



THE ORCHARD

THE ORCHARD WELCOME BROCHURE

We look forward to welcoming your child to The Orchard

The Orchard
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Little Milton
Oxon
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Tel: 01844-279989

Registered Charity No. 1028227

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ABOUT THE ORCHARD

The Orchard was originally formed as a playgroup in 1987, being housed for its first year in a classroom at Little Milton School and for two terms in a farmhouse kitchen. In September 1988, The Orchard moved into a purpose built premises adjoining Little Milton School. Members of Little Milton village and parents designed and constructed The Orchard building themselves, which won the 'Village Ventures' award in 1988.

In November 2000 we built and moved to our 'log cabin' building (Little Milton School needed The Orchard building for a third classroom). Most of the funding for the project came from South Oxfordshire District Council, The National Lottery, Little Milton School and lots of fundraising events organised and supported by The Orchard and the local community.

We are inspected annually by Ofsted to enable us to be registered to accommodate up to 24 children per session. We are also registered with the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

We are now known simply as 'The Orchard' as we feel we provide not only playgroup type activities but also aim to prepare the older child for school by a 'learn through play' approach. We have passed four Ofsted inspections, the most recent in March 2010. A copy of their report is available on request.



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THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW WHEN YOUR CHILD STARTS AT THE ORCHARD

Arrival Time

This is from 08:55, with registration at 09:15. On arrival the children need to place their apple-shaped names on our apple tree, to show that they are here. If your child is a little unhappy with leaving you, then speak to a member of staff, as they are very experienced at making the separation easier for all.

Drop Off and Collection

Please do feel free to enjoy drop off time and the mix of children, parents and staff. However, children do settle better if there are not too many parents milling around. At collection time parents congregate at the gate and a member of staff will bring your child and belongings out to you. This avoids confusion and upset.

Book Bags

Each child will need a book bag (purchased from us). This will automatically be given on their first day, and £4.00 will be added to your bill. On arrival, book bags are to be placed in the colourful box located to the right of where you come in, but only when you have finished with the book. Do not feel you have to do this every day, please read at your own pace. Keep an eye out for flyers or notices about upcoming events in the book bags.

Uniform

We have a uniform bearing The Orchard logo, which we would encourage parents to purchase. This is a red sweatshirt, polo shirt and/or a T-shirt. If you would like them to look the part, speak to a member of staff to obtain a form for the correct size. We have a small number of second-hand tops available. Please speak to a member of staff.

Show and Tell

The children love to bring in things from home to show and talk about. Please note that these show and tell days are only twice a week and vary from term to term. Usually the days are either on a Monday or Thursday one term, and Tuesday and Friday the next. We try to encourage the children to bring in something that relates to our 'theme/shape/colour of the week'.

Other than these days we try to encourage toys to be left at home, to cause less confusion.

We do have exceptions for comforters for when a child is unhappy/upset, and when they are settling in. These have a special place when not in use.

Snack Time

Platters of fresh fruit are prepared each morning so that children get a healthy snack each day. The parents kindly donate this fruit. If you could please supply one piece for every two sessions your child attends (or one if they only attend twice a week), we would be most grateful. The children are offered milk, juice or water at these snack times too, plus water is available throughout the morning. Please inform staff if your child is allergic to any food or drink.

Outdoor Life

Weather permitting, we like to take the children out to play using the great outdoors as an expansion of the classroom. Please ensure that your child has enough warm clothes for outdoors, plus wellies for those wet months. Indoor shoes such as plimsolls or slippers are required during the wet months, to ensure our floors and carpet remain clean and mud free! In summer a hat or cap is required. Please clearly mark any item of footwear, hats and/or outer clothing with their names, as this helps the staff immensely.



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Session Content

At the beginning of each term you will be given a newsheet about the forthcoming weeks activities. If at any time you want to increase your child's days, please speak to the Supervisor directly.

Spare Clothes

Sometimes children are prone to 'little accidents'. Please store some spare clothes and pull ups/nappies (if appropriate) in a bag on their peg. We do have spare clothes of our own in case of 'emergencies'.

Daily Parent Help

Each day a 'parent helper' comes in to be part of the team. Near the end of each term, the new rota is available for you to sign up your services. This is a great opportunity to see your child and The Orchard at work, and involve you in the many activities! Parent Helpers are expected to stay for the morning session only.

Discussion Times with Staff Members

If at any time you have queries or concerns about your child, please feel free to speak to your child's key person, either first thing or at pick up time to arrange a good time for you to get together.

Foundation Stage

The Orchard works towards the Early Years Foundation Stage, which carries on until they reach the end of Reception year at school. Our curriculum allows each child to develop in all 6 areas of learning throughout their time with us.

The term after your child is 4, they will be entitled to attend our Rising 5's session. This is a smaller dedicated group which gives children the opportunity to increase their concentration levels and expand on numbers, letters and shapes, in preparation for the transition to school.

For more information speak to the Supervisor.

Staff Ratio

The Orchard has a 1:6 staff/child ratio for children aged 3 and above. For under 3's the ratio changes to 1:4.

Notices

Please keep an eye on the Tree notice board by the main entrance and the door. It carries notices and reminders of events and information.

Invoices

You will be invoiced at the beginning of each term. The Orchard offers DfEE funding Flexible 15 to all children aged 3 and over. At the beginning of the term after your child's 3rd birthday, you will be given a form to fill in, which the Pre-School will process on your behalf. Any queries, please speak to the Supervisor.

Wish List

Within the cloakroom is a 'Wish List' of things that the Pre-School need. The hope is that parents will donate or contribute towards them - used or new. We are always very grateful for all things we receive and the support that is given.



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Timetable

DAY	SESSION	TIME
Monday	Morning Session	08:55-12:00
	Lunch Club	12:00-13:00
	Afternoon Session	12:00-14:45
	All day Monday	08:55-14:45
Tuesday	Morning Session	08:55-12:00
	Rising 5s	12:00-14:45
Wednesday	Morning Session	08:55-12:00
	Lunch Club	12:00-13:00
	Afternoon Session	12:00-14:45
	All day Wednesday	08:55-14:45
Thursday	Morning Session	08:55-12:00
Friday	Morning Session	08:55-12:00
	Lunch Club	12:00-13:00
	Afternoon Session	12:00-14:45
	All day Friday	08:55-14:45

If you wish to book your child into Lunch Club, please ask a member of staff.

Committee

The Orchard is a registered charity and run by The Management Committee of The Orchard. The Committee is made up of volunteer parents (mums or dads are welcome!) or carers.

Anyone is welcome to Committee Meetings, the dates of meetings are usually placed on the notice board a week in advance. We always welcome new members so why not come along to our meeting (wine and nibbles included) and find out what it is all about. There is more information about the Committee in the Administration Section.

Your Role as a Parent

We consider *every* parent of The Orchard a supporter and we always require help at fundraising events; this cannot be left just to Committee members. Please let The Supervisor know if you are able to help out in any way at all.

Finally... we are a Charity!

Please be aware that The Orchard is a charitable organisation. As such, the fees only cover our basic costs and everything else we have to fund raise for. We do rely heavily on parent support to provide all those extra resources, which the children thrive on.

WE HOPE THIS INFORMATION WILL BE HELPFUL TO YOU, AND GIVES YOU AN INSIGHT INTO WHAT GOES ON AT THE ORCHARD



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1. ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Admission of children who are known to be unwell

No child will be accepted into the Pre-School with an infectious disease or with fever, vomiting or diarrhoea. In respect of other parents and children, please ensure there is 48 hours clearance of illness before your returning your child to the Pre-School. For further reference please look on the notice board in the entrance lobby.

Procedure if a child has an accident

In the event of an accident every effort will be made to contact the parent/carer and appropriate action will be taken. All accidents will be noted in the Accident Book at The Orchard.

Collecting of Child/Children

It is the policy of the Pre-School not to allow children to leave with an adult other than the parent/carer who brings the child to the Pre-School, unless staff have been notified in writing of any change. Forms to notify staff of changes are available on request.

In an emergency regarding the collection of your child, parents are asked to telephone the staff at The Orchard on 01844 279989.

Access

The Orchard caters for people with disabilities; there is disabled access to the building by means of ramps and facilities for the disabled within the building e.g. a disabled toilet.



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2. ADMINISTRATION

Policy and Practice

The Pre-School is run by an elected Committee that ensure the major decision-making is in the hands of the parents who use the group. The Committee is responsible for reviewing both policy and practice, and for the employment and appraisal of members of staff. Committee members are usually elected at the Annual General Meeting held each year in February. This is made up of parents of The Orchard (supported by a Little Milton School Governor and a representative of The Friends of Little Milton School).

WE WARMLY WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO COME INTO THE COMMITTEE AT THE AGM, SO PLEASE ASK STAFF OR EXISTING MEMBERS IF YOU ARE INTERESTED.

The Committee

The main role of the Committee is:

- To support the staff in the day-to-day running of The Orchard
- To collect fees, administer staff wages and manage the budget
- To organise fundraising events
- To welcome and involve parents as much as possible
- To work alongside the Pre-School Learning Alliance (an umbrella organisation for Pre-Schools) and so keep up to date with legislation and good practice, and to qualify for registration with Ofsted
- To ensure The Orchard reaches the required educational standards to pass the Ofsted Inspections and so enable us to accept funded children
- To maintain high standards of safety and practice in order to pass our annual inspection to continue our registration with Ofsted

Policies and Procedure

The committee and members of staff have agreed policies and procedures. Summarised versions of the policies are included with this introductory booklet. The policies in full are available, just ask a member of staff. The parent's notice board in the entrance lobby of The Orchard building, displays our most recent inspection report and other relevant information for parents to read.



3. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Activities

The Orchard provides a safe, stimulating and creative atmosphere. Some of the many activities offered include: story time with discussion, singing and nursery rhymes, role-play, craftwork, cooking, sand and water play, construction, outdoor play and, on occasions, well-supervised country walks. We also operate a library scheme to encourage the enjoyment of books at home.

Children's Development & Learning

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage (DCFS 2007). From September 2008 the Early Years Foundation Stage became law. This brings together Birth to Three Matters and the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. Our provision reflects the four key themes and 16 commitments of the Early Years Foundation Stage

A Unique Child

- Child Development: Skilful communicator, competent learner.
- Inclusive Practice: Equality and diversity, children's entitlements, early support.
- Keeping Safe: Being safe and protected, discovering boundaries, making choices.
- Health and Well-being: Growth and developing, physical and emotional wellbeing.

Positive Relationships

- Respecting Each Other: Understanding feelings, friendship, professional relationships.
- Parents as Partners: Respecting diversity, communication, learning together.
- Supporting Learning: Positive interactions, listening to children, effective teaching.
- Key Person: Secure attachment, shared care, independence.

Enabling Environments

- Observation, Assessment and Planning: Starting with the child, planning, assessment.
- Supporting Every Child: Children's needs, the learning journey, working together.
- The Learning Environment: The emotional environment, the outdoor environment, the indoor environment.
- The Wider Context: Transitions and continuity, multi-agency working, the community.

Learning and Development

- Play and Exploration: Learning through experience, adult involvement, contexts for learning.
- Active Learning: Mental and physical involvement, decision making, personalised learning.
- Creativity and Physical Thinking: Making connections, transforming and understanding, sustained shared thinking.
- Areas of Development and Learning.



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Learning

Each child has a red folder, which is designed for parents, keyperson and staff to assess the stage of each child's development thus enabling us to plan appropriate activities to promote learning for each child based on the six Early Learning Goals (ELG). Further details on the six Educational Provisional Goals are detailed below. Your input is invaluable, as no one knows a child as well as his or her parents or carer.

Educational Provision

The Orchard embraces the principle of learning through play. Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development

The contents of the red folder have been designed by the staff and Committee at The Orchard to help them assess the stage of each child's development. Our key person approach enables us to ensure a planned curriculum tailored to the needs of each individual child.

The folder is presented in six different sections under the headings of the Areas of Development and Learning:

- 1 Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- 2 Communication, Language and Literacy
- 3 Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy
- 4 Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- 5 Physical Development
- 6 Creative Development

By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and a high level of individual adult input, we offer a curriculum that enables children to progress towards the ELG throughout the Foundation Stage (from age 3 to the end of Reception year in Primary School) and prepares them for the National Curriculum, which begins at Year 1 in Primary School.

We are required by the DfEE to base our planned activities under these ELG as set out by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority 2000 (QCA):

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children will be encouraged to be confident, have self-respect, and be able to establish effective relationships with other children and adults. There will be opportunities for them to work as part of a group and independently and they will be encouraged to concentrate and persevere in their activities, seeking help when needed. Independence in selecting activities or resources and in dressing and personal hygiene will be supported.



Children will be encouraged to take turns and share fairly, to express their feelings and behave in appropriate ways and to develop an understanding of what is right, what is wrong and why. A sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others and respect for people of other cultures and beliefs will be nurtured.

An ability to respond to relevant cultural and religious events and show a range of feelings, such as wonder, joy or worry will be promoted.

2. Communication, Language and Literacy

There will be opportunities, in both small and large groups, for children to listen attentively and talk about their experiences with increasing fluency and growing vocabulary. They will be encouraged to listen and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems, make up their own stories and take part in role-play with confidence.

Children will be encouraged to write their own names, with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters, and will have many opportunities to recognise their own names. There will be opportunities to recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound.

They will be encouraged to use pictures, symbols, familiar words and letters to communicate meaning and have an awareness of some of the different purposes of writing. A well-stocked book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, to be able to handle them and be aware of their uses, both for reference and as a source of stories and pictures.

3. Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy

Opportunities will be provided for children to use mathematical language, such as in front of, next to, underneath, bigger than and smaller than and to recognise geometric shapes. Number rhymes, songs, counting games and activities will be regularly utilised, together with activities to promote matching, ordering, sequencing and pattern making.

Children will be encouraged to use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems. They will be given opportunities to recognise and use numbers to 10 and be familiar with larger numbers from their everyday lives.

4. Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Children will be encouraged to talk about where they live, their environment, their families and past and present events in their own lives. Opportunities are provided to explore and recognise features of living things, objects and events on the natural and man-made world.

Children will be encouraged to explore and select materials and equipment, and use skills such as cutting, joining, folding and building for a variety of purposes.



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5. Physical Development

Children will be encouraged to move confidently and imaginatively, with increasing control and co-ordination, and an awareness of space and others. We have a good range of small and large equipment (both indoor and outdoor), and balancing and climbing apparatus are available. Opportunities regularly exist to handle tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

They are also encouraged to develop awareness of their own bodies and of what keeps them healthy.

6. Creative Development

Children will be given opportunities to explore sound and colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions. An increasing ability to use their imagination through art, music, dance, stories and imaginative play will be encouraged. A wide range of materials and suitable tools will be made available to help children express their ideas and to communicate their feelings.

General Information

Each term, parents are given a précis of the curriculum plan for the following weeks. A detailed version of the plan is always available for parents to inspect, and is posted to the internal door of the main room of The Orchard, together with a schedule showing the learning outcomes from the various activities.

Any parent who wishes to contribute to the planning of the curriculum, or who wishes to become involved with the teaching will be welcomed, and should speak to the Supervisor for further information.



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Rising 5's

Sessions are planned each week specifically to assess and assist the older children in preparation for full-time school. Rising 5's specific activities take place both within the normal morning sessions and during the specific Rising 5's session on a Tuesday afternoon. The type of 'work' varies from pencil control and recognition of letters, to board games for number recognition.

To help prepare the child for a smooth and happy transition to school, many schools in the area are happy to arrange regular visits during their last term at The Orchard. All schools have slightly different arrangements and thus parents should enquire with their nominated school what their policy is.



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4. STAFFING AND SUPPORT

Staffing

The Orchard operates with a ratio of one adult to six children, for children aged over 3 years and one adult to four children for the under threes.

We also operate a key person system i.e. each child is allocated a specific member of staff who will take a special interest in the individual needs of that child at The Orchard. Please see the table displayed on the Notice Board giving information as to staff and the days on which they work.

All qualified staff are also qualified first aiders and three members of staff have a Level 3 Qualification and 1 at Level 2. Members of staff attend regular training sessions to continue to develop their knowledge and interest. These courses include: observation and record keeping; child development; curriculum planning and learning through play.

Planning Co-ordinator

The Planning Co-ordinator's role is to attend all planning meetings, and together with the staff, choose a topic for each period and plan a series of activities related to that topic designed to help each child achieve the six Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage i.e. before they start school. (Please see the section on Educational Provision for more details - or speak to a member of staff for a full explanation). Weekly plans are always displayed on the internal door to the main room of The Orchard for your reference. Please feel free to speak to the staff for more information.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is essential to the success of The Orchard, which is a charitable organisation. Parents are asked to support the various fundraising events that are held and we very much welcome new faces and new ideas at any time. Parents are also expected to take their turn in helping out during sessions. This is organised by means of a rota, with each parent usually helping out only once or twice each half term depending on the number of sessions their child is attending. In the event that parents do not wish to take part in this rota, parents are required to pay the equivalent of the cost of an unqualified member of staff or another parent to cover their session.



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5. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Nursery Education Vouchers

The Orchard is registered to accept vouchers.

Photographs

Staff sometimes, take photographs of children doing activities to maintain our records required by Ofsted. If any parent/carer has any objections, please let The Supervisor know. Photographs may also be used on our Website (www.theorchardpreschool.co.uk). You will be given a form to complete for authorisation when your child joins The Orchard.

Other Affiliations

The Orchard is a full member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is registered with Ofsted. We are inspected annually in order to maintain our registration and safety standards and comply with the requirements of the Children Act 1989.

Admission Procedure

The Orchard Pre-School is able to accept children for a minimum of 2 morning sessions from 2 years at the discretion of the Supervisor and with regard to the welfare of the child.

Throughout the Week

Lunch Club - is run on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12:00 to 13:00. Providing places are available and at the discretion of the Supervisor, children attending morning sessions are able to attend Lunch Club.

Parents are required to provide their children with their own packed lunches and we ask parents to consider the importance of providing safe, healthy food and suitable containers e.g. cool boxes and ice packs, in order to ensure food stays cool in warm weather. **Please also note our 'no nuts' policy (please see the section on Refreshments).**

Rising 5's - This session is held on a Tuesday afternoon from 12:00 to 14:45. It encourages structured play with an emphasis on literacy and mathematics preparing the children more specifically for school.



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Fees

Fees are payable termly in advance and are as follows:

SESSIONS	COST
Morning	£8.50
Lunch Club	£2.50
Afternoon (Lunch Club inclusive)	£8.50
Rising 5's (Tuesday afternoon, Lunch Club inclusive)	£8.50

Parents of eligible three and four year olds receive funding from the DfEE in lieu of fees. Please ask the Supervisor or Treasurer for details.

One half term's notice in writing is required for the withdrawal of a child or a reduction in the number of sessions. If notice is not received you will be liable for the equivalent of one half term's fees.

Additional Sessions

Subject to availability, in exceptional circumstances, we are able to offer children extra sessions on a casual basis. We must ask that fees be paid at the beginning of each additional session. We are not able to substitute days due to absence.

Deposit

A deposit of £40 is payable prior to commencement by a child at The Orchard Pre-School. This deposit will be returned in full when the child leaves the Pre-School provided that the appropriate written notice of one half term has been given for the withdrawal of a child or a reduction in the number of sessions.

Ofsted Requirements For Safeguarding Children

In accordance with child protection procedures, it is a duty of Pre-School staff to notify relevant authorities of any concerns regarding a child's welfare. For further information on our Child Protection Procedures, parents are referred to the full version of the policy located on the parent's notice board.

Further Activities

The Orchard is also available for hire for children's parties at a price of £25.00. Please contact the Supervisor for further information.



6. SUMMARISED POLICIES

Below you will find the summarised policies in use at The Orchard. If you wish to read the full versions of these policies, speak to a member of staff. Where the word 'parent(s)' is used, it should be taken to mean 'parent(s) and/or other carer(s)'.

Admission

It is our intention to make our Pre-School genuinely accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community. We have 24 places for morning/afternoon sessions for children from 2 to 5 years of age, but should applications exceed the number of places available, admissions criteria would be brought in.

Behaviour and Discipline

We are opposed to any form of corporal punishment. Gentle discipline is encouraged. We aim to provide a happy, safe environment; encouraging children to share and consider the needs of others and to develop good social skills. No child in the group will be physically punished; rather they will be encouraged to engage in an alternative activity.

Safe Guarding Children

If we have any reason to suspect that a child is being abused at home in any way it is our policy to take appropriate action. All members of staff have undergone a Police check to ensure that they have no history of abuse or criminal record.

Complaints

We aim to achieve a good working relationship with parents and we welcome both suggestions and complaints as we feel these can be used constructively. If a parent has a complaint or anxiety, they should first speak with the Supervisor.

Confidentiality

Any information concerning a child will be treated confidentially and only shared with the child's parents and members of staff. Records kept on children are only accessible to the parents concerned.



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Refreshments

The children have a healthy snack each morning during which good manners and hygiene are encouraged. **Please note that due to the increase in nut allergies we have a 'NO NUTS' policy at The Orchard. Therefore, if you provide cakes etc for birthdays, they must not contain nuts or traces of nuts. This also applies to packed lunches for children who attend lunch club, i.e. NO PEANUT BUTTER etc.**

Health and Hygiene

The Orchard promotes a healthy lifestyle and a high standard of hygiene in its day-to-day work with children and adults.

Equality and Diversity

The Orchard aims to meet the needs of each individual child - regardless of their race, gender, age, class or ability. We work to ensure access to equal opportunities for all children to develop into confident, competent, caring and self-aware children. The Orchard adheres to the Pre-School Learning Alliance guidelines on equality and aims to ensure that all who wish to attend, work in, or help with our Pre-School have an equal opportunity to do so.

Parental Involvement

Parents are the first educators of their young children. It is our policy to support their essential work. We also encourage parents to play an active part in the management of the Pre-School.

Safety

The safety of young children is of paramount importance and is addressed by The Orchard in relation to their environment and to supervision. Regular safety inspections are made.

Selecting Equipment and Toys

The toys and equipment provided give opportunities for children to develop new skills and concepts and all conform to the relevant safety regulations.

Settling-In

Children cannot play or learn successfully if they are anxious or unhappy. Our settling-in policy aims to help the child feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents. Parents are welcome to remain with their child as long as it seems appropriate.



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Special Educational Needs

Our Pre-School aims to have regard to the DfEE Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special needs and to provide welcome and appropriate learning opportunities, for all children.

Staffing and Employment

We have a high adult: child ratio, as we believe it to be essential in providing good quality Pre-School care. We operate a key-worker system.

Student Placement

Students seeking work experience are welcomed to The Orchard as we recognise that we can offer an opportunity to experience good quality provision. All students are interviewed to ensure their suitability.

The Orchard is a Registered Charity No. 1028227

For further information or to arrange a visit, please telephone The Orchard on 01844 279989.