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Thongsley Fields

Primary & Nursery School



Welcome to Nursery

...growing hearts and minds



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Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Thongsley Fields Primary & Nursery School

We are delighted that your child will be joining our school's Nursery team and we are looking forward to getting to know them!

Starting Nursery is an exciting time, but is often the first time that your child will have been away from you, so there are bound to be some nerves. We know that you will have lots of questions to ask us and the purpose of this booklet is to begin to answer at least some of those questions.

We hope that you are looking forward to starting Nursery and taking part in all that we can offer your family. We will do our very best to make you and your child feel comfortable, secure and valued. Our aim is to provide your child with the very best education possible and we hope that you will work with us, in partnership, to achieve this aim.

Please do not hesitate to talk to us if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,

Philie Forster
Nursery Lead

Which class is my child in?

We are very lucky to have 3 large rooms for our children to use in Nursery, which are currently split into 2 small 'class' groups: Little Acorns 1 and Little Acorns 2. Both classes have access to our garden areas where we engage in lots of exciting learning.



We offer flexible sessions, subject to availability. Ideally this would be either 5 morning sessions, 5 afternoon sessions or two and a half consecutive days for those attending for 15 hours per week. We also offer full time (30 hours per week) places for both those eligible for 30 hour childcare funding and those wishing to pay for additional sessions. Please speak to Mrs White in the school office for more information about funding or paying for additional sessions.

From little
ACORNS
grow
mighty OAKS

A line drawing of an oak leaf, positioned to the left of the text.

Who will be looking after my child?

Our Nursery team are highly skilled, and have a vast experience of working with young children. The team working with your child will be:



Miss Forster
Nursery Teacher & Lead



Mrs Steed
Teaching Assistant



Mrs Richardson
Teaching Assistant



Miss Moore
Teaching Assistant



Mrs Clayton
Teaching Assistant



Miss Richardson
Teaching Assistant



Mrs White
Teaching Assistant

What happens before my child starts Nursery?

We encourage parents and children to come and visit our Nursery before they start where they can meet the team and see the classrooms so that it is not so daunting when they first start. We will aim to arrange a home visit with you and your child, although if your child starts mid-term, this may not be possible to fit in before they start.

What is a Home Visit?

Members of our Nursery team, including your child's teacher will visit each family home in order to meet each child in their own surroundings. This gives the teacher an opportunity to establish their partnership with parents, making time to answer any questions and hear any concerns. In addition, your child has the chance to share toys, thoughts and feelings about starting Nursery with their new teacher. Each visit will usually last approximately twenty minutes.

During the Home Visit, staff will ask questions that will help them to get to know your child and family better. For example, information we might ask about would normally include:

- Your child's names and the pronunciation of them and other family members' names;
- The different languages that are spoken and understood by your child and close family members;
- Your child's main interests and special toys as well as anything they do not like doing;
- What your child likes to do and play, both inside and outside;
- How your child usually reacts to new situations and with new people;
- Whether your child is toilet trained
- Anything that we need to know to make the settling in process as easy as possible;
- Any concerns you might have about your child's development;
- Allergies or medical conditions that we need to be aware of.

Finally, we will also confirm emergency contact details with you to make sure nothing has changed since you completed our data collection forms.

There will also be plenty of opportunities to ask staff any questions too!

When is my Home Visit?

If your child is starting at the beginning of a new term (i.e. September, January or April), you will be contacted to arrange a home visit prior to your child starting with us in Nursery. This will normally be in the last few weeks of the term before they start.



When does my child start Nursery?

Children will normally start Nursery on the first day of term after their 3rd birthday although can start at any time after they turn three years old. Our Nursery children have a 'staggered start' to Nursery, so that we can support them to settle in and get to know them.

The following timetable outlines the arrangements for your child's settling in period.

Session Times	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Morning (15 hours)	8.40-9.40	8.40-10.40	8.40-11.40	
Afternoon (15 hours)	12.00-1.00	12.00-2.00	12.00-3.00	
Two and a half days (15 hours)	8.40-9.40	8.40-11.40	8.40-12.30	8.40-3.00
Full Time (30 hours)	8.40-9.40	8.40-11.40	8.40-12.30	8.40-3.00

Will I have a say in how quickly my child can do a full session?

Our number one priority in Nursery is the children, therefore your child's settling in period may differ from the timetable shown above. Some children will take a little longer to settle, whilst others may require a little less time. Through discussions with the team, we will find a timetable that works for your child.

What do I do on the first day?

On the day of your child's first session, please arrive at Nursery calmly and happily, ready for Nursery to begin - the school gates will open at 8:40am for the morning session, and 12:00pm for the afternoon session. Bring your child into the Nursery classroom, helping your child to find their peg and put their belongings away. You will then be able to join your child in Nursery to support them to settle for a short period of time.

Does my child need to come to all of their sessions?

It is really important that your child comes to Nursery for all of their sessions, the team plans activities to support your child's learning. We monitor the children's attendance, and will ask to meet with you, if this falls below our expected level to support you in getting your child to Nursery regularly.

Will my child be able to have a snack and drink?

In Nursery we have snack time during each session where your child will be offered a piece of fruit or veg and milk. Therefore, your child will not need to bring in any snacks from home. A water bottle containing fresh plain water should be provided and brought into school every day. Children are encouraged to drink plenty throughout the day. If your child has any allergies, it is important that you let us know so that we can keep your child safe.



What happens at lunchtime?

Our children who stay all day will need to bring a healthy packed lunch to enjoy alongside their peers and the lunch time adults. We are a nut free school, and so products containing nuts are not allowed in their lunchbox, along with fizzy drinks and sweets. If you need any ideas about what to include in your child's lunch box, please speak to a member of the Nursery team who will be able to support you.

Does my child need to be toilet trained?

We encourage all children to be toilet trained before starting Nursery, however, we know that not all children are ready when they start and will support any children who are not quite there. If your child is not toilet trained, please provide them with plenty of spare pull ups and wipes in their bag. When your child is ready to start toilet training we will work together to make it as smooth as we can. Children have free access to the toilets throughout their session and are encouraged to be as independent as possible, but of course, the staff will support where it is needed.

Will my child be safe?

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure; when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. At Thongsley Fields, we take all necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in our care. We promote good health, manage behaviour effectively, ensure the suitability of staff, provide a safe and stimulating environment and maintain a rigorous system of records, policies and procedures to ensure the safety of all pupils. Our Early Years teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to work with very young children and the areas we use are regularly monitored for safety and security.

Please do take the time to read the relevant policies and information leaflets that are available on our website or from the school office.

What will my child do all day?

We believe that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (which includes Nursery) learn best through play-based activities and first-hand experiences that are both enjoyable and challenging. We aim for them to become self-motivated, independent learners through a balance of child initiated (where children decide what they want to do) and adult led experiences.

We provide and are continually developing a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. The curriculum is wide and varied, and builds on your child's existing knowledge, skills and experiences.

Learning through focused play!

If at the end of a day your child tells you that they have "just played", rest assured that your child's day will have been well planned and purposeful!



Our curriculum is based on seven different areas of learning:

1. **Personal, social and emotional development** – this concentrates on children developing a positive respect for themselves and others; building self-confidence, making new friends, interacting with adults and gaining a positive disposition to learn.
2. **Communication and language** – this covers important aspects of language development; communicating, speaking and listening. This is one of the most important areas of the Nursery curriculum, as it influences all other areas of learning.
3. **Physical development** - this concentrates on developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments; including fine motor skills: use of pencil, scissors and other tools. It also includes developing their independence in their self-care and toileting.
4. **Literacy** - this is the foundations for reading and writing. The children will enjoy a range of stories, develop an understanding of how stories end and begin to realise that marks have meanings. They are able to create their own marks which will change and develop to increasingly mimic writing which they are able to give meaning to.
5. **Mathematics** – this covers important aspects of mathematical understanding; counting objects where they say 1 number for each object, identifying small numbers of objects without counting (Subitising), using and identifying simple shapes, and beginning to understand size.
6. **Understanding of the world** – this concentrates on developing knowledge and understanding of the environment; other people and cultures; and features of the natural world. It provides the foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.
7. **Expressive art and design** – this develops the children’s imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways including through music, drama, art and role play.

How will I know how my child is doing?

Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) takes place through observations of what the pupils can do and what they say. During their first few weeks in Nursery, we will be assessing the knowledge, skills and understanding of your child using a wide range of tasks covering the EYFS curriculum. This provides the teaching staff with a valuable insight into their previous experiences and helps to mould the provision for each individual. The results of these informal assessments will be shared during Parent Consultations, which will be held at the end of the first half of the Autumn Term and then again in the Spring Term.



At Thongsley Fields, we use Tapestry (an online software package) to help record and track your child's progress. Parents are encouraged to sign up to enable them to view and contribute in order to build as complete and rounded a picture as possible.

What should my child wear to school?

The children of Thongsley Fields Primary & Nursery School wear a simple uniform of grey school trousers, shorts, or skirts and white polo shirts with navy sweatshirts. School polo shirts and sweatshirts with our embroidered school logo can be purchased via the school office. During warmer weather, girls may wear blue checked dresses. It is important that the children are dressed for school but are also able to independently manage their own toileting. Therefore, if children are newly toilet trained, we would encourage them to wear black trousers which are easy to pull up and down quickly!

Footwear should consist of a sturdy black shoe with a closed toe and no heels.

Jewellery is NOT APPROPRIATE for school and any long hair MUST be tied back.

Your child will not need a PE kit.



How can I help my child look after their belongings?

You will definitely hear this a lot: please, please, please clearly name all belongings - it is very hard to know which child owns which sweatshirt or which lost black shoe!

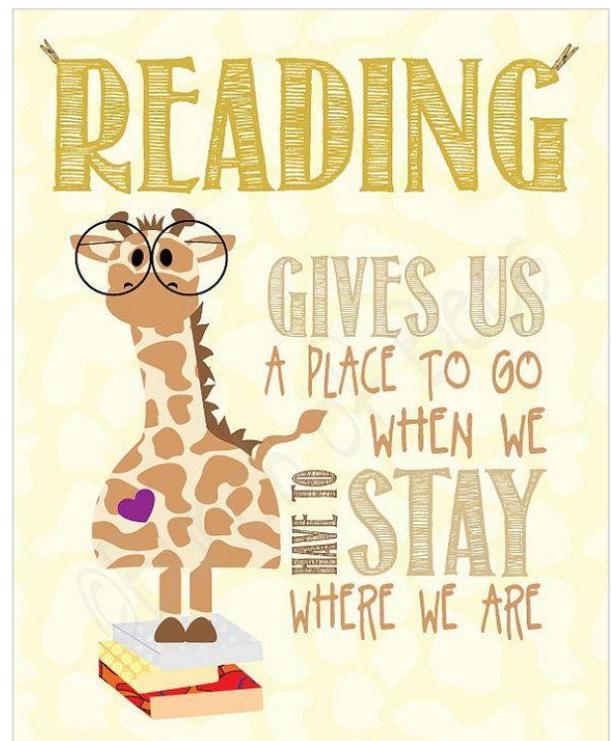
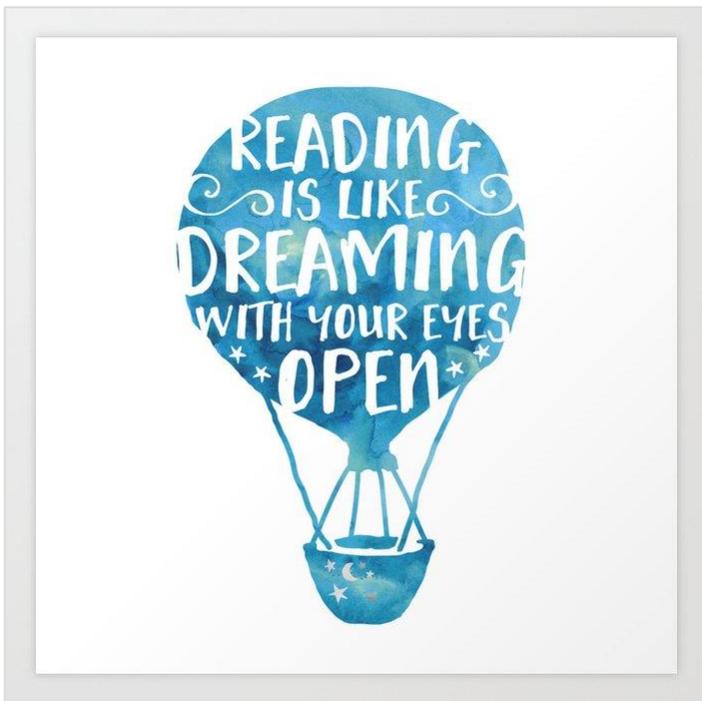
PLEASE ENSURE ALL UNIFORM IS CORRECTLY NAMED!

Will my child bring a reading book home?

To support your child's reading development, we provide a wide selection of picture books for you to share with your child at home. They may choose the same book multiple times. Whilst this may be a little frustrating (boring!) for you, this is important for your child, as they will learn the structure of stories and develop a love of books.

We recommend that your child has their own book bag, which they must bring to school every day, these will be provided by the school. Book bags are useful not only for carrying reading books but also for any other paper based information that we may need to send to you or vice versa.

We will record which book your child takes home each day in their Reading Record. We ask that you comment each day to let us know that you have read, and whether your child enjoyed the story. Through sharing stories and playing games we will encourage your child to develop a love of stories and books.



How can I best help my child?

As a parent you will want to provide the best for your child and support their learning in school.

“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.”



The greatest support that you can give to your child is to:

- **build their confidence** and independence;
- **listen to your child** and have **high expectations** that are reasonable and achievable;
- expect your child to **share things**;
- **be interested** in your child and their experiences;
- help your child to learn to **dress independently**, putting jumpers on and doing shoes up;
- make sure your child feels **confident to use the toilet** and wash their hands;
- **read to them...** often;
- **get involved** in the life of the school.

If you are concerned about your child, even for the smallest of issue, talk calmly to one of the Nursery team first. In partnership, we can provide experiences so that your child can gain maximum benefit and enjoyment from school. Every child is an individual whose learning is unique and personal. Parents and teachers need to work together to ensure that they provide the opportunities and motivation to promote learning and the acquisition of new skills.



Can I help in school?

When your child has settled into Nursery, you may consider becoming a Learning Mentor in another classroom in our school. Learning Mentors are helping parents and carers who assist with learning through a range of different activities. We advertise in our regular newsletter, The Grapevine, for volunteers and Learning Mentors and if you are interested and can commit even a small amount of time, we would be very happy to hear from you.

All adults regularly working or volunteering in school are required to complete a DBS check. Thongsley Fields is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

The Friends of Thongsley Fields organise social functions and raise money for the school. Through supporting the events, parents and friends can help add to the life of the school. If you take part in the activities, the school will benefit and therefore your child will benefit!

Term Dates & School Holidays

2022-2023

Autumn Term 2022			
Staff Training	Thursday	1 st September	School Closed
Staff Training	Friday	2 nd September	School Closed
Back to School	Monday	5 th September	School Open
Half Term	Monday-Friday	24 th -28 th October	School Closed
Back to School	Monday	31 st October	School Open
Term Ends	Friday	16 th December	Last Day of Term

Spring Term 2023			
Staff Training	Tuesday	3 rd January	School Closed
Back to School	Wednesday	4 th January	School Open
Half Term	Monday-Friday	13 th - 17 th February	School Closed
Back to School	Monday	20 th February	School Open
Term Ends	Friday	31 st March	Last Day of Term

Summer Term 2023			
Staff Training	Monday	17 th April	School Closed
Back to School	Tuesday	18 th April	School Open
May Bank Holiday	Monday	1 st May	School Closed
Back to School	Tuesday	2 nd May	School Open
Half Term	Monday-Friday	29 th May – 2 nd June	School Closed
Staff Training	Monday	5 th June	School Closed
Back to School	Tuesday	6 th June	School Open
Term Ends	Friday	21 st July	Last Day of Term

The government implemented new legislation that came into effect from September 2013 which means that schools may only authorise leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. A parent or carer does not have any right to leave of absence during term time and if your request is refused the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This could result in legal action being taken or a Penalty Notice being issued by the Local Authority.

A Penalty Notice involves a fine of £60 per child, per parent/carers (with Parental Responsibility, even living at different addresses) if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 per child, per parent/carers if paid within 28 days.

