

Little Owls Preschool (Boxted)

Contact details

Information on the preschool can be found at www.littleowlsboxted.co.uk.

You can contact us with any enquiries by

Phone: 01206 273226

Email: littleowlsboxted@live.co.uk.

Our address is

King George Playing Field, Cage Lane, Boxted, Colchester CO4 5RE

Directions

From Ipswich Road turn left into Severalls Lane. At the Business Park roundabout take the 2nd exit. At the next roundabout take the second exit. Continue into Langham Road. Turn right at the T-junction into Boxted Straight Road.

Alternatively leave Colchester on the Northern Approach Road, turn left at traffic lights following signs to Boxted, then turn right at the roundabout onto Boxted Road, which turns into Straight Road.

Continue along Straight Road until you reach the bend at Boxted Cross. Turn right into Cage Lane. The car park to the King George Field is 1st left.

The preschool is reached by walking along the footpath from the right hand side of the car park. The preschool is the second building along the footpath.

If using satnav, please enter the postcode CO4 5RE which will ensure you reach the preschool rather than our registered office.

About Little Owls Preschool

We are a charitable company, registered with the Charity Commission, and run by a voluntary Board of Trustees made up mostly of parents. We encourage parental involvement, and welcome parents who wish to take an active part in the running of the preschool, either by becoming a trustee or by helping at sessions. The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for the management of the preschool, whilst the manager and team of staff manage the day to day running of the setting.

We have a team of qualified and experienced preschool practitioners, including a qualified teacher. In addition, our office manager deals with all the administration.

We are committed to providing a stimulating learning environment, but first and foremost one in which children feel happy, safe, valued and cared for. We treat each child as an individual and provide varied and balanced opportunities for all children to learn through play.

We are registered with Ofsted to care for children from two to five years of age, and accept government funded children. As an Ofsted registered provider, we follow the welfare and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, and are inspected regularly by Ofsted. Our last inspection took place in February 2016; the report can be found on the Ofsted website*. We have been judged to provide good quality provision.

We are very fortunate to have sole use of a purpose-designed building on the village playing field, and have a very open outdoor space right outside our building. Parents and visitors can use the adjoining car park.

*www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

Staff

We have an experienced team of qualified staff, most of whom are trained to Level 3 or above. All staff receive regular training in safeguarding children and paediatric first aid and attend professional development courses to improve and update their knowledge. Our manager is a qualified teacher. In addition we have an office manager who deals with all administration.

Gill Dedhar	Manager	PGCE Qualified teacher (Level 6)
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Nicola Carrington Bloomfield	Deputy Manager/SENco	(Level 3)
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Preschool Practitioners

Amanda D'Souza		(Level 3)
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Melanie Ashby		(Level 3)
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Tracy Embleton		(Level 3)
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Caroline Norfolk		(Level 2)
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Julia Adams		(Working towards Level 2)
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Office Manager

Denise Rehal

All staff have been DBS checked.

Each member of staff also has a keyperson role, supporting a small group of children and their parents.

Admissions

We take up to 30 children between the ages of 2 and 5 years per session. Children can be put on our waiting list at any time, and are admitted from the age of two years. If parents can be flexible with the days or sessions they require, we usually have some places available throughout the year, though these will be limited during the spring and summer terms. Where necessary, if there is a waiting list, children will be admitted using a set criteria and preference will be given to children living in Boxted, along with those who are entitled to government funding for 2, 3 or 4 year olds

Once we have your child's details on our waiting list, you will be contacted during the term prior to admission to arrange a visit and to discuss which sessions you would like reserved. Once you have reserved sessions, you will be invited to a taster session, when you will meet your key person. We welcome visits from prospective families at any time. If you would like to put your child on our waiting list or would like to visit prior to this please contact us by any of the methods at the front of this booklet.

Sessions and Opening Times

We run daily sessions morning and afternoon during normal Essex school terms.

Early Birds	8.45am	-	9.15am
Mornings	9.15am	-	12.15pm
Afternoons	12.15pm	-	3.15pm
Lunch club	11.45am	-	12.45pm

Children may attend single 'core' morning or afternoon sessions (adding on lunch club/early birds if required), or any combination of sessions. For example, one child may attend 9.15am to 12.15pm (3 hours), another may attend 8.45am to 12.45pm (4 hours), whilst another attends 8.45am to 3.15pm (6.5 hours). A packed lunch should be provided for children attending lunch club.

Fees

Fees in 2017/2018 are

3/4 year olds	£4.00 per hour
2 year olds	£4.70 per hour
Registration fee	£10.00 (not payable if your child is receiving free entitlement funding)

Fees are paid monthly. Termly invoices are issued at the start of each term showing the full amount due for the term and the instalments due each month. Alternative arrangements can be made if individual families find it difficult to pay fees on this basis.

A refund of session fees cannot be given for sessions missed through illness or holidays. It is not possible to swap sessions missed for holiday or illness, but we will always try to be flexible in adding additional sessions where parents request it to cover additional work hours or appointments. Lunch club and early birds should normally be booked in advance, though bookings can be made at short notice, numbers permitting.

The registration fee is non-refundable, but does not apply to funded children.

We accept payment through employer childcare voucher schemes. Please speak to the office manager if you would like to pay fees using this method.

Please note: **One month's notice in writing is required before removing a child from any session**, whether leaving the preschool or decreasing sessions. Fees will be charged for the notice period. *This policy does not include children due to start school. Please let us know which school your child will be attending and when they are likely to be admitted.*

Early Education Entitlement

Every child is entitled to 15 hours of free early education from the term following his third birthday. This funding can be shared between a maximum of two different child care providers, and must be claimed termly by parents through the preschool. Any hours which children attend over and above the 15 funded hours are chargeable.

30 hour funding

In September 2017, there is an extended offer of 30 hours per week for three-and four-year-olds from working families. Parents will be able to access the 30-hour entitlement if they (each, in dual-parent families):

- earn at least the equivalent of 16 hours per week at the national living wage or national minimum wage for those aged under 25
- earn less than £100,000 per year.

Parents can apply for the 30-hour scheme (as well as the tax-free childcare scheme) through a joint online application developed by HMRC, which includes an eligibility checking system. Once parents successfully apply online, they will be given a code which they can then present to their chosen provider(s).

At Little Owls will be offering a limited number of 30 hour places from September 2017.

If a child eligible for government funding is removed prior to the headcount day, we will receive no funding, so will charge our usual fees for sessions attended prior to that date, or for the notice period.

Where the number of hours a funded child attends is increased after the headcount day (usually within 2 weeks of the start of each term) the preschool will charge for the additional sessions, as no further funding can be claimed for that term.

We are on Essex Early Years' list of providers who are able to receive funding for two year olds who meet the criteria for this entitlement. Where the criteria are met, the funding is available for 15 hours per week. Eligibility for 2 year old funding is broadly in line with eligibility for Free School Meals. 2 year old funding cannot be split between different providers.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS reflects the outcomes of Every Child Matters: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.

We ensure that we meet both the learning and development requirements and the welfare requirements of the EYFS. The four guiding themes of the EYFS are:

- **A Unique Child** — every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, competent and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships** — children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.
- **Enabling Environments** — the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.
- **Learning and Development** — children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

The EYFS divides children's learning and development into seven areas, three 'prime areas' and four 'specific areas':

Prime areas

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

Specific areas

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design

For each area, the guidance sets out early learning goals. These goals state what children will normally be expected to know and to be able to do by the end of the reception year at primary school. With the youngest children, we focus on the three prime areas, which are considered to be the basis for successful learning in the other 'specific' areas. There is a more equal focus on all areas as the children grow in confidence and ability. All areas are delivered through a wide range of activities, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Our planning is led by the children - their interests, their needs and their stages of development. In a normal session activities and resources are provided which encourage and develop

- art and creativity
- imaginative play
- musical awareness
- enjoyment of stories
- and most importantly, good speaking, listening and understanding, which is the basis for successful future learning
- manipulation skills
- co-ordination and balance
- early literacy and maths
- independence in self care

Children have free access to almost all of our equipment and resources and can choose which activities to take part in. We encourage independence and whilst adults are always on hand to give support when needed, children will always spend a good amount of their time on their self-initiated play. We consider it important that children are allowed to become engrossed in their play and our routines are set up so that children can play without interruption as much as possible. Part of the role of adults in the setting is to support and extend learning experiences, but we believe that children need time to learn and explore independently too.

Tapestry Learning Journeys

What is the Learning Journey?

Your child's Learning Journey is a record of their learning and development during the Early Years Foundation Stage (0-5 years). Practitioners at preschool observe your child and these observations form the Learning Journey. Information from parents is also included so that we can take account of skills that your child shows at home. We use these assessments and observations to plan next steps for each child and to make sure that extra early support is given if a child's development or learning is delayed for any reason.

What is Tapestry?

In the past Learning Journeys were on paper. We now use a digital form of Learning Journey, provided by Tapestry, building a secure online Learning Journey for each child. Observations are made using iPads during the preschool sessions. Photos or videos accompany most observations. As a parent you are given a username and password to enable you to access your child's Learning Journey from any mobile device or computer, wherever and whenever you choose. Many preschools, nurseries and reception classes also use Tapestry, so we can transfer the Learning Journey to the new setting or school when your child leaves us.

How can you as a parent contribute to the Learning Journey?

You can add photos and details of what your child has been learning at home. Your key person may assess the information you've given if it tells us something new about your child's learning or development.

You can reply to the observations that have been done by preschool staff.

Your key person may ask you if you can add a post or photo about a specific area of development, such as using a computer or speech (especially if your child is generally very quiet within the preschool environment).

Your initial 'All About Me' information will be entered into Tapestry to help with compiling the 'starting points' assessment.

How do we monitor progress?

Your key person can use Tapestry to look at how your child has progressed over a period of time. She can use it to help plan for the next steps in your child's learning. We can also look at how different groups of children (eg boys, girls, 2 year olds) are progressing as a group so that we can look at what we provide for different groups.

If your child is due a 2 year check, this will be done on Tapestry and you will be given access to it online. The exact timing of this progress check will depend on the age at which a child starts attending preschool and the number of hours a week he attends, but where possible it will be completed before the health visitor's 2 year developmental check so that any concerns or developmental delays can be identified and addressed at an early age.

Will you have a copy of the Learning Journey when your child leaves Little Owls?

If your child is moving to a setting or school which also uses Tapestry, the Learning Journey will be transferred and will carry on in the new setting.

If the new setting doesn't use Tapestry, you will be sent the Learning Journey as a PDF file.

Little Owls Preschool policy statements

The preschool has a full range of policies and procedures to ensure that the children in our care are looked after in safety and with consideration for their family background, ethnicity and needs. The policies are available to view at the preschool and on our website www.littleowlsboxted.co.uk.

Our policies are in line with the general welfare requirements of the EYFS:

Safeguarding - we take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, children's behaviour is managed effectively and appropriately for their stage of development and individual need, and we promote the good health of the children, taking necessary steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate actions when they are ill.

Suitable people - we ensure that adults looking after children, or having unsupervised access to them, are suitable to do so.

Suitable premises - outdoor and indoor spaces, furniture and toys are safe and suitable for their purpose.

Organisation - we plan and organise our systems to ensure that every child receives an enjoyable and challenging learning and development experience that is tailored to meet their individual needs.

Organisation - we maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.

Useful Information

Snack time

During each session children are offered a drink and a snack. If your child has any special dietary needs, please let us know so we can accommodate these. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the session.

If your child can't yet drink from an open cup, we are very happy for you to send in a lidded cup. However, as we have a healthy eating policy, please send an empty cup, and we will provide either milk or water, depending on the preference you have expressed for your child. When we feel it is appropriate we will also encourage and help your child to drink from an open cup.

We provide a snack of a variety of fruit, vegetables and cheese, various types of bread or crackers. We encourage the children to become independent during snack time, so they will be encouraged to pour their own drinks. This sounds messy but most children manage very well - adults are on hand to mop up any spills and we always praise the children for trying even if the drink ends up somewhere other than the cup! Children may also be asked to help clear and clean the tables before or after snack time. Snack is available for an hour during each session, so that children are able to come to the snack table when they are ready, rather than having their play interrupted.

We introduce children to foods from cultures other than their own and promote understanding of healthy eating practices. Snack time is an important part of the session, as it develops personal, emotional and social skills in a relaxed setting and is a good time to extend language and communication skills.

Lunch

We are not able to provide lunch, so a lunch box should be brought from home. Guidance recommends that food should be served within 4 hours of preparation at home, and our policy is to serve it within 3 hours of arrival. If your child's lunch box contains perishable items, please make sure that you include an ice pack or coolant.

Please also ensure that the lunch you provide helps us to promote healthy eating. We do not allow sweets in lunch boxes, and prefer that you do not include crisps or chocolate bars. We are happy for you to include drinks other than water or milk, but please do not send in fizzy drinks. If you forget to put in a drink, your child will be offered a drink of water or milk.

We always encourage the children to eat savoury items first, and will usually leave any uneaten food in the box so that you can see what has been eaten.

Collection

Parents are asked to collect their children promptly and to comply with our signing in/out policy. We have procedures in place to make sure that any uncollected child is cared for safely either until he is collected or other arrangements have been made.

Clothing

Many activities are very messy so please dress your child in clothes which you won't mind getting dirty. We have a range of Little Owls sweatshirts and t-shirts available to buy. We do not aim to make a profit from sales of these items, just to cover the

cost. They provide an ideal way of making sure your child's good clothes do not come home covered in glue or paint!

In winter, a warm coat and wellington boots are essential and in summer, a sun hat and clothing which protects the skin. Children have access to the outdoors throughout each session, so outdoor wear is essential. All items of clothing should be clearly named. Please do not let your child wear jewellery to preschool - necklaces can cause problems if they become caught in toys and all jewellery is liable to go missing and be hard to find. If ears are pierced, studs only should be worn for preschool.

Accidents

In case of serious accident or emergency you will be contacted immediately. All minor accidents will be dealt with by first aid trained preschool staff and the incident noted in the accident book which you will be asked to sign, when you collect your child.

*If you need to contact us in an emergency during preschool hours, our number is
01206 273226.*

Illness

Please do not bring your child to preschool if he is unwell. It's likely he will be grumpy, tearful or tired, or all three, and will not enjoy or benefit from the session. If your child has suffered from vomiting or diarrhoea please keep him away from preschool for 48 hours.

Parental Involvement

We recognise the role parents have already played in the early education of their child and that their continued involvement is crucial to successful learning. Parents are encouraged to become involved by helping on a voluntary basis from time to time, or by joining our committee. We encourage you to contribute information to your child's Learning Journey.

Little Owls Preschool is run by a management committee of which a majority must be current parents. Details of the current committee are on our website.

Teaching

All our planning is led by the needs and interests of individual children, and practitioners aim to challenge and encourage children whatever their stage of development. We believe that developing good communication skills, confidence and independence are the most important foundations for the children to go on and fulfil their potential. For this reason we place a great deal of emphasis on talking to and listening to the children in a variety of situations and on encouraging them to take responsibility for their own needs, appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Reading in the school system is now taught using a synthetic phonics approach. As a preschool environment we will usually be following Phase 1 of the Government's Letters and Sounds document. This means that we will be concentrating on all aspects of speaking and listening, developing children's awareness of different sounds in the environment and in speech, so that they are well prepared before they move on to a systematic introduction to phonics.

In addition of course, we will continue to develop early numeracy skills, and will give the children a wide range of activities which encourage pencil control, understanding of the importance of text and writing, and appreciation of the enjoyment which stories, rhymes and songs can give.

The activities introduced by practitioners will not be confined to literacy and numeracy, but will cover all areas of learning.

Dummies and comforters

Our Special Educational Needs policy includes a statement relating to supporting children with speech, language and communication needs. Because the use of dummies and bottles can delay speech development, EYFS guidance is that parents should be encouraged to phase out the use of dummies and bottles as soon as possible, particularly during the day. Our policies reflect this guidance:

- We will encourage children to take dummies out of their mouths when speaking.
- We will encourage children to leave their dummies in a safe place for periods of time during the sessions.
- **But** - we recognise that many children need their dummies for comfort and security, particularly in a new environment, and we will always be sensitive to each child's emotional needs.

If you would like more information or guidance on how to help your child give up a dummy, please talk to a member of staff.

If your child has a special blanket or toy, it is sometimes useful if it is brought to preschool, even if left in your child's bag. Please tell your keyperson where the comforter is and any special name your child has given it. If your child has just one special comforter, please don't forget to take it home!