



HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES

(UPDATED MARCH 2026)

“WE PLAY, WE LEARN, WE GROW”

WELCOME

We welcome you and your child to High Wych Pre-school Nursery. Our aim is to make this experience a happy and enjoyable time. This information is designed to answer your questions, if however, we have missed something out, please feel free to speak to your Key Person.

CURRICULUM INTENT

Our curriculum is delivered through quality teaching and designed to ensure that all children develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to thrive, both now and in the future.

We provide high quality teaching, a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that is carefully sequenced to support clear progression from our Caterpillars to Butterflies groups.

We place strong emphasis on:

- Communication and Language, recognising it as the foundation for learning, relationships and self-regulation.
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development, supporting children to build secure attachments, confidence and resilience.
- Physical Development, enabling children to develop strength, coordination and independence in self-care.

Learning is planned through meaningful play, real-life experiences and responsive interactions, allowing children to build on what they already know and can do. Our curriculum is inclusive by design, ensuring all children, including those with SEND, are supported through adapted provision, visuals, routines and adult scaffolding.

OUR ETHOS

Our ethos is built on nurture, consistency and high expectations. We believe children learn best when they feel safe, valued and understood.

Strong, trusting relationships with key adults are central to our practice and underpin all learning.

We promote:

- positive behaviour through clear routines, boundaries and our Golden Rules.
- independence and confidence through consistent care routines and opportunities for choice.
- respect, kindness and empathy by modelling positive interactions.

Play is valued as a vital vehicle for learning, enabling children to explore, communicate, create and solve problems.

Adults are skilled in observing, responding and extending learning, ensuring children are supported and challenged appropriately.

OUR VISION

Our vision is for every child to leave our setting as a confident, respectful and capable learner, ready for the next stage of their education.

We want children to:

- communicate their needs, thoughts and feelings effectively.
- form positive relationships with peers and adults.
- demonstrate independence in self-care and learning.

- develop a love of learning and confidence to try new experiences.

Through a nurturing yet ambitious curriculum, we ensure all children are given the best possible start in life.

COMMITTEE – Officers and Trustees

As a charity we are governed by a constitution and use the Early Years Alliance model. The governing body is made up of volunteer parents and people from our local community. The structure is such that we have a Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and Trustees. These people are responsible for ensuring that the charity is suitably managed and sustainable. Our Annual General Meeting is usually held in October and reflects the previous year's business.

KEY PERSON

Before starting you will be assigned a Key Person who you will meet in setting or at your home visit. We aim to build positive relationships with our families, for us to look after your child, meet their needs and help them to settle. Also, to answer any queries you may have and to help build relationships by promoting mutual respect. Your Key Person will become an important 'grown-up' in your child's experience with us.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONS NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

To find out how we support children who may have special educational needs and disabilities, please see the link to our 'Local Offer' below.

<https://directory.hertfordshire.gov.uk/kb5/hertfordshire/directory/service.page?id=4YPVPY00120&familiesfirstchannel=2-2-9>

SETTLING IN AT PRE-SCHOOL

Staff members are very experienced at reassuring and settling children. Your Key Person will keep a special watchful eye on your child and will support their transition into setting. Do not worry if your child takes a while to

settle as this can be an anxious time for you both. If your child is distressed when you leave them, please feel free to contact us to see how they are getting on. We will contact you if your child does not settle well. It is also quite common for a child who has settled very quickly to be reluctant to be parted from their parents after a few weeks. Try not to worry as, in our experience, this phase soon passes. Please talk to your Key Person about any worries you have about settling or if you require reassurance at any stage. You can also call us on 07792-612585 to check how your child is settling. Parents are welcome to visit by appointment to talk to their key person to discuss their child's progress. We also have parent consultations to discuss progress.

ARRIVAL AND COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Arrival

Families are to arrive at the main doors and a staff member will be there to greet you at 8.50am or 12 noon to let your child in.

Collection

We ask that you wait by the main front doors at 11:50 and the side doors by the slope at 3.00 to collect your child.

One child at a time will be released to the parent or person coming to collect. Once a child is released, they become



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your responsibility. Please be extra vigilant as the car park can be very busy.

Ensure that whoever collects, picks up all your child's belongings.

Due to lack of storage, all bags, lunchboxes, drink bottle, coats, all-in-ones, and wellingtons must be taken home after each session.

ARRIVAL AND COLLECTION TIMES

PLEASE arrive on time to collect your child. Collection times are 11.50am for morning and 3.00pm for afternoon. If you wish to collect your child earlier than 3.00pm, then you may collect at 2.45pm. Please let us know in advance if you wish to collect early. We do insist that these times are adhered to, to avoid disruption of activities. Please inform us as soon as you can if you are going to be late. If we have not heard from you within 20 minutes of the end of session (11.50am or 3.00pm), our Collection policy must be enforced, which means we may contact Children's services, as part of our duty of care.

We do ask that, when filling in your emergency contact / permission on FAMLY, you include everyone who may collect your child along with their photograph. If in the event of anyone else collecting your child, the nominated person **MUST** have previously been introduced to the Staff by the Parent/Guardian, or we must have a photograph of that person. If a person has been introduced and has not collected regularly, we may still contact you again just for confirmation. Or, if this is not possible, a password **MUST** be given prior to collection and a photograph emailed or full description given over the phone.

Please do not ring the doorbell between 2.45pm and 3.00pm, as we do not have spare staff to man the doors and have found that this is disruptive for the children staying until 3.00pm. We have this system in place to ensure children's safety and avoid any distress.

Some children may get upset when they see other children being collected early, so we need staff to comfort and reassure these children.

ABSENCES

We take our guidance from the Public Health Agency, NHS and abide by the Government legislation on infection control.

It is a government funding requirement that you must inform us if your child is going to be absent for any reason.

You must contact us immediately via FAMLY when you know your child is going to be absent, stating why they will not be attending and a possible return date. Childhood diseases may be mild for an otherwise healthy child, but could be serious for others, e.g., German measles, whooping cough for babies, chicken pox for the elderly and mumps for males.

This could also have a detrimental effect on staff members, if they then become ill themselves and must have time off work. Childhood illness may also affect someone who is pregnant.

VOMITTING, DIARRHOEA, CONJUNCTIVITIS, SLAPPED CHEEK AND HAND FOOT AND MOUTH

Children are not permitted in setting for at least two clear days from the time of their last bout of vomiting or diarrhoea.

Conjunctivitis and hand, foot and mouth are both highly contagious. Conjunctivitis must be treated before the child returns.

If your child has hand, foot, and mouth, they must be kept away until they are better, as recommended by the NHS website.

ANITBIOTICS

Parents must keep children away from setting for 24 hours, each time a child is administered a new prescription for antibiotic, regardless of whether they have had the same medication previously. This is in case there is a reaction to the medicine.

We can administer prescribed and non-prescribed medication. Please bring in the original medication with instructions and the use by date. We will upload this on to FAMLY for you to acknowledge. We cannot administer medication until you have acknowledged this information.

Please upload on to FAMLY any allergies and medical needs your child has, any preventative measures to take, and a list of clear symptoms that we should look out for. This should also be discussed with your Key Person.

SUITABLE CLOTHING

We want your child to experience every aspect of Pre-school so please ensure they are wearing suitable clothing. We encourage you to put your child in clothes that you do not mind getting spoilt with paint etc. Children will be offered aprons to wear but they may choose not to accept as it can interrupt their curiosity, awe, and wonder. We ask that you provide all-in-one weather suits for wet weather play.

PLEASE NO - laces on shoes, flip-flops, strappy sandals or crocs, thin strappy dresses, jewellery, belts, dungarees, studded baby vests if your child is toilet trained.

UNIFORM

Uniform can be purchased on www.schooltrends.co.uk. Key in our post code CM21 9EA and choose High Wych Pre-school Nursery. We recommend that children wear uniform. We also sell preloved uniform, fleeces and jumpers at very reasonable prices – please speak to your key person to find out what is available.

LABELLING

Please label very clearly your child's name on the top outside of their lunch box and changing bag. All hats must be labelled in the rim, coats, cardigans, and jumpers labelled in the neck part. Wellingtons and shoes must also each be labelled.

THINGS TO BRING

If your child is in nappies, you will need to bring spare nappies and changes of clothes in a bag, clearly labelled with their name. If your child is potty trained, you are asked to bring a change of clothes in case of accidents. Again, a bag containing changes of clothes is required. If your child will be staying for lunch, you will need to bring a packed lunch bag / box. We aim to take children for outdoor play every day. They will need wellingtons only if the grass is wet. You will also need to provide an all-in-one



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weatherproof suit, only when it is raining, for outdoor wet play.

LUNCH TIMES

If your child attends all day, or just in the afternoon, you are required to provide a packed lunch for them. **PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL** your child's lunch box with their name on the outside, as this avoids confusion when lots of children have the same lunch boxes. Take care to pack food that you know your child likes. We suggest healthy treats such as chopped up fruit or raw vegetables.

Please see the website below for ideas.

<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier->

We encourage children to eat but will not make them and any uneaten food will be returned. We wish to promote healthy eating and healthy lifestyles so please **DO NOT** include any kind of sweets, chocolate, or chocolate bars. We may put reminder about 'healthy choices' in your child's lunch box. Ask your Key Person if you are stuck for ideas for a packed lunch. Due to allergies, we promote a nut free zone so please ensure you check ingredients on products. Please note most chocolate spreads contain nuts. We provide milk, coconut milk or water and ask that your child brings in a water/juice bottle which we encourage them to access. During the morning session we provide a healthy snack which is a mixed fruit and vegetable bowl, and children can choose.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

We recognise the importance of parents as children's first educators and from this knowledge wish to build positive two-way partnerships for us to provide the best support, set challenges and offer a stimulating environment for your child to learn. Your Key Person is on hand to discuss your child's abilities and progress and by working together we can encourage your child to reach their full potential. See below our information about FAMLY.

As a parent of a child attending HWPSN and as we have Charity status, you automatically have a family membership which means you have one vote at any general meeting which includes our AGM, usually held in October. We also invite you to join the trustees and become part of the charity which will involve attending two meetings a year and voting via email on issues arising.

We ask that parents get as involved as they can in our fundraising planning and events. Meetings are informal and are a good chance to have fun and meet new people. Come along to our next meeting to see what we are all about. Meetings are advertised on FAMLY.

MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We do not allow mobile phones, cameras, or other electronic devices to be used on site by parents and carers. If found using your device, you will be asked to leave the building or finish the call immediately.

The exception is during HWPSN events. On these occasions, parents and carers are reminded that any recording or photos are NOT to be published on any social media. All parents will have signed our Contractual Agreement to ensure that this is adhered to. It is parents and carers responsibility to remind anyone else in their party.

FEES

See your Contractual Agreement for further details.

If you are a fee payer, please be aware that you must pay fees for any absences for example illness and holiday. Your contract to pay is valid for the whole time your child is on our register. We require six term time weeks' notice that your child is leaving (excluding when they make their transition to school nursery/reception at the end of a term). We require six term time weeks' paid notice if you decide to reduce any fee-paying sessions or if you decide to leave. This applies to fee payers and funded children. All changes must be submitted in writing.

If you are in receipt of government funding, the sessions you agree are allocated to you at the beginning of term, are set until the end of that term. If you would like an extra one-off session, over and above your government funding, you will be invoiced separately. If you are funded and if there is availability you may choose to pay for extra sessions. These will be set for the term; therefore, you will know which sessions are to be paid.

If an inset afternoon falls on one of your child's usual sessions and you are a fee payer, you will not be charged. If your child is funded, you are entitled to request an alternative session at another time. Please contact office@hwpsn.co.uk to arrange.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Any information you require regarding allocations, funding, fees etc. please contact office@hwpsn.co.uk or phone 07792-612585.

FAMILY

This is our secure online system which has everything all under one roof. All information relating to your child's registration is to be uploaded by you and it is your responsibility to keep it up to date. This includes medical and allergy information, contact details, emergency contacts and parental permissions. You will also be able to access your invoicing and session allocations.

FAMILY will be used for your child's learning journey which is a two-way communication between you and your key person about your child's learning and development. There will be lots of photos and interesting comments from your key person and we encourage you to upload photos and comment yourself. It is a great feature to engage in your child's development.

STAFF MEMBERS

Pre-school Leader & Manager and Designated Safeguarding Person – Donna Turner

Office Manager – Jacqui Harrison

Deputy Pre-School Leader, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-Ordinator (SENCo), Designated Safeguarding Person,

and Key Person – Lynda Spenner

Key Persons - Lynda Spenner, Clair Gomes, Amelia Baker, Chloe Adcock, Sarah Hill, Kathy Brandon, Lauren Robins, and Gemma Rainbow.

Pre-school Assistant & Cover staff – Heather Sayers and Jolene Dipple.



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CHARITY OFFICER TRUSTEES

Chairperson – Robert Kinkade

Secretary – TBC

Treasurer – Dominic Maher

Ex Officio (without voting power) – Donna Turner

