

# Welcome to Thameside Nursery!

**Our school motto**

*Every Child Every Chance Every Day*



## Essential information

# 2025-2026



## **Welcome to the Nursery Class at Thameside**

We are really excited about welcoming you to our Nursery Class! We are called Gruffalo Class. We hope this booklet will answer some of the questions you may have regarding your child starting in nursery.

Starting out in a new environment with lots of new faces can be a challenge for little ones. Some children settle in remarkably quickly, whereas others can be a little more wary. In order to make this transition from home life to nursery time as smooth as possible, we believe that it is vital for parents and staff to work together to help your child/ren feel confident and secure from the start. Every child is different, and parents should not feel worried if their child takes a while to settle. Parents and carers are asked to please share any worries or issues with the staff in our Nursery; we believe in good communication at all times between home and nursery to ensure continuity and to give your child the best possible experiences to support their learning and development.

## **Starting Nursery – For you**

The first time you leave your child in the care of another can be more daunting for you than it is for your child. During those first few days, when you and your child are in a new routine, we will provide reassurance and support, answer any questions you may have and give you feedback at the end of your child's day. It is important to us that both children and parents alike feel comfortable to share any questions or concerns and have trust in the high level of care that our staff provide for the children.



**Nursery Team**



Mrs Hendy (Nursery Manager)

Mrs Shiraz (Nursery support staff)

**Time     30 hours day**

**15 hours morning session**

8.45	Morning Session begins	Morning Session begins	
9.00	Registration/ Group Time	Registration/ Group Time	
9:20-11	Free Flow/Small group activities	Free Flow/Small group activities	
10:00	Free flow snack	Free Flow snack	
11:00	Group Time	Group Time	
11:20	Tidy up/Wash Hands	Tidy up/Wash hands	
11:30	Lunch Time	Move into the hall	
11.45	Lunch continues	Morning session end	Afternoon session starts
12.00	Children play in receptions garden with the reception children		Children play in receptions garden with reception
1.00	We go into nursery for registration and group time		We go into nursery for registration and group time
1.20	Free flow/small group activities		Free flow/small group activities
2.30	Tidy up		Tidy up
2.45	Session end		Afternoon session ends

Extended day until 3.15pm  
is charged at £2.50 a day

### **Dropping-off and Collecting Children**

The children will be dropped off and collected from the Nursery door located through the nursery gate. Parents can wait with their children in the Nursery Garden until the door opens at 8.45am. This is also the collect point at 2.45pm and 3.15pm. However, if you pick up or drop off at 11.45am this is from the Main Hall doors.



Nursery Door

8.45am, 2.45pm and 3.15pm



Main hall doors

11.45am

Please note that the play apparatus and equipment should not be used by children unless a member of staff is supervising them.

The safety of all the children is our priority. We ask for all parents to leave the school playgrounds promptly in the mornings as once the school gate gets locked at 8:50 am and it stays locked until you come back to collect your child at the end of the session. If you arrive with your child after this time, please take them to the main school office to be signed in.

If for any reason parents find that they will be delayed, or if another person will be collecting a child, it would be helpful if the Office are informed as soon as you are able to, in order that a message can be passed on. For safeguarding reasons, we use a password system when another person is collecting your child.

If your child should receive an injury at school, parents will be told and given an accident form, either at the end of a session or through a phone call. It is important for this reason that all contact numbers are kept up to date.

### **Keyworkers**

Your child will have a keyworker, who is an adult responsible for a small group of children in nursery. Their keyworker will be there at drop off and collection each day to help you with any questions or concerns you may have. We will let you know in the first week of school which adult will be your child's key worker. You are also always welcome to talk to the class teacher at any point.

## **Lunches**

If your child brings in a packed lunch from home we encourage it to be as healthy as possible. Food has a huge impact on children's concentration and energy levels so a balanced lunchbox is key! Items such as bread, rice and pasta keep them fuller for longer. Fresh pieces of fruit or carrot/cucumber batons count towards their 5 a day too! If you are stuck for new or different ideas, visit the NHS website below as they have great ideas for lunchboxes.



**[www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes)**

Parents can also opt to pay for their child to have a hot meal from our school kitchen. To see a sample of our weekly dinner menus, please have a look on our school website under **'Our School: Lunch and Snack.'**

## **Snack time**

The school aims to promote healthy eating, and good oral hygiene, by providing the children with either a piece of fruit or some vegetables along with milk or fresh water for their morning snack. We all sit together to encourage good manners and enjoy some conversation.

## **Drinks bottles**

An exciting part of starting Nursery for children is getting new items such as drinks bottles and lunchboxes! Please make sure they have their name on as we often have children with the same design! Drinks bottles must contain water; no fizzy or sugary drinks please. If your child is not a huge fan of water, then flavoured water is a great option instead.

## **Toileting and nappy changing**

All children are welcomed to our Nursery regardless of whether they are potty trained or not. We understand that all children develop at different stages and some take longer at learning new skills! Your key person will be here to help and work with you during the potty-training stage and to encourage your child along every step of the way.

To help make the toilet training process as easy as possible and support our children in this important stage of their personal development, we have bathroom facilities made especially for small children. The toilets and sinks are both low and easy for children to use, and as a result these facilities give the children confidence to progress to being totally independent in the toilet.

If your child is toilet training, please bring lots of changes of clothes (even socks!) If you are using a chart with your child at home, we are more than happy to continue this at school.

## **Learning Journals**

All your child's exciting learning and key moments will be kept in their learning journey, for which we will be using an online Learning Journal through an app called 'Tapestry'. This

allows us to record snapshots of your child's learning throughout the week and to save them to their own personal 'Journal' which can then be viewed by you at home via any desktop, Apple or Android device. We encourage families to add to their child's Learning Journal themselves, to record the amazing things that your child does and achieves at home.

For any child who doesn't currently have a Tapestry based Learning Journal, they will be set up in the first few weeks of school and a Tapestry Workshop will be held to help anyone who needs it to get themselves logged on, and to show you the basics of how to use it.

There will be Parents' Evenings to meet with your child's teacher and discuss your child's progress.

### **Nursery Activities**

During your child's week they will take part in lots of different activities. These include:

- Arts and crafts including painting, drawing, gluing and sticking...
- Playdough, gloop, water, sand...we love getting messy!
- Science experiments
- Yoga
- Story telling
- Story scribing
- Philosophy for Children
- Phonics
- Maths
- Dancing
- Puppet shows
- Rhyme and song time with musical instruments
- Outdoor fun
- Bug hunts and more...



They will also get to participate in whole school events, like World Book Day, and to go on trips and outings with the Reception class.

## **Uniform**

Thameside uniform with the school logo can be purchased from the uniform shop, Trutex in Didcot. Uniform can either be purchased from them online at [myschoolwear.co.uk](http://myschoolwear.co.uk) or can be purchased directly from the shop in Didcot.

Trutex Didcot, 14 Cockcroft Road  
Didcot  
Oxfordshire  
OX11 8LL  
UK

[+44 \(0\)1235 211011](tel:+441235211011)

[Ask@myschoolwear.co.uk](mailto:Ask@myschoolwear.co.uk)



**Non logo'd uniform can be purchased from any retailer that parents/carers prefer.**

Main uniform:

- Navy blue sweatshirt or cardigan with logo.
- White shirt/polo/blouse
- Grey trousers (no tracksuit bottoms or leggings)
- Grey skirt or pinafore dress
- Grey/Black tights
- White/Grey/Black socks
- Blue Gingham Dress (Summer Term Uniform only)
- Suitable footwear for indoor and outdoor play (School shoes are not required until Year 1)
- Wellington Boots

We do also ask for your child to have a bag at school each day with:

- ❖ Spare clothes (these do not need to be uniform)
- ❖ Nappies and wet wipes (if needed)
- ❖ Outdoor clothing, as we go outside in all weathers (e.g. hats, coats, sun hats, sun-cream)
- ❖ Welly boots

**Please can you name all your belongings! It would greatly help the adults to recognise your child's belongings if they have been misplaced.**

## **How to Prepare Your Child for Nursery**

If your child is starting Nursery, you may be approaching this major milestone with conflicting emotions. You're probably excited about all the fun (you hope) your child will have and the new friends they will make. At the same time, you may feel a little sad that your baby is venturing out into the big world without you; these emotions are normal. Your child is also bound to have a host of feelings about this transition, feeling proud to be

joining Nursery but at the same time worried about being separated from you and starting something unfamiliar.

### **Having Fun with Nursery**

There is a lot you can do in the weeks before your child starts Nursery in order to prepare them for the big day. However, it is important to try to keep your efforts low-key. If you become too focussed on this milestone, your child may end up being more worried than excited. Detailed below are some simple ideas to help you to prepare your child in a fun and relaxed way:

- **Use pretend play to explore the idea of Nursery.** Take turns being the parent, child and teacher. Act out common daily routines, such as saying good-bye to mummy and/or daddy, taking off your coat, singing songs, reading stories, having Circle Time and playing outside. Reassure your child that Nursery is a good place where they will have fun and learn. Answer their questions patiently. This helps children feel more in control which reduces their anxiety.

- **Read books about Nursery.** There are many books about going to Nursery available from the public library in your area. Choose several to share with your child over the Summer before school starts. Talk about the story and how the characters are feeling. Ask how your child is feeling.

- **Make a game out of practicing self-help skills like:** unzipping their coat, hanging their coat on a hook, putting on their rucksack, fastening their shoes. For example, you might want to have a "race" with your child to see how quickly they can put on their shoes. When you play school together, give your child the chance to practise taking off their coat, closing their bags, and sitting "criss-cross applesauce" (crossed legs) on the floor.

- **Worries and Watching:** Your child may also have some questions or concerns about starting Nursery, either before or after they start in the Autumn. Help them get ready with these two key strategies:

- o **Listen to your child's worries.** Although it is tempting to quickly reassure your child and move on, it is important to let your child know that his or her worries have been heard. No matter what they are, big or small, children's worries about Nursery can significantly influence their experience there. Will you remember to pick them up in the afternoon? Will their teacher be nice? Let your child know that it is normal to feel happy, sad, excited, scared, or worried. Explain that starting something new can feel scary and that lots of people feel that way. It can be helpful to share a time when you started something new and how you felt. When you allow your child to share their worries, you can help them think through how to manage them. For example, they can bring a comfort toy with them, or bring a photo of you to keep with them.

- o **Notice non-verbal messages.** As much as 3-year-olds may talk, most are not yet able to fully explain how they are feeling or what they are worried about. Your child may "act out" his worry by clinging, becoming withdrawn, or by being more aggressive. Another common reaction as children take a big move forward, is to actually move backward in other areas. For example, if your child is fully potty trained, they may start have toileting accidents. They may ask that you feed or dress

them even though they can do these things by themselves. It is natural to be frustrated by this regressed behaviour, and you may be concerned that if you do these things for them, they won't go back to doing them themselves. In fact, letting them play this out often leads to children returning to their previous behaviour patterns sooner. Remember that your child is facing - and managing - a big change in their life. They may need more support, nurturing, and patience from you while they make this transition.

### **The Nursery Countdown: What to Do and When**

The last few weeks before starting Nursery seem to fly by! As you begin the countdown to the first day, here are some things to keep in mind:

#### *During the two Weeks Before Nursery Starts:*

- Label all items—bag, jacket, shoes, jumpers, hats, gloves etc.—with your child's name, in permanent ink.
- Decide how your child will get to school and how they will come home. Talk to your child about the morning and afternoon routine so that they understand that they will be safe, okay, and cared for.
- Start using your child's "school bedtime." Children often go to bed later in the Summer months and as the days grow longer. You can help your child to get into a Nursery schedule by keeping to his or her school bedtime, beginning about two weeks before school starts.

#### *The Night Before Nursery:*

- Answer any last-minute questions from your child.
- Pick a bedtime that gives your child a good night's rest before his or her first day. Keep the bedtime routine soothing and relaxing. Don't focus too much (or at all!) on the first day of school unless they want to.

#### *The First Day:*

- Wake up/be ready, in enough time so that you and your child don't have to rush to get to Nursery.
- Make breakfast/lunch for your child and, if possible, sit down to eat together - or talk with your child as they eat and you get ready.
- Review the day's routine (what Nursery will be like, how your child will get to school/come home).
- Pack your child's bag together.

## **Saying a Good Good-Bye**

These strategies can ease the worries of separating on your child's first day at Nursery.

- Keep your tone positive and upbeat. Children pick up on the reactions of the trusted adults in their lives, so try not to look worried or sad, and don't linger too long. Say a quick, upbeat good-bye and reassure your child that all will be well and that you will be back soon.
- Think about creating a special good-bye routine. For example, you can give your child a kiss on his or her palm to "hold" all day long. Or, the two of you can sing a special song together before you leave. Good-bye routines are comforting to children and help them understand and prepare for what will happen next.
- Resist the rescue. Try not to run back in the classroom if you hear your child crying, as upsetting as this can be. This is a big change and your child may, quite understandably, feel sad and a little scared. But if you run back in, it sends the message that he/she is only okay if you are there and it is likely to prolong your child's distress and make it harder for them to adapt. Rest assured, teachers have many years of experience with helping families make the shift to Nursery. Instead, you can wait outside the classroom for a few minutes to ensure that all is well, or call the Nursery later in the morning to check-in.

We hope you are as excited as us about starting at Thameside.

We are here to make sure that the transition into Nursery goes as smoothly as possible, so if you have any questions please don't hesitate to email [officemanager@TPS.CambrianLT.org](mailto:officemanager@TPS.CambrianLT.org) and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

**We look forward to seeing you next term we can't wait for you to join our Thameside family!**

## **Newsletters and website**

The school newsletter (Thameside In Touch) is written on a regular basis to keep you informed about what is going on in the school and forthcoming events. This will be emailed to you via BROMCOM in the form of an email. Copies of the newsletter are also stored on the website. The website is full of information about the school and the class. It also has an updated calendar section.

Find it at: [www.thamesideschool.co.uk](http://www.thamesideschool.co.uk)

School office: 01235 527 600

Email: [office@TPS.CambrianLT.org](mailto:office@TPS.CambrianLT.org)