



Registered Charity No: 1128799

Hollies Pre-school

Care and Education Policy

Last reviewed February 2023
To be reviewed February 2027
Or sooner if required

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Statement of Intent.

Our aim at the Hollies is to provide a safe and happy environment where children can grow and learn under the guidance and supervision of our dedicated and caring staff. We aim to fulfill their physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs, whilst showing them kindness, consistent discipline and encouragement in a happy and informal setting.

Working with parents and carers.

We actively encourage parents and carers to work in partnership with us and take an active part in their children's play, learning and development.

Parents are invited to an evening to introduce them to the Hollies. Staff attending the meeting will include the manager, the administrator and a committee member. During the meeting parents will be informed of the general background of the Hollies, role of the committee, children's routines, settling in, safeguarding, Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), fees, billing and paperwork we require. There will be an opportunity for parents to ask any questions.

At the Hollies we operate an open door policy. This means we welcome parents/carers to join us if they wish, during the time their child spends with us. They are free to join the children during their play, whether it's doing a jigsaw, reading a book or having a cup of tea in the home corner.

Parents/carers are encouraged to share their expertise and knowledge with the children. This could be a particular interest or hobby or connected to their occupation. Parents/carers are invited to come and read to the children at story time.

Parents/carers can talk to staff during their visits or when they collect/ drop off their children at Hollies. We have a shared diary system which enables us to communicate with parents and other settings the child attends and parents/carers to communicate with us.

Any visits can be arranged by speaking to the administrator or manager. All visitors attending the setting must treat anything they see or hear regarding individual children as confidential.

Parents/carers of pre-school children are invited to attend a parents evening each year to discuss their child's progress. They are also encouraged to contribute to their child's learning journey on an ongoing basis. This can be facilitated using the diary, dialogue with their key person and through the Learning Book.

Questionnaires are sent out to all parents who have children that attend the Hollies. This information is used to help us maintain and improve the care we offer. We have regular committee meetings to obtain and respond to feedback from parents, carers, all parents are invited to attend these meetings.

Attendance

We are rigorous in our attendance procedures. If a child is absent a parent/carer must report their absence and the reason for it, preferably by telephone call so the message is received promptly. If the setting has not been contacted the manager will phone the parents/carer to enquire about the child's wellbeing.

Equal Opportunities

At the Hollies we promote Equal Opportunities by providing the opportunity for all children to learn and make progress irrespective of their age, gender, ethnicity or special needs. We value all contributions from all our children, families and staff.

At the Hollies we:

- Encourage all children to develop a positive self-image and to accept and value others for who they are;
- Challenge any bullying or discriminatory behaviour that may occur in the setting (children or staff);
- Provide positive role models;
- Use resources at our disposal to promote positive images of the world around us;
- Use non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities;
- Encourage all children to participate in a wide range of activities and to take calculated risks in their challenge to do so;
- Do not discriminate against or refuse a child entry into our setting with a disability.

Settling in

During the half term before their child starts attending pre-school parents/carers will be invited to attend a full pre-school session with their child. During this visit the parent will be introduced to their child's key person, siblings of older children will have the same key person, unless circumstances prevent this. Following this visit, parents/carers are encouraged to bring their child for extra visits so that they can get to know their key person, other staff and the children before their child starts pre-school next term. This is also an opportunity for the child's key person to gain information from the parent about their child's likes and development.

Every effort will be made to meet each individual child's needs and help them settle at the Hollies. Before the child begins attending the Hollies, parents/carers are asked to complete a form to provide information about their child's interests, etc. They will also be asked to complete a baseline assessment for the three prime areas of learning.

When the child arrives for their first pre-school session their key person will be on hand to meet them. Parents are asked to say their goodbyes and leave their child to settle. Staying may prolong the settling process and the child may become quite distressed. The child will be reassured and we will explain that their parents/carers will be coming to collect them. The visual timetable can be used to help them with the routine and to show them when they will be collected. The manager/supervisor will phone the parents/carers when the child has settled and parents/carers are welcome to phone during the session for an update. Every effort will be made to settle the child, but should they become very distressed the manager/supervisor will ring the parent/carer to discuss the possibility of early pick up. If necessary a plan will be put into place to help ease the child into pre-school – e.g. staying for the first hour and building it up over a couple of weeks.

Key Person

Each child joining the Hollies will be allocated a Key Person. This is a member of staff designated to him/her who will help them settle at pre-school and encourage them to

take part in a wide variety of activities. A 'support' key person will be allocated to cover if the key person is absent due to illness or annual leave. This will ensure that parents have a point of contact and that regular observations continue to be made. The 'support' key person will not be responsible for uploading the observations to the child's learning journey, this will be done by the key person when they return or by a supervisor or manager if it is a long term absence.

All the staff at the setting observe the children as they play and record their observations on a daily basis – to include child's full name, date, area of play (eg home corner), and what they observed or heard. It is the role of the child's key person to transfer these observations into their learning journey. Photographs are taken on the Learning Book tablet, so they can be entered into the child's learning journey with a written observation. The revised Early Years Foundation Stage encourages Early Years Practitioners to spend quality time with the children, and less emphasis on recording observations. We still make observations that are added to the child's learning journey, but we have reduced this in line with the guidance.

The children's progress is tracked by the manager termly and any concerns raised with the key person and parents.

The observations will cover the seven areas of development. The three Prime areas are Personal, social and emotional (PSE), Communication and language (CL), and Physical development (PD). The four specific areas are Literacy (L), Mathematics (M), Understanding the world (UW) and Expressive arts and design (EAD).

The children are never tested in any way or made to feel they should be at a particular stage of their development. The children's learning journey is updated regularly so we are aware of their stage of development. The key person uses the information regarding the child's development and interests to plan activities for their 'focus group'.

The use of observations and individual learning journey's:

- Enables us to plan for individual children;
- Ensures the children are progressing in all areas of development – any lack of progression would be highlighted and planning put in place or advice sought if needed;
- Helps us to identify children's preferences;
- Help us to plan different areas in pre-school.

All the children's learning journey's will be recorded through the Learning Book program. Parents will have their own password so they can access this on-line and will be able to contribute photographs and comments.

Parents will be invited to attend a parents evening during the summer term. This is for parents/carers only.

A requirement of the Early Years Foundation Stage is for all parents to receive a short report about their child's progress, just before their third birthday. This is sent out to parents, to be passed onto their Health Visitor. Parents are also asked to bring their child's red health record book in so we can add a shortened version of the 2 year check report.

The Hollies Environment

At the Hollies we aim to give the children constant access to both the indoor and outdoor areas. The door to the outdoor area is closed at the beginning and the end of the

session when children are arriving/leaving the building, for security and safeguarding purposes. Once children are registered and numbers confirmed by two members of staff the door to the outdoor area is opened so the children have free access to both areas. Parents are asked to provide outdoor clothing for their children at all times, but we do have spare waterproof coats. The Hollies provide waterproof trousers and have spare wellies to ensure the children have suitable clothing during wet weather. Staff position themselves so that children are supervised at all times in all areas.

Different activities are provided for the children, taking the children's ideas and requests into account. The toys stored in the drawers inside the building are changed regularly, but children can request something out of the cupboard.

Children are encouraged to look after their environment and resources.

When the children are back inside and the door is closed at circle time a member of staff checks the outdoor area to ensure there are no children still outside.

Caterpillar groups

Caterpillar groups are planned by the 2 year lead. They are aimed at the younger children or any children requiring support in the prime areas. They will help develop their personal and social skills and communication skills. These groups will play based and primarily based in the flower room.

Children's transition

At the Hollies we aim to make the children's transition into their next setting enjoyable and as stress free as possible.

We invite teachers from local schools to visit us during the session, to observe and introduce themselves to the children and to read a story at story time. Information regarding all individual children is shared with the setting they will be moving to.

When the children are moving onto school we aim to have a member of the Hollies staff at their school visits to help settle them, so there is a familiar adult face they can relate to.

During the last term the children attend The Hollies their key person will give them the opportunity to make a small book about their new school. This will include photographs of their new teacher, head teacher, classroom, playground, etc. The children will also have the opportunity to discuss how they are feeling and express any worries. We will also read stories about school and talk about what they will be able to do at school. During this time the key person will give feedback and communicate any concerns that may arise and give parents/carers the opportunity to talk about their child's transition into school and any worries they may have.

Appendix A Our Daily Routine

A typical routine is as follows:

9am/11.30 / 12.30	Welcome time and registration	Children arrive with parents/carers. They leave their adult at the gate and enter the building to find their coat hook. Staff welcome children and help with coats etc.
9am	Circle time.	When all the children have arrived they are split into 2 groups for circle. The older children go over to Badger Base and the younger children stay in the main room. We begin by singing welcome song. We discuss the weekly topic/memory tray/Hollies rules etc. and the days activities/childrens plans. Encourage children to participate, share news, etc. The younger children will have a short circle beginning with the welcome song and a couple of rhymes. Once number of children is checked against the register freeplay begins.
9.20-10.55 / 12.50 – 2.25 10.15/ 1.45	Child initiated activities.	This is the time when the children carry out their plans. They can plan to work anywhere – inside or outside. The activity areas include: reading area, mark making, role play, small world play, creative, construction, physical play, jigsaws, table top games, painting. During this time the staff play alongside the children encouraging them and extending their learning. During this time staff will take their key children group for a focus/adult led activity. Caterpillar groups for the younger children take place in the Flower room. Quick tidy outside and outdoor adult led activity – parachute, etc. (optional)
10am – 10.45 1.30 – 2.15	Café.	The café is open. Healthy snacks and water or milk are available. When children are ready, they find their name on the snack board and place it under the first letter of their name on the 'Alphabet board'.
10.50/ 2.20	5 minute warning	Supervisor will shake the tambourine and inform children that it will be tidy up time in 5 minutes. The 'Tidy up inspector' will be chosen.
10.55/ 2.25	Tidy up time.	All children are encouraged to help tidy the toys and activities away. They are given a special job to do to help tidy up. Then they join the circle ready for the next activity.
11am /2.30	Singing circle.	Children are split into two groups. The older children will go to Badger Base for singing circle and story. The younger children will have singing time/ suitable activity to support their stage of development such as rhythm sticks. They may be split into 2 smaller groups depending on group size/stage of development.
11.20	Lunch time.	Children staying for lunch wash hands and sit at the tables. One member of staff to supervise each table.
11.30/ 3pm	Tick tock time.	11.30 / 12.30 children are taken to the gate by member of staff and signed out on the register. 3pm children sit at tables to be collected.

		Parents come into the play area and children are sent out one at a time. Any children staying for afterschool/3.30 pick up will go to the rainbow room for television time or the flower room to do an activity, play game, etc.
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