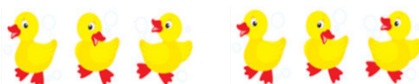


Welcome to St Francis CE Primary School



**A safe place to play, learn and achieve.
The Early Years Foundation Stage
Ducklings Nursery Class**



The Governors and Staff would like to welcome your child and your family to our nursery class.

We hope you find the welcome booklet a useful guide for your child's first experience of nursery at our school.

St Francis CE Primary School, Horspath Road, Cowley,
Oxford, OX4 4QT
Co-Head Teachers: Mrs. Fleur Belcher and Mrs. Lorraine
Woods

Telephone: 01865 468190

Website: www.st-francis.oxon.sch.uk

Email: office3253@st-francis.oxon.sch.uk

Nursery Opening Times

Mornings: Monday-Friday: 8.35am - 11.35am

Door opens at 11.25am, please collect your child by 11.35am.

OR

Full Time/30 Hour place, Monday-Friday: 9.00am – 3.00pm

You will need to obtain a funding code from www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/ in order to access the 30 hours funding before a place can be allocated.

For families who are not eligible for a 30 Hour code, we also offer 30 Hour places where you can self-fund top up sessions. Please ask at the school office for more information on this.

The Nursery and Early Years Team



Mrs. Fi Coates
Nursery Teacher
Monday - Thursday
mornings.
Reception – Tuesday
afternoons.



Mrs. Becky McConville
Nursery Teacher
Friday mornings.



Mrs. Kim Page
Early Years Support Worker
Monday-Friday mornings in
the Nursery and afternoons
in Reception.



Mrs. Susie Stuart
Reception Teacher



Mrs. Sharon Wake
Early Years Support Worker
Monday-Friday all day in



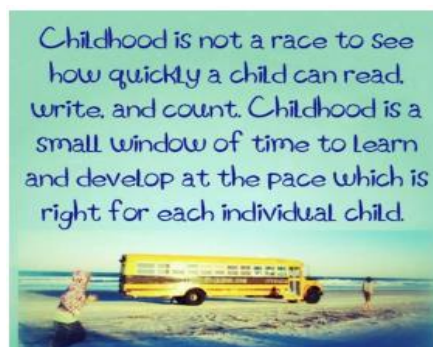
Mrs. Lucy Hampton
Year 1 Teacher
Early Years Lead Teacher

Working in Early Years is not just a job to us; it is a special calling. We believe that this profession requires total dedication, devotion and a loving commitment. Our educational philosophy is to create a learning environment that is fun, exciting and safe.

Our goal is to go far beyond teaching. We are passionate early years educators and we like to inspire children to want to learn more about themselves and the world around them and to prepare for their next steps in their learning journey.

Our role during this formative time of a child's brain development is essential. Early learning experiences are crucial factors for emotional, intellectual, cognitive, social, and physical development, ultimately affecting how well a child will perform in their first year at school. There is nothing more inspiring than to see the face of a child who has mastered a new skill or conquered a challenge. Of course, some days are exhausting but when we greet those smiling faces the next day, we feel empowered beyond words.

We have developed excellent relationships with our parent/carers and children over time and we feel privileged and honoured to be a part of their learning journey.



Welcome To Our Classroom



This is the cloakroom.

This is where you can hang your coat. You will have your own coat peg and you can hang your bag of spare clothes here.



Hang Up Stuff

Toilet Area

It is very helpful if your child is toilet trained and can use the toilet and wash their hands independently.

If your child is in nappies/pullups please send them to nursery with a sufficient stock of nappies/pullups, wipes and nappy sacks in a named bag /ruck sack. When you feel your child is ready to be toilet trained nursery staff can support this.

Even if your child is toilet trained, children do occasionally have toileting accidents. Please ensure that your child brings a spare change of clothing in their bag each day. Our toilets are situated within the nursery room and children are encouraged to be as independent as possible in their self-care. Staff are always available to support in their personal care if required.

The toilets and wash hand basins are just the right size for little children. Children can use the paper towels to dry their hands.



Our Nursery

Our nursery has many areas of continuous provision for the children to access, both indoors and outdoors.

Outdoor Learning

Children in nursery have open access to the outdoor area and we consider our outdoor area as an 'outside classroom', as we greatly value the learning opportunities that the outdoor environment offers to young children. We hope that you appreciate that there can be times when the children's trousers, socks or tights may get dirty!

Here are some of the activities we enjoy.

Tunnelling!



Role-Play



Balancing



Ball skills



Water Play



Sand Pit



Mud Kitchen



Play is particularly important for young children. Nursery children learn through play-based learning. Learning through play is the foundation of childhood development in terms of language and communication, emotional well-being and regulation, creativity, and intellectual reasoning.

Outdoor Learning

Here are some more activities that we enjoy. There are many other activities available, it is impossible to list them all!

Climbing and jumping



Using a seesaw



Using wheeled toys.



Designing,
creating and

Visiting the Sensory Garden:
looking, listening, looking, smelling,



Our inside Learning Environment

Funky Fingers Table



Playdough and Malleable Table



Painting Table



Maths Table



Sand Tray



Imaginative Role-Play Area



Mark Making Table



Small World Play



Here are some more activities that we enjoy. There are many other activities available, it is impossible to list them all!



Our inside Learning Environment

Snack Table

Children have a snack during the morning session which includes a drink of milk and fruit provided by the Government Fruit for Schools scheme. You may prefer to send your child to nursery with a labelled drink bottle.

Please do not send in biscuits, sweets or crisps for your child to eat in nursery.

Please remember to inform us if your child has an allergy or intolerance to any foods, milk or other substances.



Lunch Time

If your child is staying for lunch (30 Hour place) please make sure they have a packed lunch in a named box and a named drink. We have a 'healthy school' policy and encourage healthy eating. We discourage sweets, chocolates and fizzy drinks.

Please refer to the Healthy Lunchbox letter you have been given.

We will keep you updated about any children in nursery who may have severe food allergies. **Please avoid sending in foods containing nuts.**

Our Day

Well... there is no such thing as a typical day at our nursery!

We are keen to follow the children's interests and lots of activities are planned 'in the moment.' However, we do have a routine which we try to follow:

Morning Children	
Welcome Time 8.35-8.55 	Welcome Time We welcome children and their families at the nursery door. This is a good opportunity to chat with other parents and with staff.
Register Time 8.55-9.00	Register Time
Key Group Time - 9.00-9.25 	Key Group Time This is an adult-led session where children work in a small group with their Key Person . The focus might be: topic work; numbers; shape, space and measure; phonics games and Letters and Sounds activities; Story Telling; rhyme of the week activity or construction fun.
Free-flow Play 9.25-11.00 	Free-flow Play During this time children can access a wide range of activities both indoors and outdoors, some of which are adult-focused (led by an adult). All activities are supervised and monitored.
Tidy-up Time 11.00-11.10 	Tidy-up Time Children help to put things away neatly so they are ready for others to use later.
Whole Class Group Time 11.10-11.25 	Big Group Time This is an adult-led session where all the children listen and join in with songs, rhymes, topic work and stories.
Home Time 11.25-11.35 	Home Time Please collect your child on time and inform us if somebody different will be collecting them. We take the 30 Hour children to lunch in the school hall at 11.40am They will join the children from our reception class and spend their lunch time and afternoon together.

Starting Nursery

Starting nursery is a significant milestone in your child's life. We will do all we can to help them feel welcome, safe and secure. We are aware of the tremendous input that you, as parents/carers, have already made in the education of your child and we look forward to developing a partnership with you in these valuable early years.

When your child starts nursery, you will find that only a few children will start on the same day. By admitting the children a few at a time we find that the children are able to settle quickly and easily into the nursery routine, making the transition from home to nursery as smooth as possible for both children and parents.

There will be plenty of opportunities for play based learning. Many activities will be 'messy'. So be prepared for grubby clothes! Although the children will be required to wear aprons for these activities, more often than not, they still manage to get covered!

Preparing Your Child

Starting nursery is a very exciting time for young children and together we can make it a very happy and rewarding time. Before starting nursery talk to your child about coming to nursery and about the things they will be doing and the people they will be meeting. It is important to remember that young children vary tremendously in the way in which they react to new experiences so do allow your child plenty of time to settle into to nursery. Some children may take longer to settle than others, we will always work in partnership with you and your child to ensure the best possible transition arrangements and outcome.

Leaving Your Child /Your Child's First Day

When you do leave your child for the first time, it is best to do so for only a short period, our graduated start will hopefully enable this. Always make sure that you say "goodbye" to your child and tell them when you will be coming back and what you will be doing whilst you are away.

Key Person/Key Group

Children thrive from a base of loving and secure relationships. This is normally provided by a child's parents/carers but it can also be provided by a **key person**. A key person is a named member of staff with responsibilities for a small group of children who helps those children in the group feel safe and cared for. During your child's time in nursery your child will also be placed in a **key group** with their key person. Small key groups foster close bonds between the child and the key person in a way that large groups cannot easily do. These groups allow the key person to better 'tune into' children's play and their conversations to really get to know the children in the group well.

The key person spends most time with your child and is best able to answer any questions you have about how your child is getting on. The key person responds sensitively to children's feelings and behaviours, endeavors to meet your child's emotional needs, supports physical needs too, such as nappy changing, toileting and dressing and contributes to your child's Learning Journey. **All staff however, will care for and attend to the needs of all the children in the nursery.**



Whole Class Group Time

This is when all the children and the adults come together for stories, songs, topic work and rhymes



Partnerships with Parents/Carers

We want to work closely with you. Good communication between staff and parents/carers enables us to inform each other of relevant matters concerning your child. This is key to a successful partnership between home and school. We pride ourselves in having excellent relationships with parents/carers. If you have any concerns or just need a chat, staff are available. Staff meet and greet you and your child daily at the entrance to the nursery. We appreciate being informed of any change at home that might affect your child and will treat anything you tell us in strict confidence. Please inform a member of nursery staff if there are any changes to who will normally be dropping off / collecting your child

Updates and News

We want to inform you about the activities and learning experiences that your child will be taking part in. We update parents in the following ways:

- Nursery monthly newsletter
- Via our on-line Profile called Tapestry
- Our Class Page – accessible on our school website: www.st-francis.oxon.sch.uk
- Whiteboard outside the nursery

Parent/Carer Meetings

We hold two parent/carers meetings each year when you will be invited to discuss your child's progress. However, there is no need to wait for these if you have questions or concerns. We want you to feel welcome at the nursery and will always have time for you.

How You Can Help?

There are many booklets in the nursery corridor that contain ideas on how to support your child's learning and play at home, toilet training, speech and language etc. The following link may be of use to parents and carers to explain what is expected at each stage of your child's development from birth to five: What to expect when...
<https://foundationyears.org.uk/files/2021/09/What-to-expect-in-the-EYFS-complete-FINAL-16.09-compressed.pdf>

Parent & Teacher Association (PTA)

We have an active PTA who organise events throughout the academic year with the whole purpose of raising money for the school and children. We are always looking for new members so if you would like to be involved then please speak to a member of staff.

Bringing and Collecting Your Child

- Children must be brought and collected by a person over the age of 16 years.
- Please tell us if someone different will be collecting your child or if you are going to be late for any reason. Also let us know if you need to collect your child early.
- Please ensure that your child is brought to nursery on time. We plan a busy session and wouldn't want any child to miss out on valuable learning and experiences.
- We would be grateful if you would ensure that your child is collected on time at the end of each session as children can get upset if they are always left until last.

Please note – parents/carers are not permitted to drive into the school car park.

We also request that you do not park outside the school gates or on the yellow zig zag lines. This creates dangers for the children going in and out of nursery/school.

Absences and Illness

- Please inform us of any change of address or contact numbers so that we can get in touch with you if your child becomes unwell or in case of an emergency.
- If your child will be absent, please contact the school (see page 2.)
- **If your child has had sickness or diarrhoea please keep them at home for 48 hours after their last period of sickness.**

Safeguarding

At St Francis we are proactive about safeguarding children. Any concerns are always shared with designated safe guarding leaders within the school and we are committed to working with others to promote the rights and interests of all children. Please see our school 'Safeguarding' page on the school website for more information on key policies and procedures.



Accidents / Injuries and Medical Information



If your child has a medical need, staff must be made aware.

You will be asked to fill in details of the medical need to formulate an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) where necessary. Such medical needs may include severe allergies, asthma and eczema or a medical need requiring staff to administer regular medication. Staff are unable to administer medicine such as Calpol.

If your child has been prescribed medication such as antibiotics or eye drops, it is preferred that you come to nursery at the required time to administer the medication. Whilst every care is taken to ensure that our environment is safe, children are children and bumps, trips and falls do happen – this is part of their development.

Any minor head or facial injury (bump, scratch, graze) is reported to parents/carers. Accident forms are completed by the member of staff who witnessed the incident and will be given to parents at the end of the nursery session.

If your child is ill and unable to attend nursery, please contact the office as soon as possible on 01865 468190

Developing Cultural Capital

At nursery, children benefit from a flexible curriculum that builds on and celebrates what they understand and know already. We believe that exposure, not only to culture but also to situations in which the children might not have previous experiences of, is of paramount importance to their ongoing successes. Gradually widening children's experiences as they progress through the nursery year is an important step in providing rich and engaging learning across the curriculum. Cultural capital is the accumulation of knowledge, behaviours, and skills that a child can draw upon and which demonstrates their cultural awareness, knowledge and competence; it is one of the key ingredients a pupil will draw upon to be successful in society, their career and the world of work.

Activities include:

- Diwali fun
- Halloween Fun Day
- Mini Bonfire Party
- Christmas Singalong and Party
- Babies to visit
- Visits from people in the community – nurses, doctors, firefighters, police officers, hair dressers etc.
- Easter and Mothering Sunday Celebrations
- Chinese New Year
- Valentine's Day
- Shrove Tuesday/Pancake Day
- Children in Need/World Book Day/Red Nose Day
- Summer Picnics, fun Days such as Pirate Day
- Eid Celebrations



These are just some of the activities that we plan for the children in order to broaden their experiential learning. We also invite visitors to talk and work with the children.



Our Aims and Vision

In the Ducklings Nursery Class, we aim to:

Provide a **safe, happy, stimulating and challenging** program of learning and development for the children to experience as they begin their journey through school.

Provide **rich teaching and learning opportunities** that will set in place firm foundations for further learning and development in reception, year 1 and beyond and enable choice and decision making, fostering curiosity, independence and self-confidence.

Use and value what each child can do, nurturing and assessing their **individual needs** and helping each child to progress and develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and respect for others in the environment.

Provide the best Early Years Education, in **strong partnership** with parents, carers, Governors and the wider community, whilst recognising the huge benefits that a shared partnership brings to each child's early years' experience.

Provide a caring and **inclusive learning environment** where everyone is known and valued, differing needs are acknowledged, accepted and met, including those who have additional needs.

We offer a delicate balance between **adult-led** experiences and **child-initiated** activities across all **Seven Areas of Learning**. (Find out more on the next few pages.) We believe that providing a balance of adult-initiated and adult-led activities, that child-initiated learning will be fostered and will naturally evolve.

By providing a safe environment where children play and make mistakes and ultimately learn from them, then true child-initiated play will emerge and bloom, thus enhancing children's 'in the moment' experiences.



The Importance of Learning through Play

Our children do not make a distinction between 'play' and 'work' and so neither do we as practitioners.

Children need time to become engrossed, work in depth and complete activities both indoors and outdoors.

We spend a lot of time observing children and assessing their levels of involvement, then enhancing their play opportunities accordingly.

- We offer opportunities for children to engage in planned and purposeful activities initiated by adults, but we also foster play which is developed by the children themselves.
- This enables us to respond appropriately to children, informed by our knowledge of how children develop and learn and a plan a clear understanding of possible next steps in each child's development and learning.
- Our nursery team are all highly trained skilled practitioners, our provision prides itself in all children having a key person who is a qualified teacher, Early Years Support Worker or Teaching Assistants and we all love to play!

Please do you ask your child - What did you do at nursery today? If they reply that they played all day, then that's the sign of a great day! Imagine all the learning they experienced through their play!

Adult-led, adult-initiated and child-initiated play

The adults will plan for the children using loose topics as a starting point to provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum and provision for the academic year.

The children are continuously observed; the adults then modify the planning to suit the current interests of the children. Children engage in self-chosen, **child-initiated** activities which can be supported by an adult, interacting to extend learning, but not interfering and turning it into an adult-led activity. Staff also set up **adult-initiated** activities to help to inspire the children's play.

Adults can respond to children's learning by offering support, extending and scaffold learning as appropriate.

We support children's learning and development by extending via questioning, asking open-ended questions, asking higher order questions, challenging thinking, modelling speaking in full sentences or in short phrases as appropriate.

We believe that children learn best from choices they have initiated themselves and encourage this as much as we can. **Adult-led** activities take place during key group times, whole class group times and during adult-focussed activities.

Our aim is to have an enabling environment where children can build upon, embed and extend the skills they have learnt from the direct teaching or interaction that has taken place.

Our aim is to also give the children the opportunity to try things out in a safe and nurturing environment and encourage our children to be independent learners.

Communication, Language and Literacy

Developing communication and language skills is at the core of everything we do at St Francis. Children will be given opportunities to:

- Take part in class discussions, sharing their own experiences and news from home, developing how we listen to others and take it in turns to respond.
- Develop their speaking and listening skills through imaginative play activities.
- Celebrating all the different languages that our children speak and learning new words in different languages.
- Listen to and enjoy a wide range of stories during our daily story time, fostering an interest in reading by visiting our 3 different book areas and accessing books independently.
- Learn how to handle books with care – turning pages, one at a time or lifting flaps and moving parts with care. Learn the names of different parts of a book – front cover, back cover, title, author, illustrator, page, page number, word, writing, text, picture, contents etc.
- Develop a growing range of vocabulary during our Rhyme Time and Story Talk Time.
- Become fully immersed in our termly **Core Stories**, using the story language learnt during their play across the seven areas of learning, and can remember much of what happens in a story and retell it in their own words.
- Develop their questioning skills – How/Why/Where/What/When?
- Take a library book home each week in nursery to share with an adult.
- Experiment with range of mark-making materials and develop early mark making/ writing skills.
- Recognise familiar words, sounds and shapes of letters during our phonics sessions.



Visit our website to find more information on:

- Encouraging talking, communicating and interaction in our setting using a variety of strategies¹⁹
- How will my child learn their letter sounds/phonics? - How will my child learn to read?
- How will my child learn to make marks/write?

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This Area of Learning is at the heart of the Foundation Phase. Children will be given the opportunities to:

- Learn about themselves, their relationships with others both within and beyond the family.
- Develop self-esteem, their personal beliefs and moral values.
- Develop an understanding that others have differing needs, abilities, beliefs and views.
- To celebrate different cultures and develop a positive awareness of their own and others cultures.
- Become increasingly aware of traditions and celebrations that are important aspects of the cultures within England. (British Values – [Please see our website for more information on British Values in the EYFS](#))
- Develop a positive attitude to learning.
- Become confident, competent and independent thinkers and learners.
- Develop an awareness of their environment and learn about the diversity of people who live and work there.
- Develop positive attitudes towards caring for the environment.
- Express their feelings and empathise with others.
- Be increasingly independent in meeting their own care needs, e.g., brushing teeth, using the toilet, washing and drying hands. Make healthy choices about food, drink, activity and toothbrushing.



We promote a positive environment and encourage positive behavior throughout a variety of strategies. Find out more on our



Physical Development

Children will be given the opportunity to:

- Develop physically, using their bodies effectively.
- Develop spatial awareness, balance, control, mobility and co-ordination.
- Develop their gross and fine motor and manipulative skills through a range of activities.
- Develop physical control and safe use of one-handed tools and equipment.
- Use a range of large and small equipment.
- Enjoy physical activity and notice what happens to their bodies when they exercise.
- Develop their sense of identity through self-image, self-esteem and confidence.
- Develop their awareness of health, hygiene and safety and the importance of diet, rest, sleep and exercise.

Please dress your child in clothing which enables them to use the toilets successfully, such as clothing with an elastic waist band.

Please dress your child in clothing which allows them to explore the nursery, climb on play equipment and shoes with velcro or easy fastenings.



We recognise the importance that fine and gross motor skills play in enabling your child to hold mark making tools, make marks and learn how to write.

Find out more:

Visit our website look for [Mark making in the nursery](#). Your child's journey at becoming a writer.

Mathematical Development

We use practical activities to develop mathematical skills and language. Children will be the given opportunities to:

Gain experience and confidence in counting, matching, sorting, ordering and comparing during adult-led group times and follow up activities provided during our continuous provision.

Play games during adult-led maths sessions to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of mathematics, then using and applying mathematics independently in self-directed practical tasks and real-life problems during indoor and outdoor play.

Learn about 2D and 3D shapes in our environment.

Look for, make and create patterns.

Explore ways of measuring time, length, height, weight, volume, capacity and playing with money.

Learn about the sequence of the day, days of the week, the sequence of different events such as making a sandwich or getting dressed.

Play games during maths sessions to develop their skills knowledge and understanding of mathematics, then using and applying mathematics independently in self-directed practical tasks and real-life problems during indoor and outdoor play.

Use mathematical language and vocabulary spontaneously during their child-initiated play whilst looking for patterns and relationships, spotting connections, make and learn from their 'marvellous mistakes.'

Enjoy using and applying mathematics in practical tasks and real-life problems.

Use ICT resources as tools for exploring number, reading and recording data and matching and sorting.

Our aim is to promote mathematics as an everyday part of life.

To find out more: Visit our website and look for [Everyday Maths in Nursery](#)



Understanding the World

Our termly topics promote experiential learning to allow children to make sense of themselves and the world around them. Children will experience the familiar world through enquiry, investigating the indoor and outdoor environment in a safe and systematic way. They will be given experiences which will help them to:

- Increase their curiosity about the world around them.

- Develop their senses of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting.

- Begin to understand past events, people and places, living things and the work people do/people's jobs and occupations.

- Enjoy learning through exploration, enquiry, experimentation and asking questions and trying to find answers.

- Learn to demonstrate care, responsibility, concern and respect for all living things and the environment.

- Plant seeds and bulbs and care for plants in our Sensory Garden.

- Find out about living creatures and life cycles of plants and animals.

- Explore and talk about different forces they can feel and about differences between materials and the changes they notice.

- Develop the skill to communicate using a range of appropriate vocabulary.

- Express their own ideas, opinions and feelings with imagination, creativity and sensitivity.

- Learn through participation in experiential learning activities and through the use of resources such as stories, photographs, maps, models and ICT.

We also develop children's Digital Competency (ICT) skills through all areas of our curriculum:

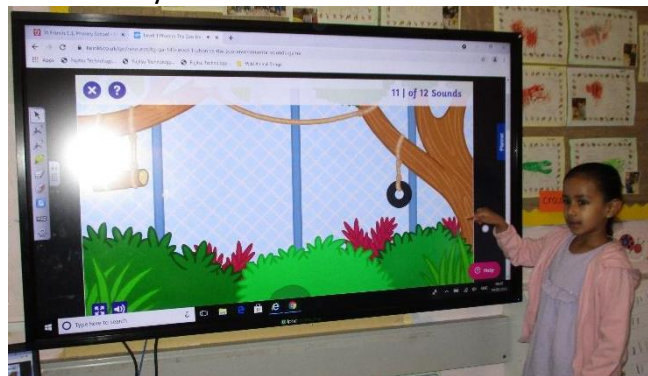
- Understand the uses of ICT.

- Use iPads to take pictures and record sound/videos.

- Access the Interactive Whiteboard and iPads to practice their number and letter formation as well as count, match and sort objects.

- Begin to develop simple programming skills using our Beebots.

- Begin to discuss on-line safety.



Creative Development

Children will be given the opportunity to:

- Sing rhymes and songs, join in with music and singing sessions reflecting global music.

- Play simple musical instruments, change their sounds and create rhythms and explore different sound sources.

- Make varied body shapes, move creatively and express themselves through music.

- Use a variety of creative materials such as different types of paint, a variety of tools with which to apply paint; malleable materials such as play dough, slime, gloop and foam; collage materials and junk modelling.

- Explore colour and texture through a range of tactile materials.

- Demonstrate an awareness of roles through imaginative play, small world play, role-play, puppets and dressing up.

- Joining a variety of large blocks, crates, bricks and planks.

- Play with a variety of construction toys together to build and balance.

- Exploring small world play – cars/garages, trains, dinosaurs, farm set, wild animals. sea creature sets etc.

