR CHILD INTO OUR CENTRE

It is really important to us that all children should be treated with great care and consideration. A new child should feel comfortable, cared for and integrated into the life of the Centre as quickly as possible.

We fully appreciate that it can be a difficult time for both adult and child. Each child's experience will be different and we therefore adopt a flexible approach to the settling of children in the Centre.

Full details of settling for the different rooms will be given to you at your Welcome Meeting, Home Visit or first settling session.

In the Blue and Purple Rooms you will be asked to stay for a minimum of one session before you leave your child and in the Orange Room, because of their younger ages, you will be asked to stay for a minimum of three sessions before you leave your child.

We are happy to receive telephone calls from parents or carers at all times. We fully understand that you are concerned for your child's welfare and may feel anxious about leaving him or her for the first time in someone else's care. We hope

that we will be able to reassure you but if a child is very upset it is our policy to be honest and tell you.

If settling continues to be difficult, we will work with you on ways to make settling easier. Every child is different and we can never 'predict' how a child will settle. Be prepared for a long or short transition into their new learning environment!

You will meet your child's key person at your home visit and have time to share any additional information about your child with them. You will also be able to talk to your key person during settling sessions as needed.

During your visits you will be able to spend time with your child in the Nursery environment, getting to know the routine, the environment and the staff who will be working with your child. We ask you not to leave the building on these days.

Tips for preparing to leave your child

If possible prepare the way, even before your first visit, by explaining that Nursery is a special place for your child where she/he can play and make new friends. If your child becomes distressed by the thought of leaving you, it is important to mention it to the Senior Manager and the key person. Reassure your child that you won't leave unless you're sure s/he will be alright and that there will be someone to look after her/him always.

It is usual to wait until the second visit when your child has become more familiar with the surroundings and begun to build a relationship with the key person, before you leave the room. A child who is anxiously looking for a parent will find it impossible to build a relationship with the key person.

PROMOTING EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE **OUR GUIDE TO GOOD ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY**

There is a proven link between good attendance and punctuality and children's attainment. If you choose not to make the best of the 15 funded hours your child receives by not attending, you could be depriving another child of that place.

Therefore, at Oxhey Early Years Centre we encourage you to get off to a good start by setting excellent attendance and punctuality habits for your child's future, and give them the best chance in their learning.

Why is regular school attendance so important for my child?

To ensure that pupils make progress within the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' curriculum it is important for them to be in Nursery and School regularly - a good pattern should be set from the beginning.

As well as the academic progress they make it is very important for children's personal, social and emotional development. When children have been off nursery for prolonged periods it can be difficult for them to re-establish the friends they have made and be familiar with the routines of the setting.

Nurseries build the foundations for the children's future progress and everything they learn with us benefits them when they transfer to Reception.

Regular attendance means your child can make the most of their education, improving their chances in adult life. It has been proven that children who miss school frequently will fall behind with their work and do less well in exams.

DID YOU KNOW?

If a child attends school 90% of the time, this effectively means they are missing half a day of school time per week. Over one year, this equates to a child missing 4 weeks of school. During the course of their whole education, half a year of schooling would be lost.

If your child only attends 80% of the time, they are missing one day of school per week = eight weeks per year. During the course of their education, one whole year of schooling would be lost.

How does Oxhey Early Years Centre support my child's school attendance and punctuality?

- OEYC is responsible for supporting the attendance of children and dealing with problems which may lead to non-attendance.
- We aim to work with parents & carers to encourage excellent attendance habits which will prepare you and your child for Primary and Secondary school.
- OEYC, as required by Hertfordshire Education Authority, will complete attendance registers twice a day, at the beginning of each school session.

- As required, OEYC will differentiate in the registers between unexplained absence, holiday, absence for medical reasons, and lateness.
- Poor attendance or consistent lateness will be followed up either in person or in writing.

How can parents and carers ensure excellent attendance for their children?

- Avoid medical or dental appointments during school hours.
- Support school attendance by avoiding family holidays during term time. Holidays during term time should be taken only when 'exceptional'.
- If you have no alternative but to take your child out of Nursery School during term time, please fill in a 'Holiday / Planned Absence Request' form, giving as much notice as possible. These can be found in the foyer near the Administration Office.
- Work positively with OEYC to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance.

If your child is going to be absent from Nursery, please follow the absence procedure below:

If you know in advance that your child is going to be absent - for instance a medical appointment, family occasion, religious celebration - please complete a 'Holiday / Planned Absence Request' form and hand it in to the Administration Office with as much notice as possible.

If the absence is unplanned you must:

- Contact us on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend for whatever reason, either speaking to someone in the Admin Office or by leaving a telephone message. This procedure should be followed on every day your child is absent from the Centre.
- Follow this up with a letter confirming the date and reason for absence on the first day your child returns to the Centre.

Please note, if your child has lunch at the Centre we must receive a phone call to report an absence by **9am** to avoid having a meal ordered and being charged accordingly.

FOOD & DRINK

Please make sure that you have written about any food allergies or a dietary requirement that your child may have on your child's CPR (Confidential Personal Record Form) and discussed them with your key person.

Meal and snack times are seen as an important opportunity for conversation, learning and encouraging independence - as well as ideal for learning about socialising, maths, language and other subjects.

Drinks:

Water coolers are available for children in all rooms. **Children in the Orange Room and Blue Room are asked to bring a named cup or bottle which can be filled with water.** They will be asked to put their photo on it when they come in for their session. These bottles need to be taken home at the end of every session and are not kept refrigerated. Please do not provide sweet or milky drinks.

At breakfast and supper we also serve fruit juice that is diluted and we do not serve cordials or squash.

All children have access to milk. This is a free entitlement and strongly recommended to help your child's daily intake of nutrients. Diluted juice, milk and water are offered to the Orange Room children at snack times.

Water is offered at lunch times.

Breakfast:

Breakfast is served in the Orange Room from 8am until 8.55am for children who are booked in for breakfast. A variety of healthy cereals are on offer with a selection of toast and fruit. Children are encouraged to collect their own dishes and cutlery, spread their own toppings and cut their own food as appropriate.

Snacks:

Healthy snacks are provided during the morning and afternoon sessions. Snack times include a portion of fruit or vegetables, a carbohydrate and often a protein e.g., cracker, bread stick, toast and butter or cheese.

Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible: buttering crackers, cutting up fruit, pouring drinks and putting their own dishes away.

Cost of snack:

If your child is in the Blue Room, or receiving the 3 year old funding in the Purple Room and Orange Room you are asked to contribute towards the cost of the snack. For other sessions, the cost of the snack is included in the daycare price.

Lunch:

Please note that there are LIMITED lunch places available and priority is given to children whose parents are working or children who have a full time place 8-1 / 8-4 / 8-6 / 9-4 / 9-6 session. If your child is 2 or 3 years old and is receiving free hours, you may be entitled to Free School Meals if you are in receipt of the relevant benefits. (Check online at www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals.)

Our mid-day meals are transported to the Centre. Strict temperature control and hygiene procedures are in place. We are inspected on food hygiene and currently we have the highest award of 5 STARS for our food management system.

Meals are usually served in the Rainbow Room.

We promote and believe in 'family service' at our Centre. The children sit in small groups with an adult at each table, who eats the food with them, initiates conversation and helps to serve out the food from dishes on the table. There is always another adult available to help so that the adult eating with the children does not have to leave the table.

The lunch menu is nutritionally balanced and child friendly. We work with the catering contract manager to ensure the food offered to our young children is appropriate and popular. Please ask for a menu leaflet or view the menu on our website www.oxheyearlyyearscentre.herts.sch.uk

If your child is staying for the afternoon session please bring a named tooth brush and children's toothpaste.

Supper:

Supper is usually served in the Rainbow Room. Healthy meals are cooked on the premises and adults sit with the children as at other snack and meal times. The children sometimes help to cook something for supper as part of their afternoon projects. The supper menu is displayed on the trolley where the children's coats are stored. Please ask for a copy.

Food Hygiene:

Practitioners handling food are given food hygiene training by Hertfordshire County Council Catering. All those preparing meals have a Level 2 Food Hygiene Qualification.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHES

- All clothes, especially clothes that are likely to be removed, **must be clearly labeled**.
- Children should wear covered, well fitting and protective footwear to keep their toes safe. Very strappy sandals, flip-flops or crocs are not suitable.
- Clothes should be practical, with simple fastenings.
- Please don't send your child in clothes that you do not wish to be marked. Although aprons are provided for messy play, some children are reluctant to wear them. It is important that they can really enjoy and get involved in all kinds of play (including water play, painting and messy play) without worrying about dirtying their clothes.
- Please bring clearly named wellingtons for wet weather play if you do not wish your child to use wellingtons provided by the Centre.
- Please don't send your child in jewellery, for safety reasons. Speak to your key person if this is a problem.
- Please bring some spare clothes (tops, bottoms underwear, socks) in a clearly named bag in case your child has a toilet or water play accident. If your child is in nappies please bring spare nappies and wipes. If your child is being toilet trained, spare shoes/ slippers would be useful.

The Centre has a Wet Room which is located in the Purple Room. This is where the children can investigate the properties of water and they can get involved with many activities. Prior to the children entering the Wet Room they are changed into Centre T-shirts and underwear to protect their own clothes. If you wish your child to wear their own clothes please put a change of clothes into their bags.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Library Books

You are welcome to choose a book with your child from the selections outside each room.

Our research has shown that children who borrow our books regularly and read at home make great progress in their speaking, listening, early reading and writing.

If you do not have time to choose a book with your child, due to work commitments, please ask your key person who can help your child to choose a book.

Library and Activity Days

In Blue and Purple Rooms in the Spring and Summer Terms we will invite parents to sign up to help on Library Day (usually a Friday) or Activity Day.

If you are volunteering for a Library session you will stay after you have dropped off your child and help children choose a book to take home and spend time sharing books and reading to small groups of children.

Activity Days will offer you the opportunity to come into the Centre to help with such things as cooking, creative projects, using the woodwork bench and tools, gardening etc. You will be signposted to these activities and how to sign up via our weekly newsletter

SMOKING

The Centre operates a non-smoking policy. Smoking is not permitted on any part of the Centre's premises or grounds or during off-site visits.

MOBILE PHONES (tablets and laptops)

We respectfully ask you not to use your mobile phones (or any other mobile devices with internet access) in the Centre whilst you collect or drop off your children.

Use of mobile and smart technology has become a safeguarding concern and we therefore cannot allow their use within the Centre. Staff will remind you of this policy if they see you using your phone or device within the Centre.

CAR PARK

All parents and visitors to the Centre can use the car park, but must be aware that it becomes very busy at peak times and there are very limited spaces. Staff, emergency vehicles and disabled drivers have access to the car park. There are reserved disabled parking spaces. **Please be reminded that it is against the law for your child to travel in a car without a suitable car seat or booster seat.**

Please note, dogs are not allowed in the Centre or on the grounds; unless they are Guide Dogs.

Car Park Safety Rules:

You are required to respect our rules for the safety of our children, families and neighbours.

- ❖ Only park in allocated spaces
- ❖ Do not enter the car park if it is full - wait for a car to come out first
- ❖ Drive very slowly
- ❖ Do not park on the kerbs outside Eastbury Court as this obstructs pedestrians
- ❖ Do not park in designated bays for our elderly neighbours at Eastbury Court
- ❖ Only use disabled parking spaces if you have a disabled badge
- ❖ Beware of children and pedestrians walking or running along the kerbs
- ❖ Always keep your children close by you.
- ❖ Do not walk across the car park - use the pedestrian entrance
- ❖ Do not leave children in your car without an adult supervising them
- ❖ We operate a no smoking policy throughout the car park and premises

KEEPING YOU INFORMED ABOUT LEARNING

Long and medium term plans are displayed in or around the rooms for you to read.

- Weekly newsletters will keep you up to date with information about the Centre, e.g. new developments or staff changes and tell you about what learning has been taking place, ideas for learning at home and activities planned for the follow week.
- Our weekly Learning Journal tells you all about the children's learning and helps you with ideas for supporting and developing their playing and learning at home. Always ask us if you need any more challenging ideas to ensure that your child learns as much as they can!

- Newsletters and OEYC Learning Journals will be e-mailed to you via Parentmail
- Copies of newsletters, term dates etc are available in the reception area and ON OUR WEBSITE www.oxheyearlyyearscentre.herts.sch.uk

Parentmail

We communicate with you mainly by emails - we will send a text message if the matter is urgent i.e. snow closure. If you don't have an email account that you use daily, you must let us know, otherwise you will miss out on lots of information.

If you don't have email access please let us know so we can print papers off for you.

- Our Parentmail service is used to contact parents by text and e-mail. Vital information about centre closures etc during severe weather is communicated in this way.
- **Please make sure that you have returned the Parentmail form and keep us informed of any changes in your email address and contact numbers.**

Important information eg term dates, INSET days are also available on the website www.oxheyearlyyearscentre.herts.sch.uk. The website is regularly updated.

Information about our Parents' Association contact
ta@oeyc.herts.sch.uk

- There will be opportunities throughout the year for you to meet with your key person to discuss your child's progress and to enjoy social events.
- A Senior Manager or Leader is always available for additional discussions with parents/carers. Arrangements can be made at a mutually convenient time on request.

KEEPING US INFORMED

- Please let **your key person or a senior member of staff** know if you have any concerns about your child.
- **Suggestion Boxes** are situated in the reception areas of the Centre and we WELCOME feedback and comments and compliments, as well as how you think we can be better. We always respond to these forms and display our responses as soon as possible. If you prefer a more anonymous way of putting your views across, then please use this service. It is a great way to be heard. Alternatively you can speak to a member of the team or your child's key person. We always want to know how we can do better.

REGISTRATION

Registration is important for Fire Regulations and to ensure that the room numbers comply with Ofsted requirements. If you are paying for your session it is necessary to ensure your invoice will be correct.

- You will need to encourage your child to self register by matching his/her name to his/her photo and putting the photo on their drink/cup.
- The Blue Room staff complete the Blue Room register.
- **On daycare registers you MUST SIGN YOUR CHILD IN AND OUT, put your child's arrival and departure times on the register.**
- When you collect your child from the Orange or Purple Rooms or from an extended session in the Blue Room you will have to sign your child out on the register.