



The Old School Nursery (Shapwick) Ltd
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Our Mission -

At the Old School Nursery Shapwick we aim to create a safe, happy, loving environment where children can learn, grow, and flourish, preparing them for the next stage of their amazing lives.

Our Vision -

The Old School Nursery provides a home away from home, set in the countryside location of the village of Shapwick. We create an atmosphere that encourages the enquiring, expanding thoughts, fascinations, and imagination of the children in a safe and caring environment.

Our Values -

- 1) Children are at the heart of our nursery family.
- 2) We are partners with our children, families and community.
- 3) We are passionate and dedicated to providing the best for children.

Our Team - Our highly qualified, experienced, and talented team bring a rich set of skills and experiences to our children to enable them to grow and develop to their full potential. From the safe base of a key person that they can trust, each child is lovingly cared for in an environment that considers what is important to them and their development.

Our team love what they do, and this easily translates to the children. We fill our team with motivated, caring and engaged team members from a variety of backgrounds and ages and with a number of varied talents that they share with the children.

A key person for every child.

To ensure your child receives the best possible care, the nursery operates a key person system. Your child will be gently introduced to nursery life with a carefully selected member of staff which will be decided when they visit. These key people help to nurture your child and build one of the important attachments that your child will have to help them to settle in, feel safe and overcome any adversity they might experience.

Nurturing independence

At every stage we are always aware of creating the opportunity for our children to become independent in their physical and emotional skills sets. Whilst we will always be on hand to offer support, we do not seek to take away any learning opportunities that pose themselves

during our day. With growing independence, a sense of self confidence and self-belief, their own identity emerges, social interactions thrive, and friendships are born.

Communication

The key person will communicate to you from the initial visit when you sit together and share your child's story with them.

Where possible the key person will be there for your daily handovers in the morning and evening, which for the youngest children will include a written summary of their day.

The key person will send you updates via our online learning journal on the Tapestry portal (login details for this will be sent to you after your settling in sessions.) These updates are a lovely opportunity for you to see pictures, videos, and notes about your child's adventures whilst at nursery and also allows us to monitor development to ensure that any gaps in learning can be bridged and the appropriate level of support and encouragement given to each individual.

We encourage parents to see Tapestry as a conversation - a two-way communication which includes sharing moments from home with us, as well as an opportunity to see inside the walls of nursery life.

A warm welcome to all.

Our nursery provides a safe place for all children. The backgrounds, beliefs, abilities, medical needs, and important cultural events of each individual are valued, respected, celebrated and shared as appropriate to each family.



Today you are **YOU**,
that is **TRUER** than true.
There is **NO ONE** alive
who is **YOUER** than **YOU!**

Children's rights and safeguarding.

At the heart of all we do is the commitment to not only safeguard each and every child and support families when they need additional support, but also to celebrate and respect children's rights.

We have a wealth of policies and procedures which form the bedrock of our practice and keep safety and wellbeing of all children at the top of our priority list and take into account the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of every child.

Birds and Bees Room. - For our youngest children.

(Our ratio in this room is 1 staff member to 3 children. 1:3)

For many families this is the first time your child is going to be left with anyone outside of your immediate family or close friends. Our Birds and Bees environment offers a welcoming, engaging, and varied set of spaces that allow for the children to free flow into small groups, helping keep the children calm and engaged.

With two gardens, both hosting a purpose-built sand area and space for different large and small physical play, with the addition of an undercover area, a mud kitchen, slide, growing area and views of trees and farmland.

Inside we have a dining room with space for all our children to share meals and snacks, with chairs and tables all at a low level. This space also doubles up as a messy play space for all kinds of exploring and creative fun.

A separate sleep room creates a calming atmosphere with cot beds or floor beds for the children to take relaxing naps to fit in with their home routines.

Our two inside playrooms are a mixture of active and cosy spaces used for all the other wonderful activities that we have on offer daily, from a home corner, treasure baskets, sensory play, music and books, sand and water tray, soft play and ball pool, puzzles, dancing and more.

Birds and Bees also have the use of a separate milk kitchen where we can prepare all bottle feeds.

CATERPILLARS (2 years +)

(Our ratio in this room is one staff member to every four children. 1:4)

During their time with us in Caterpillars at a stage when development of language and more complex thoughts are being explored, we work with the children through stories, action songs, rhymes, and art to express their feelings and emotions. We have plenty of space for children to use their bodies as they gain mastery in their movements, facilitating children's natural inclinations for climbing, balancing, and manipulating both their bodies and the objects that they interact with in the environment.

Working in small groups we have plenty of opportunity to build on our social skills, having our voice heard and having a growing sense of who we are, what we like and dislike. During the year of being two, a young child's identity really moves into full developmental swing and we give the children the time and space to realise this. Our observations of the children in this time show us how their learning styles, repeated patterns of play and dispositions for learning are developing and we use this knowledge to plan their next steps for development.

The majority of children in this room are also practicing to develop their independent toileting, with access to the main toilets and potties in the room we are well versed at supporting this important transition. We also have a large changing station with built in steps that allows for the children to climb independently, again expanding their growing skills.

Our outdoor environment is an integral part of our offer to all our children, and the main play area is shared between the Caterpillar children and the preschool. This area provides them with the opportunity to move freely, use their whole bodies, move quickly, explore, and take risks at their own pace. The outside space boasts two large undercover areas, a large sandpit with a cover, mud kitchen, growing area, stage and music area, pirate ship and so much more.

We also offer many opportunities to venture out into the wider community as we explore our sleepy village and the wonderful nature opportunities that it holds.

There is a special rest and sleep time offered to the children after lunch who are requiring a nap whilst the other children will spend an extra session outside.

Our caterpillar children love to explore our art and malleable resources every day and we set up our environments to challenge and excite their senses. We create playscapes that challenge their sense of working at height, using media on vertical inclines, open and closed space and intricate spaces that require problem solving skills to fully utilise.



All children also have access to our sensory room which is located in the preschool room. This space is equipped with a large bubble tube and many items to support relaxation and wellbeing and is a lovely addition for the children.

BUTTERFLY ROOM (AUTUMN TERM THE YEAR BEFORE THEY COMMENCE SCHOOL)

Our ratio in this room is one staff member to every eight children. 1:8)

Our Butterfly room is the home of our preschool children who move to school in the upcoming intake.

We believe it is our role to offer the children the time and space in an environment that is safe and well supported. Within this context they develop their life skills which will aid them in their transition to school and beyond. Our preschool children are independent both in physical and practical tasks but also in thought and mind. We value their wellbeing and happiness over all else and give them time to manage the many social situations that occur when interacting in groups. Children develop their conflict resolution skills, coming up with alternative solutions, learning to make compromise and see things from a perspective other than their own. Children's friendships develop to a deeper level in the preschool, they learn what they want in a friend as well as how to be a good friend to others. Through these experiences' children build resilience and are better equipped to bounce back from adversities when they happen.

Our preschool environment is made up of loose part resources, which the children can use in a variety of ways dependent on the play they are engaging with, they use their imagination and developing story telling skills to bring inanimate objects to life with a whole new set of uses. Our children are the activists of their generation, the future keepers of our planet, we listen to their thoughts and enable their ideas. Working in this way on big thinking about subjects that matter to them, helps them develop into contributing citizens.

We have a lot of real-life objects in preschool, things from other people's worlds that act as a provocation for new play opportunities but also to learn that you need to respect not just other people but objects and places too.

We use projection and light as a media to manipulate and understand how we can impact our environment, using resources such as our light table, overhead projector, movie projector and laptop. These resources enable the children to use light in the same way they would sand, or water or other malleable materials, to interact with moving pictures of themselves, interact with their shadows, interjection and changing light and movement, shape, and number and more.

Our inside space also has an indoor swing and climbing cube to further develop our children's senses of balance, time, and space as well as the many other social and turn taking outcomes.

Literacy and numeracy are very important for our children and our job in Early Years is to encourage a love of books, reading, sharing stories both real and imagined and making marks that have meaning and represent our thoughts. We help children's phonic development and their understanding of letters and sounds through play-based activities and positive encouragement. In addition to this we support children to understand the concept of number and counting and recognising their names. However, formal reading and writing is not a part of our curriculum in nursery and each school will have their own way of teaching and supporting this part of your child's development.

Self-regulation and developing positive behaviours.

Understanding your own feelings and emotions and how these impact on our behaviour is a complex and difficult process that we learn and evolve through our whole lives. At The Old School Nursery, we support the children to develop strategies for positive behaviours, manners and respect for themselves and each other.

For a child to gain mastery and mature both cognitively and physically, children need repeated exposure to solving problems and managing a range of situations. We enable the children by offering opportunity to do this in a safe environment, supported by patient and respectful adults and who give the children clear boundaries that are fair and that they can understand. We do not overschedule the children at nursery, as it is important the pace is unhurried in order to give the children the time, they need to practice these skills.

Meals.

We are so fortunate to have three wonderful cooks who work on rotation at the nursery, they provide nutritious, well balanced, home cooked meals for the children and team to share and enjoy. We source our meat from the local Butchers in Blandford ensuring we are providing high quality locally sourced meat.

Children are served with breakfast between 7:45am and 8:45am.

We provide a mid-morning snack, a cooked lunch at 12:00pm and a varied tea at 4.30 pm.

We carefully plan a separate menu for the babies where necessary and cater for children with specific dietary requirements.

Bringing extra to our children.

We believe that our team will deliver the best care for your child when they love what they do. Our team is made up of individuals who go above and beyond their normal duties to support our children, some of those team members bring their own passions and talents in too. We have team members who support more in-depth work in Art, wellbeing, activism, music and two fully qualified gymnastics teachers who work with the children towards achieving their level 1 award by the time they leave us for school.

Below is just one example of how these teachers add so much value for our children.

Verina is our resident music teacher (playing almost every instrument that we have ever heard of) the sounds from her keyboard, guitar, saxophone, flute, piano accordion, tongue drums and more can be heard ringing out as she works with groups of children across the nursery each week.

Verina not only plays instruments with the children, but she also listens to their words and enables them to create their own songs and melodies working with pitch, scale, rhythm and rhyme. Verina explores and listens to the children's interests and fascinations about music and helps them to expand the range of music they are exposed to, from classical to sea shanty and all the good stuff in between!

Verina helps the children to explore bigger questions such as how do you know which key to press next? Where does the sound come out of? Is the sound still there if the volume is off? How do we fix the string on the guitar? What effect does music have on our body and our mood?



We look forward to welcoming you to our Nursery.