

# INFORMATION PACK



FIRST STEPS DAY NURSERY  
& PRE-SCHOOL  
MEADOWBROOK  
RUSKINGTON  
LINCS  
NG34 9FJ

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## First Steps, Headstart & Stepping Stones Day Nurseries

Welcome to our Nursery. We are part of a group of eight childcare facilities, the first of which was established in 1989. We can be found in the following locations:

First Steps Day Nursery  
Meadowbrook, Off Lincoln Road, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincs NG34 9FJ  
Tel & Fax: 01526 832518

Headstart Day Nursery  
The Old School, Dudley Road, Grantham, Lincs NG31 9AB  
Tel & Fax: 01476 591744

Headstart Day Nursery  
20 Great Northern Gardens, Bourne, Lincs PE10 9EH  
Tel & Fax: 01778 393925

Headstart Day Nursery  
Towngate East, Market Deeping, Lincs PE6 8LQ  
Tel & Fax: 01778 380992

Stepping Stones Day Nursery  
Agnes Street, Grantham, Lincs NG31 9QP  
Tel: 01476 593643

The Club House - Out of School Care  
The Old School, St Anne's Street, Grantham, Lincs NG31 9AB  
Tel & Fax: 01476 591744

The Club House at Huntingtower - Out of School Care  
Huntingtower Community Pri. Academy, Huntingtower Road, Grantham, NG31 7AU  
Tel & Fax: 01476 591744

First Steps at Winchelsea School - Out of School Care  
Winchelsea CP School, 4a Sleaford Road, Ruskington, Sleaford, NG34 9BY  
Tel: 01526 832518

The facilities are part of Lincolnshire Childcare Group, founded by Diane Smith B.Ed.(Hons) M.A. and the late Susan Jenkins B.A.(Hons) PGCE, both qualified teachers. They are all registered with OFSTED.

## INTRODUCTION

First Steps Day Nursery & Pre-School provides full-time day care for children aged between birth and 5 years old in small, homely, age-specific areas. Our aim at First Steps is to provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment for your child. We encourage children to develop at their own rate and to fulfil their potential in all areas. All children are treated as individuals and valued equally regardless of their background, race, religion or gender. In this booklet you will find a quick overview of our world, but you can speak to us to arrange a tour of the Nursery, either virtually or in person after hours.

We recognise that many children may not be toilet trained, so we are happy to deal with nappies and to help with toilet training.

The Nursery is run independently by a supernumerary Manager, who is assisted by a Deputy, both supported by an Area Manager. We have separate rooms for Babies and Explorers (0-2 years) and Little Learners (Toddlers). There is also a Pre-School Learning Centre which promotes and supports learning in children aged 3 years and over. We believe our Pre-School Learning Centre really does give children a head start.

This philosophy is continued in our Out of School Club, which is provided for older children, for after school care and in the holidays. Please ask for a separate information pack for this facility.

We enjoy and welcome the involvement of parents, grandparents and carers. We look forward to making you welcome and developing strong relationships to benefit your child.

We adhere fully to the OFSTED regulations throughout the Nursery, and this includes enhanced checks on all members of staff.

## EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

The EYFS Framework is the guidance that all Early Years professionals use to support children from Birth to age 5. It sets out the legal welfare requirements that we have to fulfil to ensure children's safety and well-being, and the learning and development requirements that guide our planning, observations and assessments of the children's progress.

Our daily practice is based on the following four guiding principles of the EYFS:

A Unique Child, Positive Relationships,  
Enabling Environments, Learning and Development

We tailor our activities to children's interests and facilitate their learning and development by providing an environment that is both fun and stimulating. By getting to know the children and through our inclusive practice we help them to feel safe and secure, and encourage them to learn to be strong and independent.

Based on these guiding principles we support the children's progress and development in the following seven areas of learning:

**Prime Areas:**

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

**Specific Areas:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

As a group of childcare facilities, we fully subscribe to the ethos of the Framework that states that the above areas are important for "building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving."

## **KEY PERSON**

When your child starts at the Nursery he/she will be put in a group with a Key Person. The Key Person will have a lot of contact with your child and will get to know his/her individual needs and abilities. Overseen by the Manager, Key Persons will be there to support the development of each child's ability in all areas, forming strong relationships with the child, giving them the skills and confidence that will enable them to make an easy transition into their next room or to their new school.

## **THE BABIES AND EXPLORERS ROOM (0-2 YEARS)**

This is set in a self-contained area, which is devoted solely to the needs of young babies and early toddlers. The atmosphere is relaxed, and the high staffing ratio allows for a lot of one-to-one contact and loving care. We know we are looking after your most precious asset, and we make every effort to maintain the routines already established at home.

When bringing your baby, we ask that you imagine that you are going out for the day and to pack all the things that your child might need. This will include enough food and milk for the day, suitable feeding equipment, bibs, disposable nappies, wipes or cream, and a change of clothes. For safety reasons we ask that any food that you provide for your baby is decanted out of glass jars. Please ensure that all utensils are microwave safe, and that all belongings are labelled.

In this unit we collaborate very closely with parents, noting and reporting exactly what the baby has done throughout the day. We recognise that leaving a baby can be an especially anxious time for parents and we strive to make this as easy a process as possible. If at any time you are worried, do not hesitate to telephone so that you can discuss your concerns with the Manager or Supervisor.

### **THE LITTLE LEARNERS ROOM (TODDLERS)**

Once babies approach two and are taking a lot of notice of their world, we introduce them to the Little Learners Room where the activities are more varied and stimulating. This transition is a gradual process determined by each child's individual development and progress.

Here the children will start to experience more structured play whilst still having variety and flexibility of choice. We begin to introduce a simple routine to the day and encourage the beginnings of social skills and interaction. Within this the play is carefully tailored to the child's interest, to encourage learning and to stimulate the developing child. Opportunities will be provided for children to improve physical skills both gross motor and manipulative. Language development is a priority, and much time is spent listening and talking to the children, sharing books and singing together.

The 2-Year-Old Assessment will be carried out in this Room, normally around 6 weeks after the children's second birthday. Your child's Key Person will discuss this with you before the assessment is done so that your points and observations from home can be taken into account.

### **THE PRE-SCHOOL LEARNING CENTRE (3+ YEARS)**

Here children begin a more structured learning programme to suit their individual needs and development, but the emphasis is still on "learning through play". Their day is structured to provide a variety of activities such as drawing and painting, cutting and sticking, imaginative play, looking at books, and playing with construction toys and puzzles. We also include dedicated time for literacy and numeracy development.

The activities are influenced by the children's individual interests and will be carried out both indoors and outdoors to encourage their learning and development. Children move to this area of the Nursery to prepare them for going to primary school. The main emphasis in this area is to encourage the children to develop some independence and self-care, with a lot of support from their Key Person; thus, helping them to grow in confidence and become ready for school.

We take great pride in our relationships with local primary schools. The term before the children are due to start school, we arrange for their new teachers to visit the Nursery so that they can meet the children and introduce themselves.

## PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES

The Nursery has a Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO), who has received further training in this area. The Co-ordinator works alongside other practitioners in the Nursery to help identify any additional needs, and is responsible for liaising with parents/carers, external agencies and support services. A full copy of our policy is available on request.

We are aware that some children may have particular educational, emotional or physical needs which, if not addressed, may affect their progress. Our aim is to give every child the best start in life, and throughout the Nursery we provide activities and support that are tailored to individual needs, thus enabling each child to reach his or her full potential.

## COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/CARERS

We believe that communication with you is very important. We all need to know what is happening in our child's world. This will take place both formally and informally, from quick chats and emails about your child's day to progress reports about his/her learning and development.

A Nursery can be a very busy place, so for a more in-depth discussion please feel free to inform the Manager who will arrange for a meeting either by video call or in person with your child's Key Person. You will also be provided with log-in details for our Parent Portal which will give you access to your account and your child's online learning journal called "Footsteps" which contains the observations by the Key Person and samples of his/her drawings and creations; this is available for you to look at, at any time. We hold open evenings when you can spend time looking around the Nursery and talk to your child's Key Person, and we produce newsletters to inform you of events and activities we have planned.

## NURSERY HOURS

The Nursery is open **strictly** between 7.30 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Friday. Within this we have two structured sessions, one in the morning from 9.00 am to 12.00 noon and another in the afternoon from 1.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

The Nursery fees are charged at **£5.75 per hour**, in the Baby and Toddler Rooms, and **£5.80 per hour** in the Pre-School Rooms. We will require a non-refundable deposit to secure a place. This will be deducted from your final fees.

Fees are payable in advance by tax free & childcare vouchers, debit or credit card, or by BACs into our bank account. We do not accept cash.

Bookings must be a minimum of one session, and outside of our structured sessions children may arrive and leave at the prescribed times as listed in our Nursery Hours leaflet. We ask parents/carers to adhere to booked times within these hours so that our staff ratios are correct. Any part hours used outside of booked

times will be charged to the next full hour. However, for **collections after 6.00pm** there will be an additional charge of **£10.00** for every 15 minutes or part thereof.

Half fees will be charged for any absence due to illness or holidays, but full fees will be charged in the case of un-notified absence. All absences must be notified to the Nursery by 8.30am. The Nursery does close for Bank and Public Holidays, and over Christmas. We do not charge any fee when the Nursery is closed. Please note that one month's notice is required if you wish to cancel your child's place. Fees in lieu of notice will be charged if the right amount of notice is not given, and you may also lose your deposit.

The Nursery offers a hot meal at lunchtimes, which is charged at **£3.50 per meal**. The meals come from an external provider with whom we work very closely to ensure that they meet the requirements of our healthy eating policy. However, you are free to provide packed lunches for your child if you prefer. Please inform the Manager of your preference. In addition, with the exception of the Baby Room, we provide complimentary breakfasts for children booked to start in the Nursery before 8.30 am, and light teas for those booked to be picked up after 5.00 pm.

## **POLICIES**

Our full set of policies is available for you to read on our website. The following, however, is an outline of some key points from our policies:

- Parents can provide a packed lunch, but the Nursery does offer hot meals. Snacks and drinks will be provided during the session. When providing a packed lunch, we require ice packs to be placed in the lunch boxes. This is the responsibility of the parents/carers, as we do not check every box on arrival. No packed lunches supplied by parents/carers will be heated up at the Nursery.
- If your child needs medicine, you must inform the Nursery, and fill in and sign the medicine card with specific dosage and times. Medicine will be given to your child only according to these specific instructions. However, if your child is clearly unwell or has something that is infectious, it is in everybody's interest for you to keep your child at home. We reserve the right to refuse admittance in these circumstances. Please see the enclosed exclusion policy for more information.
- If your child had sickness and diarrhoea, we do require her/him to be clear of any symptoms for 48hrs before returning to the Nursery.
- If your child suddenly requires medical attention, and we cannot contact you or a nominated carer, we shall contact your doctor or our local medical centre. In case of emergency, we shall arrange transportation to the nearest hospital.
- We will inform you if your child has had any accident at the Nursery. If we feel that the accident needs recording, you will be asked to sign an Accident Form.

- We positively promote desirable behaviour and under no circumstances is any form of physical punishment used in the Nursery.
- Head Lice - In the event of a child coming into Nursery with head lice we will talk to the parent and request that treatment is applied to clear them. In cases of persistent or extreme infestation we reserve the right to ask the parent to collect their child from Nursery and to bring him/her back only when the infestation is completely cleared.
- We will not allow a child to leave the Nursery with an unauthorised person. To avoid embarrassment, please let us know in advance of any changes in your collection arrangements.
- You must inform us if your child suffers from any allergies or any dietary problems. We cannot be held responsible unless this is clearly stated in the Childcare Record.
- We work in accordance with The Children Act 2006 and Lincolnshire Area Child Protection Committee code of Practice. We intend to create an environment in which children are safe from abuse, and in which any suspicions of abuse are promptly and appropriately responded to. As to how we achieve this please see our Safeguarding Children Policy & Procedure.
- Half fees will be charged for any absence due to illness or holidays, but full fees will be charged in the case of un-notified absence. All absences must be notified to the Nursery by 8.30am. The Nursery does close for Bank and Public Holidays, and over Christmas. We do not charge any fee when the Nursery is closed.
- Any hours booked under the government's Early Years Entitlement are not transferable to different days or hours, due to absence.
- One month's notice is required if you wish to cancel your child's place. Fees in lieu of notice will be charged if the right amount of notice is not given, and you may lose your deposit.
- The Nursery cannot be held responsible for your child when in your care on the Nursery premises, e.g. prior to arrival and after collection.
- If a child is not collected, we will make every effort to contact a known authorised person. In the event of us being unable to do this, we are then bound by law to contact the Social Services emergency team.

Should you have any reason to complain about the Nursery please see the Manager immediately. Your concerns will be dealt with promptly, but if you are not satisfied with her response, please ask to talk to our Area Manager who will try to resolve the issue. If you are not happy with the outcome you can contact OFSTED at Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD or telephone 0300 123 4666.