

Frequently Asked Questions



An outstanding setting for 2, 3 and 4 year olds that provides stimulating learning experiences for all.



www.bowerdean.bucks.sch.uk



Bowerdean Nursery School

'Learn to Play... Play to Learn.'

Starting Nursery is very exciting, but we recognise that it can also be a daunting and confusing experience. We know that for many families this could be the first time their child has spent time away from their parents. Or our families may have had experience of private day nurseries, which are very different from a Nursery School.

To help support our families as they embark on this new stage in their child's development, we have put together this guide to provide answers to some frequently asked questions.

What will my child learn?

We aim to inspire and enable children so they can play an active role in their own lives and fulfil their individual potential. The true joy of early years education is being able to embrace a fully cross-curricular approach to learning. Our curriculum is developed around the seasons and provides a careful balance of adult-led teaching and play-based exploratory learning.

Planning throughout the week is always linked and builds on the day's previous learning. Our learning is always based on books to develop listening skills, widen vocabulary and strengthen the children's imaginations. We use our stories as a springboard into linguistic, artistic, mathematical and scientific discoveries. We are very proud of our creative and mathematical work, which has featured in local art galleries.

Where will my child learn?

We embrace the use of places and experiences beyond the classroom for teaching and learning. This can include outdoor play (learning through play), outdoor projects within the Nursery grounds (vegetable gardening or chicken keeping), weekly visits to local places such as religious buildings, museums, shops and natural spaces. We also encourage learning experiences in Nursery through visitors (beekeepers/artists) and events. In addition, we also provide weekly Forest School sessions in our local woods.

We also operate a 'free-flow' approach to learning. This means both indoor and outdoor areas are open simultaneously every day and the children can choose where they wish to take their learning. We access our outdoor learning area in all weathers. We do not stop children from playing outside, rain or shine, so it's vital the children come to Nursery with appropriate clothing.

Our day begins in the classroom, with a structured group time to introduce our learning theme. Children then have free choice to explore the activities both inside and out, which are designed to extend their understanding of the learning theme through exploration and play.



Why is attendance important?

We are a school and our day is more structured than in a day nursery or playgroup. We have discrete teaching sessions at the start and end of every session. It is very important that children are on time so that there is no disruption to learning. Attending every day is vital to ensure the children make progress. Our planning is carefully designed to develop and strengthen knowledge and skills. Being late or missing whole sessions will mean your child misses valuable teaching and learning opportunities.

How do you monitor my child's progress?

Each child has a key person. They are responsible for knowing each child's strengths and areas for development. As the children all mix together, once our structured circle time is finished, every member of staff spends time with each child and is able to support their learning. We observe the children's free play and engagement in activities to assess their development. Staff gather samples of their work and use observations to complete a termly record of current development and progress. This learning log is shared at termly parent consultations.

How do you share children's progress with parents?

Unlike day nurseries, we do not provide daily or weekly updates on what each child has been doing. To provide such daily feedback would necessitate staff spending too much time away from the children. We believe it's more important for staff to talk and play with the children to ensure the best possible progress.

We hold termly parent consultations, during which staff share each child's progress records.

Staff will also share significant achievements when appropriate. This is often at drop off or pick up. However, these are some of our busiest times and our main concern is to ensure the safe arrival/departure of the children.

How do you communicate with parents?

We use a variety of ways to communicate with parents.

ClassDojo is used to share our weekly planning and as a messaging system. Please ensure you register as this is our main method of communication.

You can also find out information about our learning, term dates and events on our website, Facebook page and on Instagram. All the details are at the foot of the page.



Why do you not use Tapestry or ClassDojo to provide individual photographs of my child?

Much like providing individual daily updates, we prefer the staff to spend all their time supporting the children's learning rather than taking and uploading pictures. We post our weekly planning on ClassDojo to help you talk to your child at home about what we have been learning. We believe encouraging parent-child discussion in this way is more beneficial.

What can I do to support my child?

80% of a child's learning happens at home. Learning is a partnership between home and school throughout your child's entire educational journey. What you do at home is crucial to your child's success.

Read a story every day - without fail. This is the single most important thing you can do to help your child. Research repeatedly shows this has the biggest impact on a child's development in all areas of learning.

Talk to your child at every opportunity. You can never talk too much and you can never use too many different words. Ask your child lots of open-ended questions and give them plenty of time to answer.

Keep screen time to a minimum. Phones, tablets and tv should be avoided wherever possible. They stop children from learning to communicate with other people and reduce their ability to play imaginatively.

Allow your child to take risks. The more a child uses scissors, knives, bikes, climbing equipment the more confident they become and the less likely they are to hurt themselves.

Where can I find out more information to support my child at Nursery?

We have lots of information about our curriculum and what we do on our website. We also hold Parent Curriculum meetings and coffee mornings, where you can find out more about how to help your child.

There is also a Parent Information Board in the atrium, where you can find ideas to support your child's progress.

What should I do if I have a concern or question?

Please speak to us. We are here to help, if we can. It's best to ask at the office to arrange a time to speak to the Nursery staff.

As mentioned, drop off and pick up times are very busy and our priority is to keep the children safe, so staff are not always able to speak to parents at these times.