

St Mary's Early Years



Handbook for Parents and Carers 2020-2021

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Child Protection:

The designated members of staff with responsibility for managing Child Protection are Mrs Liz Laird and in her absence, Mrs Fiona Macaulay.

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Staff List

Head Teacher	Mrs E Laird
Deputy Head Teacher	Mrs F Macaulay
Senior Early Years Practitioner	Mrs S Henderson
Early Years Practitioner	Mrs A Wilson
Early Years Practitioner	Miss S Munro
Early Years Practitioner	Mrs F Lavery

- There will also be Modern Apprentices training throughout the school session.

COVID 19

During this unprecedented time, the nursery is following all necessary procedures to keep your child safe. Staff who greet you and your child at the door/at collection will all be wearing masks. We ask parents to be mindful of the 2 metre social distancing guidelines at the nursery door between other parents and the staff, parents can wear masks if they would feel safer to do so. Children are reminded to wash hands often throughout the day and they wash their hands when entering and exiting the building (even for playing in the garden).

The maximum children the Nursery can have in one group is 32. As our maximum number in Nursery is 48 children, when needed, staff will be creating two smaller

rooms with two bubbles of a maximum of 24 in each. Children and staff from each bubble will not be mixing throughout the day with mirror image rooms with all aspects of play in each both indoor and out. If you have any concerns regarding the safety of your child with these very unusual times please ask a member of staff.

Our Aims in the Nursery

We aim to create a secure, welcoming environment in which all children can investigate, explore and learn through play experiences.

Nurturing: Staff focus on each child's wellbeing and support the growth and development of every child.

Kindness: Children are encouraged to be mindful of how their peers are feeling and supported by staff to resolve issues kindly.

Caring: Staff take a caring approach to all children, they are there for support when children need it.

Respect: All staff respect every child's individual needs and feelings. Children are encouraged to have the same respect for one another.

Inclusion: All children and their families are welcomed at Nursery with no prejudice.



Nursery
Times and Routines

Session

When your child first starts Nursery, there will be a settling in period over the course of a few days, or longer if needed, depending on the needs of your child. Parents will be given the choice of two models, which will dictate start and finish times for the children.

- Model 1
8:30 – 15:00 Monday to Thursday and 8:30 – 12:30 Fridays
- Model 2

8:45 – 15:15 Monday to Thursday and 8:45 – 12:45
Fridays

Currently with no parents allowed in the building due to Covid-19, there will be at least two members of staff at the front door to welcome your child into nursery in the morning. Each child will be asked to put hand sanitiser on before entering the playroom where they will find the cloakroom area, where each child has their own peg labelled with their name.

Children will also be asked to self-register, find their named rock and place it into the jar that reflects their emotion for that day. This encourages independence in the children, whilst also allowing the staff to be aware of how the child is feeling. This is also developing the child's early literacy skills by being able to identify their name in print.

The same routine will apply at the end of the day with two members of staff standing at the nursery door, who will be able to fetch your child from play or group time and help them with their coat and bag, before bringing your child outside. If you are planning to collect your child out with the normal time, please make a staff member aware at morning drop off, or phone the school office.

Parents and carers will be asked to provide the nursery with a list of people that are permitted to collect your child, which will be strictly followed to ensure the safety of each child. If someone is going to be collecting your child, who is not already on the pickup list, please make a member of staff aware as soon as possible, or phone the school office.





What to expect and Getting It Right For Every Child.

Learning in the Early Years is largely based around a theorist called Friedrich Froebel, who invented the idea of kindergarten. His approach to pedagogy promotes the importance of play, allowing children to understand the world around them by directly experiencing it.

At St Mary's Early Years the staff team aim to develop a strong bond with your child but also with the parents and carers to

make the nursery experience as positive as possible. Your child will have many opportunities to learn through play based activities with a particular focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing, although it is believed that all learning is linked, with each area of learning connecting to the others.

Your child will be encouraged to be curious and interested in the world around them. They will be fully supported in becoming a confident individual, a successful learner, a responsible citizen and an effective contributor – in line with the aims of “Getting It Right For Every Child” (GIRFEC), which is a Scottish Curriculum for Excellence and Midlothian Council Early Learning and Childcare policy for all nurseries and schools.

We work closely with partner agencies such as Speech and Language Therapists, Health Visitors, Occupational Therapists, the Community Paediatrician Team and ASD Outreach Teachers for advice and additional support. If you have any concerns about your child’s development, please discuss this with the nursery staff, either at pick up time or you can arrange an appointment if preferred. Similarly, nursery staff

will always discuss any concerns with you before seeking further advice or support from partner agencies.



Early Level Literacy, Numeracy and Health and Well Being

Literacy:

Children will be encouraged to use literacy in a number of ways. Early Level literacy is the foundation of children's development in talking and listening, reading and writing. This will include:

- Talking and listening for a range of purposes such as Songs and rhymes, describing activities, social communication
- Reading from a variety of printed texts including posters/symbols, stories, rhymes, books
- Mark making, developing pencil grip, making recognisable letter formations, writing for a range of purposes

Numeracy

Your child will experience mathematics and number skills through games, rhymes, music and technologies such as:

- Sorting and matching
- Problem solve and question
- Count forwards and backwards
- Measure using a range of non-standard and standard units
- Design and pattern making

Health and wellbeing

Your child will be supported in building friendships, getting along with others and self-worth. Children are also encouraged to be independent, eg making their own snack, responsible for their personal belongings, tidying up the Nursery.

All snacks and lunches are provided centrally from Midlothian Council and the Scottish government as part of the Nursery Expansion to 1140 hours. There is a variety of healthy foods and a hot lunch menu is sent out every three weeks to parents.

Children have free flow to the garden meaning they can have energetic play as much as they would like, developing their skills and control and beginning to understand the importance of health and fitness.

Daily tooth brushing in partnership with the NHS is part of our Healthy Living Curriculum. Children are also involved in making healthy snacks.



Illness, accidents and safety

Illness

If your child is unable to attend nursery due to illness or for any other reason please let us know as soon as possible. Please do not bring your child to nursery if they are unwell or have had sickness and diarrhoea in the last 48 hours. Even if your child wishes to come they should stay at home as they may spread infection. This is NHS Scotland guidance.

Please let us know if your child has a medical condition and they are on medication, including inhalers. If medicine or inhalers need to be administered at nursery we require a medical permission form to be completed and signed by parent/carer. Depending on the severity of your child's condition it may require a Care Plan to be in place for all staff to follow consistently. Please ask Staff for further guidance. If your child develops any common childhood illnesses e.g. chickenpox, please let us know so we can inform the other families.

Accidents

If your child has a bump or graze while at nursery, staff will take appropriate first aid measures, they will record the accident and let the person collecting know what has happened. If your child has any head bump, a staff member will contact you just to make you aware and will closely monitor the child for the rest of the day. The staff will also contact you if they feel the child needs to be taken home, attend a doctor or hospital.

An accident form is filled in for any bump and two copies are made, one for the parent and one for staff to record in their file.

Safety

Please always remember to close the gate behind you when dropping/ collecting your child. Please use the pedestrian crossing to cross the busy road with your child.

Child Protection:

We are bound by Lothian Inter Agency Child Protection Procedures and follow St Mary's RC Primary School Policy for Child Protection. All nursery staff complete Child Protection Training every two years.

The designated members of staff with responsibility for managing Child Protection are Mrs Liz Laird and in her absence, Mrs Fiona Macaulay.

Other Information

Scooters:

We encourage children to travel on their bike/scooter to Nursery. Please park it in one of the bike racks in the playground.

Outings:

Outings are a valuable part of our curriculum, exploring the local area and linking to interests within the nursery. Written permission will always be requested before your child can take part in outings involving minibus/coach transport. Parental help is much appreciated when taking the children out into the community. Currently due to Covid 19 restrictions we are not able to take the children out on excursions.

Clothing:

Your child needs to be suitably dressed for outdoor learning which reflects the weather and for going to the toilet independently. Please ensure your child has Wellies daily as children have free access to water play.

Please label your child's clothes including shoes. Nursery sweatshirts and polo shirts can be ordered via the link on the school website.

Dogs:

Dogs are not permitted within the school grounds. Please do not tie dogs up to the fence as children and the dog can still be scared when walking past.

Complaints Procedure

If you have a concern about an aspect of the work of the nursery please discuss this with the nursery staff. Most concerns can be dealt with in this way.

Should the concern persist parents and carers should then approach the Head Teacher.

If for any reason the concern is unable to be resolved at school level, parents and carers should then write to:

Care Inspectorate
3 C & D South
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ
Tel: 0345 600 9527

Fiona Robertson
Executive Director – Education
Midlothian Council
Midlothian House
Dalkeith
EH22 3AA
Tel: 0131 270 7500