

## **Little Owls Preschool (Boxted)**

**Ofsted Number - EY400589**

### **Contact details**

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Facebook - **Little Owls Preschool - Boxted**

Our address is

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

### **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 with fundraising. The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for the management of the preschool, whilst the managers and team of staff manage the day to day running of the setting. We have a team of qualified and experienced preschool practitioners. In addition, our business 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. Please see our last inspection in our website.

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. We are also lucky to have our own Forest School teacher and a nearby forest area. Parents and visitors can use the adjoining car park.

## Staff

We have an experienced team of qualified staff, most of whom are trained to Level 3. All staff receive regular training in safeguarding children and paediatric first aid and attend professional development courses to improve and update their knowledge. In addition, we have a business manager, who deals with all administration. All our staff and their qualifications can be viewed on our website and on our preschool premises. All staff have been DBS checked. Each member of staff also has a keyperson role, supporting a small group of children and their parents.

## 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
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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?**

We 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?**

- We encourage your involvement with your child's 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 'About Me' information will be entered into Tapestry to help with compiling the 'starting points' assessment.

### **How do we monitor progress?**

Your key person will be using their professional judgement and 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/she 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 able to download 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](http://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. We maintain records, policies and procedures required for the safe and efficient management of the setting and to meet the needs of the children.*

## Safeguarding and Complaints Policy

All our policies can be found on our website ([www.littleowlsboxted.co.uk](http://www.littleowlsboxted.co.uk)), but it is very important that you read the safeguarding and complaints policies. The telephone number for Ofsted is 0300 123 1231 or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk). We also hold a hard copy of all policies on the premises which can be viewed at any time.

## Website

On our website you will find all general information, our most recent Ofsted report, and our half termly blog about what the children will be learning and how you can support them at home. Along with term dates and PD days. All our COVID-19 procedures and policies can also be found here.

# 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. 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. 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. Please ensure that the lunch you provide helps us to promote healthy eating and good oral health. We do not allow sweets in lunch boxes, and would prefer only one snack bar, amongst other choices such as cheese, yogurt and fruit. We would prefer additional drinks to be water rather than juice where possible and please do not send in fizzy drinks. 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 advise us if someone other than yourself is collecting your child. You will be asked for details of the person collecting and a password. We have procedures in place to make sure that any uncollected child is cared for safely either until he/she 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! Please ensure you supply plenty of spare clothes

during each session and please check regularly that your child has not grown out of these.

In winter, a warm coat and wellington boots are essential and in summer, a sun hat and clothing which protects the skin. It is parent/carer responsibility to apply sun-cream at the beginning of their child's session. We will top this up throughout the day as required. 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.

### **Forest School**

At some point during your child's preschool journey, they will be invited to attend our Forest School sessions. It will be essential to provide appropriate clothing as listed in the information that will be given at the time.

### **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.

### **Illness**

Please do not bring your child to preschool if he/she is unwell. It's likely he/she will not enjoy or benefit from the session. If your child has suffered from vomiting or diarrhoea, please keep him/her away from preschool for 48 hours.

### **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 mark marking, 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 be highly motivating and engaging to support all areas of learning.

## **SEN**

Any child that requires extra support will receive this in collaboration with the parent/carer, SENCO, key person and any relevant outside agencies. We follow procedures as laid out in the SEND Code of Practice.

## **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!