



University
of Worcester

A photograph of two young children, a girl and a boy, sitting in a blue plastic tub filled with water. They are using colorful fishing rods with yellow handles and green shafts to catch small, colorful plastic fish. The girl is on the left, wearing a purple patterned shirt, and the boy is on the right, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt. The tub is placed on a blue and green striped mat. In the background, there is a wicker playhouse and other outdoor equipment.

Unitots Nursery

Parent Handbook

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Welcome to Unitots Nursery. This booklet provides some useful information and guidance for parents and carers on the operation of the nursery. If you have further questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

INTRODUCTION

Unitots Nursery is located on the University of Worcester St John's campus. It is self-contained and has a large outdoor area. We are able to use the University facilities such as the gym and sports centre and regularly have walks around the campus.

The Nursery is registered with Ofsted to provide care and education for 40 children aged from three months up to five years. The Nursery has also achieved the gold award for 'Promoting Health in Early Years Settings', an achievement award from Worcestershire County Council for 'Commitment to quality in Early Years' a gold award from the NUS Green Impact Scheme for 'Promoting Environmental Sustainability' and an Excellence Award for a project to promote environmental sustainability in other Early Years Settings.

The Nursery operates with three age groups – babies, tweenies and preschool children, each with their own areas. Children transfer between rooms according to their age and developmental ability.

The Nursery is registered with Worcestershire County Council and we are able to access support and advice from the Early Years Improvement Team if and when we need it. We also attend the Worcestershire Early Years forums.

What we offer

We aim to provide high quality care and learning, through a variety of well planned, stimulating learning activities and experiences to enable children to develop both socially and mentally, while remaining happy and gaining in confidence. All children are regarded as individuals, with differing stages of development, needs and rates of achievement.

We plan to ensure that there is a balance of adult-led and freely chosen activities and that all areas of learning are well covered both indoors and outdoors. Our continuous provision includes role play, painting, water, sand, collage, construction, small world, investigation, jigsaws, mark making, ICT, musical instruments, books, exploratory and manipulative play. Complementing the continuous provision, well planned and purposeful activities and experiences further support children's learning.

We constantly reflect on and review our practice in order to improve the quality of provision that we offer.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the time in a child's life between birth and age five. It "...sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future progress through school and life."

Early Years practice is underpinned by four themes:

A Unique Child – every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive relationships – children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

Enabling environments – children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs.

Learning and development – children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets out:

- The safeguarding and welfare requirements that providers must follow to keep children safe and promote their welfare.
- The seven areas of learning and development which shape activities and experiences for children.
- The early learning goals that providers must help children work towards, i.e. the knowledge, skills and understanding that children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five (end of reception year).

The EYFS framework places emphasis on your role (as parent/carer) in helping your child develop. All the activities you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development. You can help if every day you can do some of the following:

- Sing and recite nursery rhymes
- Talk about the numbers, colours and letters you see when you are out and about
- Allow your child to cut and stick pictures from magazines
- Cook/bake together
- Plant seeds/bulbs
- Use the weather to extend your child's vocabulary
- Explore the park
- Talk about different packaging in the supermarket
- Talk to your child at every opportunity

The Areas of Learning

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through seven areas of learning. All are important and inter-connected. Children should mostly develop the three prime areas first. These are:

1. Personal, social and emotional development
2. Communication and language
3. Physical development

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in four specific areas. These are:

4. Literacy
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the world
7. Expressive arts and design

The areas of learning (Early Learning Goals) provide an educational programme to help plan your child's learning and development. It is designed to be flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

1. **Personal, social and emotional development** involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
2. **Communication and language development** involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
3. **Physical development** involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their coordination, control and movement. Children will also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
4. **Literacy** involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children will be given access to a wide range of reading materials to ignite their interest.
5. **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, and calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces and measures.
6. **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
7. **Expressive arts and design** involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology.

Assessment

Children are assessed through close observations. The observations help us to plan for children's individual needs and the next stages of their development.

Educational, personal and social development is monitored, recorded and shared with parents on a regular basis. Parents are welcome in the Nursery to discuss any aspect of their child's progress and welfare.

Key person system

Your child's key person is your main point of contact within the setting. The key person is responsible for your child's care, learning and development, monitors your child's progress and regularly shares this information with you. The key person will also give ideas as to how to help your child at home.

Please provide information as often as possible about what your child has been doing at home, what their interests are and what they enjoy doing. There are a number of routes for passing on information – verbally, writing on the information sheet outside the room, on the feedback slips, in your child's Learning Journey, in the Nursery to Home Book (Baby Room only) parents evening or if new to the room during an update session after approximately four weeks.

At some point after your child has turned two, the key person is responsible for providing a written summary of how your child is progressing. This is called the 'progress check at age two'. This check highlights the areas in which your child is progressing well and any in which they may need some extra help or support and how parents/carers can help. This information can be shared with other professionals such as health visitors who can use it as part of the health and development review.

Progress reports

At the end of each term we will send home a progress report showing your child's learning and achievements and with suggestions of how you can support your child at home.

Information sharing

We encourage a two-way flow of information – it is important that we share and exchange information about your child.

- Information is shared with parents/carers at inductions and review meetings
- Outside each room there is a poster for you to jot down any interests your child has or activities that they like doing
- There are feedback/achievement slips outside each room for you to take away and return with information about your child's interests and/or achievements
- Information can be passed on verbally when dropping off or collecting your child

The information you provide helps us build up a better picture of your child and enables us to plan appropriate activities and environments to meet their learning and development needs. Please take the time to regularly tell us something about your child. The key person can also help with ideas on to how to help your child at home.

As you can appreciate, it can be very difficult for staff particularly in the Tweenie Room and Pre-school Room to give verbal feedback to every parent every day. We understand that you would like to know about your child's day and to help we provide the following information on the notice boards outside each room :

- What your child has had for lunch (if have a Nursery lunch) and for snack
- When and for how long your child has had a sleep (Tweenie Room)
- What activities your child will be taking part in – weekly planning sheet
- Follow on activities that you may wish to do with your child at home
- Information on daily activities are displayed on the clouds
- Photographs of activities are displayed on display boards in the corridor
- The digital photo frame

If you do want verbal feedback at the end of your child's session you will need to come in earlier as it is very busy at pick up times, particularly 4pm. Staff are often not available to talk to you and they need to be with the children who are not yet going home. Alternatively, if you would like to see your key person please make an appointment.

We have helpful information sheets on a variety of issues such as toilet training, teething, tantrums etc, if you wish to discuss any of these issues or request further information please see your key person.

Information can be emailed to the Unitots email address unitots@worc.ac.uk

Room information

Each room has their own Room Information sheet which is sent or given to parents prior to admission to the rooms.

Clothing and footwear

The children go outside every day and will need outdoor clothing appropriate to the season e.g coat and suitable footwear. They will require named waterproof coats, wellies and all in one wetsuits. Please note that we have a very limited supply of spare clothes and boots. If your child is not properly equipped they may not be able to take part in outdoor activities.

We would prefer that you send your child in **joggers/leggings/shorts** rather than jeans, skirts and dresses; the latter are very restrictive for children when climbing, running and participating in physical activities, which the children take part in every day

It is important that young children have measured good fitting shoes that support their feet. Please ensure that your child attends the Nursery with suitable footwear in order for them to participate fully in all the activities that we offer. **Open toed sandals, sling backs, jelly shoes, flip flops and crocodile shoes are not suitable** for the range of daily physical activities that the children participate in.

Children also require a spare set of clothes which should be kept in a named pump bag on their peg and a bag to put wet clothes in, particularly for children who are toilet training.

Regularly check that your child is wearing the correct size wellies – children's feet can grow quickly. **All named please.** (Including shoes as children can often have the same shoes.)

Look out for our wellie swap table.

Nursery sweatshirts and polo shirts - If you would like your child to have a Nursery sweatshirt and/or polo shirt please add your child's name to the main order form and fill out an order form which are on the unit by the door. Polo shirts are £11, sweatshirts £12. The payment will be needed before the order can go. Once you have the tops please name them.

How you can help us and your child

How you can help us and your child:

- We encourage children to be independent and develop their self-help skills. It would help their progress if you could do the same at home.
- Help your child to self-register with their photograph, putting it up outside the room when they arrive and taking it down and putting it above their peg when they leave.
- Prompt response to requests e.g. for more nappies (we don't have spares).
- Support our rules, e.g. by not encouraging your child to run down the corridor.
- Send your child in easy-to-dress clothing suitable to help develop self-help skills.
- Share with your key person any little steps or achievements your child has made at home and write any information regarding their interests on the sheet outside their room.
- Use pump bags or bags of a similar size to store your child's spare clothes. Oversized bags are too big on the pegs and encroach on other children's pegs.
- Please ensure that you do not leave medication such as calpol or lighters (which we have found before) or anything else apart from spare clothes etc in your child's bag on their peg. Bags in the corridor could be accessed by children.
- Leave your child's toys and books from home at home. It avoids upset if they get lost or damaged and we have plenty of toys and books. (with the exception of comforters).
- We encourage your child to become independent and confident. Once mobile please encourage your child to walk independently into the Nursery rather than be carried in.
- Could we please ask that if your child comes home in Nursery clothes that you return them a.s.a.p. as we have a limited supply.
- If the Nursery session has started we would be grateful if you could hand your child over to a member of staff outside the room (apart from the Baby Room) as it is disruptive to the session and can be upsetting for other children if parents are coming in and out and engaging staff in a conversation

Social events and outings

Children often go for walks around the campus, taking advantage of the learning opportunities and experiences the campus offers. Sometimes the children are taken off the campus for outings e.g the older children may visit the library or pantomime and the younger children may visit the local shop or park. For visits off the campus parents/carers will be required to fill out a separate authorisation slip.

Contact details

Please ensure that we are updated with any changes to your details, in particular address, telephone numbers, emergency contacts and also any updates on allergies, dietary requirements- newly diagnosed or if no longer applies.

Nursery closure

Should the Nursery have to close due to the outbreak of an infectious disease or severe adverse weather, fees will not be charged for that period of closure. However, should the Nursery continue to remain open, and you choose to keep your child away fees will be charged as normal.

Snacks and meals

The Nursery provides drinks and snacks in the morning and afternoon. The children are offered milk, water and sometimes fruit juice, and a variety of nutritious snacks such as fruit, vegetables, toast, sandwiches, etc. Filtered water is served at lunch time and is available to children at all times.

Cooked meals are served at 12 noon and are optional for children over 12 months. The menu is displayed on the notice board. We are able to cater for most dietary needs.

Parents who wish their child to have a packed lunch must ensure that the box is clearly labelled, preferably on the outside and any boxes, flasks or bottles that may be inside are also named. There needs to be a small 'solid' ice pack in all lunch boxes. To avoid losing teaspoons, the Nursery will provide a teaspoon if one is needed.

We promote healthy eating, and guidelines on what to put in a lunch box can be obtained from the Nursery. Please, no sugary drinks, crisps or similar, chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks. We also request that nothing comes into the Nursery containing nuts. No nut products. All lunch boxes are stored on the lunch box trolley in the corridor.

For babies, cartons of milk are preferable but if not, formula milk will be made up in the morning and at lunch time. We are able to heat baby food that has not been previously opened and home prepared food. An information sheet is available from the baby room.

Health and Wellbeing

We promote the health and wellbeing of children and staff. Please only send your child into the Nursery if they are fit and well as it has an impact on other children, staff and the operation of the rooms

We have a 48 hour sickness policy and cannot admit a child who has had sickness and/or diarrhoea for 48 hours after the last symptom.

If children need to be given medication, please sign an authorisation form available at the Nursery. We will only administer medication prescribed by a medical practitioner. Non-prescribed medication is not normally administered, the exception may be teething. Generally if a child has to have pain relief medicine such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, e.g. Calpol, before coming into the Nursery they are not well enough to come in.

In the event of your child becoming ill or having an accident at the Nursery, the parents, carers or emergency contact will be contacted to collect your child. Appropriately trained representatives of the University of Worcester may administer treatment to your child in the case of emergency, and may seek medical treatment for your child from qualified health professionals, including taking your child directly to hospital where necessary.

Absence

We would appreciate a phone call or an email if your child is going to be absent from the Nursery e.g. sickness, holiday, day off. It helps us monitor illness and inform other parents what is 'going around'. It can also have an impact in the room, with planned activities, if staff are waiting for a child to arrive who then doesn't come in.

Please let us know in advance if you are taking your child out for a holiday. If we have enough notice we can cancel your child's lunch.

Sessions

Session times - Please be aware that your child cannot be admitted into the Nursery before your session time and if you are late picking up after the time you have booked you will be charged a late pick up fee of £5 for the first 15 minutes and then £10 per every 15 minutes thereafter. Your child needs to have left their room at the end of their booked session and signed out at this point.

The Nursery closes at 6pm and staff finish at 6pm. If your child is booked in until 6pm it is important that you have left the premises by 6pm. This may mean coming a few minutes earlier to collect your child and their belongings. If you are late collecting after 6pm the charge is £5 for the first five minutes and then, from 6.06pm, £1 a minute.

Photographs

Photographs are sometimes taken of children to demonstrate and record children's learning activities. These are only taken with consent from parents and permission for the taking of photographs is included in the admission pack.

Safeguarding and child protection

As part of our Safeguarding policy and to keep your child safe, only Nursery staff can open the door to the Nursery. Please do not be tempted to open the door to any one on the other side even if you know who they are. Please do not hold the door open for anyone else when coming in or out of the Nursery, let the door close again. Please do not tailgate other parents or visitors unless a member of staff has seen you and agreed your entry.

If you have someone else with you when dropping off or collecting your child please ask them to wait outside the Nursery, as we don't know who they are.

We do not permit the use of mobile phones in the Nursery.

Children will only be released to an authorised collector. If someone other than an authorised collector is collecting your child please inform the office, preferably in writing, with the name address and contact number of the person collecting. The collector will also be asked for the child's password.

If your child needs the toilet whilst you are still with them please do not accompany them into the children's bathroom – there may be other children in the bathroom or who may wish to use the bathroom. If your child is not able to use the toilet independently – there are some more toilets just down the corridor in Bredon (turn left when leaving the Nursery and they are on the left hand side) or ask a member of staff to assist.

Personal, confidential information is kept safe and secure. We are however, committed to safeguarding children and should we feel it necessary, we will share information with other professionals to keep children safe.

The Unitots Data Protection Statement is available on the University website:
www.worcester.ac.uk/documents/Unitots_data_protection_statement.pdf

Nursery Education Funding

Early Years funding is available to all three and four year olds from the term following their third birthday. The universal entitlement is for up to 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year, term time only.

The additional 15 hours funding (30 hours) is available to working parents who meet the eligibility criteria.

Funding for two year olds is available to parents who meet the eligibility criteria.

Further information on funding is available on request.

We accept most childcare vouchers.

Policies

We have a wide range of policies and procedures, which set out our commitment and practice, for example:

1. Equal opportunities
2. Safeguarding and child protection policy and procedure
3. Health, safety and welfare
4. Behaviour management
5. Special educational needs and disability policy
6. Working with parents and carers
7. Confidentiality
8. Complaints
9. Administration of medicine
10. Policy and procedures for children with allergies/dietary requirements
11. Policy and procedure for the promotion of physical activities
12. Sleep policy and procedures
13. Policy and procedures for the retention of information and images
14. Policy and Procedure for Photographs and appropriate Use of Images
15. Food and drink
16. Pandemic e.g. COVID 19 or Influenza

If you wish to see any of the above or any other policy we have that isn't listed, please ask.

The Nursery has a no smoking policy and we request that no mobile phones are used in the Nursery.

Comments

We aim to provide a high standard of service to parents and of education and care for children; any comment we receive is valued as a means to improvement. If you are not satisfied with any aspect of the Nursery's work or have a suggestion to make, please speak to the Nursery Manager. Alternatively you may wish to put the matter in writing. We will investigate all complaints and respond with the outcome within 28 days of receiving the complaint.

Contact information

Unitots Nursery
University of Worcester
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
Telephone: 01905 855277
email: unitots@worc.ac.uk

You can find the Early Years Foundation Stage at www.foundationyears.org.uk which includes the early learning goals.

To find out the quality of your child's nursery go to www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report or visit the Nursery website for the most recent Ofsted report.



Student Services

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www.worcester.ac.uk/student-services