



# **Parent Handbook**

## **2017/18**

# The Mulberry Bush Parent Handbook

We are so pleased that you have chosen the Mulberry Bush to care for your child/ren. In this handbook we have compiled lots of information that may be useful for you whilst your child attends the nursery. The handbook will be updated periodically to reflect changes in legislation and nursery policy when this happens you will be made aware of these changes and a new handbook issued.

The Mulberry Bush is a family run setting combining intimacy, personal atmosphere and attitude with the investment and infrastructure of a much larger organisation. We provide parents with a unique childcare option.

At the Mulberry Bush we believe passionately that each child is unique and full of potential and our role is to enable them to full fill this. We do so by providing safe, caring, engaging and challenging environments for our children to learn and develop in. Guided by our highly trained and committed team, each child's experiences are tailored to their own, individual needs. This individual care goes beyond the day to day nursery experience and we can play an important part in supporting parents and families.

Helping our children to grow and develop is a great and wonderful responsibility and we are proud to say that when we send our children on to school they are confident and happy in the learning environment, well prepared and eager for their next stage in life.

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## **Useful Information:**

### **Address:**

The Mulberry Bush  
51 Locks Road  
Locks Heath  
Southampton  
SO31 6NS

**Telephone number:** 01489583130

**email:** [management@themulberrybush.co.uk](mailto:management@themulberrybush.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.themulberrybush.co.uk](http://www.themulberrybush.co.uk)

### **Ofsted Registration Number:**

EY464833

## **Starting at the Mulberry Bush:**

Usually parents/carers will visit the setting to get a good idea of the environment, ethos and atmosphere of the nursery. We are always happy to accommodate parents who would like to come back for additional visits to help them to make the right choice for their child. All nurseries are different and it is vital that you are totally confident in the choice that you make and we will do whatever we can to assist in this.

## **What you need to bring to nursery:**

At the Mulberry Bush we try to provide as much as possible. We understand how challenging the life of a busy, working parent is and do our best to make nursery a support and not an additional worry. We provide nappies, wipes, nappy cream and sun cream. We also provide all food (except formula milk), waterproof salopettes for wet weather play and bedding for children who sleep during the day. If your child requires specific brands of sun cream/wet wipes etc then we will ask you to provide them.

We do ask the EVERYTHING your child brings to nursery, including shoes and coats, is clearly labelled with their name.

## **What you need to provide:**

Welly boots

A waterproof jacket

Suitable clothing to keep them warm when playing outside

Sun hats for when it is sunny

At least one full change of clothes – more if your child is potty training or if they particularly enjoy getting wet and muddy!!

Any comforters that your child may need

We ask that toys (except comforters) are not brought into nursery. At nursery children learn that all the resources are to be shared, a valuable and often difficult lesson, it is extremely distressing and confusing for children to be told that there are exceptions to this rule if a child

brings in their own belongings. It is also not possible for us to keep track of individual toys and many of them will not be sufficiently robust to survive the nursery environment. If your child insists on bringing in a toy we ask that it is stored in their bag or basket BEFORE parents leave the setting at drop off.

### **Registration:**

Once you have made the decision that you would like your child to attend the Mulberry Bush we will ask you to complete a registration form and to pay a non-refundable registration fee. The registration fee is to cover the administration procedure. Once registration form and fee are received and start dates and day of attendance are agreed we will then send a confirmation letter or email. **Please be aware that changing start date or days of attendance, after registration has been confirmed, may jeopardise your child's place in the nursery and we reserve the right to decline such requests.**

### **Booking extra sessions:**

If you would like to book extra sessions, in addition to your usual booked sessions, then please contact the management team.

### **Changing your nursery sessions:**

You are required to give one months' written notice of your intention to reduce the number of sessions that your child attends nursery. If you would like to make a permanent change to your child's booked sessions then please give the management team as much notice as possible to look into the sessions available.

**We do not usually allow the swapping of sessions.**

### **Leaving procedure:**

You are required to give one months' written notice of your intention to withdraw your child from the nursery, or one months' fees must be paid in lieu of notice.

### **Induction process:**

Approximately 1 month before your child is due to start attending the nursery we will be in touch to arrange a meeting between yourselves and your child's key person and further settling in sessions. We will request that you attend a meeting with your child where you will complete an 'All About Me' form with your key person. This will provide us with lots of information about your child and their likes and dislikes. This meeting is also a chance for us to tell you about the day to day experience that you and your child will have at the Mulberry Bush and to address any questions that you might have. We would like you to tell us as much as possible about your child's life beyond nursery as it helps us to make their settling in as smooth as possible.

We advise at minimum of one 30 minute session and one 1 hr session prior to your child's first full session with us, these sessions are not charged. If you and your key person feel that it is appropriate we will suggest that you leave your child with us for 30mins after your 'All About Me Meeting' to start to introduce them to the idea of being in the setting without you. We will then schedule a 1 hour session for you to drop your child off with us for a short play. This may be sufficient for your child however we encourage parents and carers to consider booking additional half day sessions prior your child's official start date to help them to settle

in as smoothly as possible, these additional sessions are charged. Please speak to your key person and the setting manager/deputy manager to discuss availability of additional sessions.

If you suspect that your child may need some additional time to achieve a smooth transition into the nursery please let us know as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly. In some circumstances we will provide a home visit service to help children who are very anxious about starting nursery.

### **Key Person system:**

The key person system is central to our practice at the Mulberry Bush. Your key person will be your primary contact with nursery, they will take responsibility for your child's day to day care especially their personal care – nappy changing, toileting etc. They will focus on developing a trusting relationship with your child so that they, and you, can feel totally confident to go to that person for reassurance and support. The more information you can give your key person about your child's interests, likes and dislikes, experiences beyond nursery, family life etc. the more effectively the key person can tailor their care. Of course key practitioners have to have days off and holidays and they are, occasionally, unwell. We therefore have a secondary key person system so that there is always specific back up for each and every child. We encourage a spirit of team work at the Mulberry Bush for both staff and children. This means that while your child will usually have their closest relationship with their key person, they will also have confidence to be in the care of all the practitioners who work with them and we hope that you will too.

Working with the guidance of the Early Years Foundation Stages and working to the seven areas of learning (see section on EYFS for more information) your key person will track and support your child's development. They will make regular observations of your child to ensure that they are developing appropriately. These observations will be recorded in their online learning journal in EyLog (see section on EyLog for more information).

Children under the age of 2yrs also have a daily diary that goes home with them after each session. This records their daily experience of nursery such as sleep, food, activities etc.

### **Safeguarding:**

At The Mulberry Bush we work with children, parents, external agencies and the community to ensure the welfare and safety of children and to give them the very best start in life.

Children have the right to be treated with respect, to be helped to thrive and to be safe from any abuse in whatever form.

We support the children within our care, protect them from maltreatment and have robust procedures in place to prevent the impairment of children's health and development. **Please see our full Safeguarding policy for further details.**

We have a named person within the nursery who takes lead responsibility for safeguarding and co-ordinates child protection and welfare issues, known as the Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator (DSCO). The nursery DSCO liaises with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Local Authority Children's Social Care Team, undertakes specific training, including a child protection training course, and receives regular updates to developments within this field.

The Designated Safeguarding Co-ordinator (DSCO) at the Nursery is: the setting Manager

## **SEN (Special Educational Needs):**

At *The Mulberry Bush* we are committed to the inclusion of all children. All children have the right to be cared for and educated to achieve the best possible outcomes, to share opportunities and experiences and develop and learn alongside their peers. We provide a positive and welcoming environment where children are supported according to their individual needs.

We recognise that some children may have additional needs that may require particular help, intervention and support. These needs may be short-lived for a particular time in the child's life or may require longer-term or lifelong support. At all times we will work alongside each child's parents and any relevant professionals to share information, identify needs and help the child and their family access the support they need.

In accordance with our admissions policy, we are committed to providing a childcare place, wherever possible, for children who may have special educational needs (SEN), and/or disabilities, according to their individual circumstances, and the nursery's ability to make any reasonable adjustments in order to provide the necessary standard of care. All children will be given a full settling in period when joining the nursery according to their individual needs.

Where we believe a child may have learning difficulties and/or a disability that has not previously been acknowledged, we will work closely with the child's parents and any relevant professionals to establish the child's needs and to secure any action that may be required. We recognise that children with disabilities may not have SEN but may need the nursery to make reasonable adjustments to enable them to make full use of the nursery's facilities.

Where we have emerging concerns about a child and/or where a child has identified additional needs or a disability, we will find out as much as possible about the needs of the child and any support the child or family may need to ensure the child makes the best progress in their learning and development. We do this by:

- liaising with the child's parents;
- observing each child's development and monitoring such observations regularly;
- liaising with any other relevant professionals engaged with the child and their family;
- seeking any specialist help or support wherever possible;
- researching relevant publications/sources of help;
- reading any reports that have been prepared; and
- attending any assessment or review meetings with the local authority/professionals wherever possible and practical.

(Please see our full SEN policy for further details)

## **Sickness and Illness:**

(please see full policy for further information)

To help keep children healthy and minimise infection we do not expect children to attend Nursery if they are unwell. If a child is unwell it is in their best interest to be in a home environment with adults they know well rather than at nursery with their peers.

If a child becomes unwell during their session we will implement the following procedure:

- We contact their parent/s/ If we feel that the child is unable to cope with being at nursery we will ask that the child is collected as soon as possible. During this time we care for the child in a quiet, calm area with their key person, wherever possible;

- We follow the guidance given to us by Public Health England (formerly the Health Protection Agency) in Guidance on Infection Control in Schools and other Child Care Settings and advice from our local health protection unit on exclusion times for specific illnesses to protect other children in the Nursery. HOWEVER the Nursery reserves the right to implement our own guidance on certain illnesses. These exceptions are specified below: in ALL cases we require a doctor to identify the nature of the illness/rash/infection;
- Hand, foot and mouth: we request that children are excluded from the setting until the rash is no longer visible;
- Slapped cheek: We do not require the child to be excluded from the setting once the rash has appeared, as it will no longer be infectious, however we do request that the illness is identified by a doctor, so that other parents can be warned;
- Conjunctivitis: children will be excluded from the setting until at least 24 hours after medical treatment has been started and weeping has subsided;
- Should a child have an infectious illness, such as a stomach bug with sickness and/or diarrhoea, they must not return to Nursery until at least 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea;
- In the event of a case of food poisoning of a child or member of staff originating in the Nursery we notify Ofsted as soon as possible and in all cases within 14 days;
- We inform all parents if there is a contagious infection identified in the Nursery, to enable them to spot the early signs of this illness. We require 2 cases of the illness before we make this notification;
- We thoroughly clean and sterilise all equipment and resources that may have come into contact with a contagious child to reduce the spread of infection;
- It is important that children are not subjected to the rigours of the Nursery day, which requires socialising with other children and being part of a group setting, when they have first become ill and require a course of antibiotics. We therefore exclude all children on antibiotics, if it is for a contagious illness, for the first 48 hours of the course. For non-contagious illnesses that require antibiotics we exclude for the first 24 hours (unless this is part of an ongoing care plan to treat individual medical conditions e.g. asthma and the child is not unwell);
- We have the right to refuse admission to a child who is unwell. This decision will be taken by the Manager on duty and is non-negotiable;
- If a child becomes unwell with a temperature of over 39 degrees we will contact parents and may initiate our medication procedure for paracetamol and/or request that the child is collected from Nursery. Please refer to the medication policy for further details; and
- All parents are requested to regularly check their children's hair. If a parent finds that their child has head lice we would be grateful if they could inform the Nursery so that other parents can be alerted to check their child's hair.
- We acknowledge that most children will take some time off during the year either due to sickness or for holidays. To account for this we discount every child 25% of their fees for a 2 week period. This is then annualised and taken off the monthly bill for each child.



## Medication:

(please see full policy for further information)

If a child requires medicine we will obtain information about the child's needs for this, and will ensure this information is kept up to date.

We follow strict guidelines when dealing with medication of any kind in the Nursery and these are set out below.

### **MEDICATION PRESCRIBED BY A DOCTOR, DENTIST, NURSE OR PHARMACIST**

- *(Medicines containing aspirin will only be given if prescribed by a doctor)*
- Prescription medicine will only be given to the person named on the bottle for the dosage stated;
- Medicines must be in their original containers;
- The parent/guardian of any child requiring prescription medication should hand over the medication to a staff member who will complete a medication form with details of the medication, storage of medication, times for administration of medication etc. this must be acknowledged and signed by both the staff member and parent/guardian;
- **MEDICATION MUST NOT BE LEFT IN A CHILD'S BAG;**
- Medication must be clearly labelled with the child's full name; and
- Parents/guardians must give prior written permission for the administration of each and every medication. However, we will accept written permission once for a whole course of medication or for the ongoing use of a particular medication under the following circumstances;
- The written permission is only acceptable for that brand name of medication and cannot be used for similar types of medication, e.g. if the course of antibiotics changes, a new form will need to be completed;
- The dosage on the written permission is the only dosage that will be administered. We will not give a different dose unless a new form is completed;
- The times that the medication must be administered must remain the same. We will not administer at different times unless a new form is completed;
- Parents must notify us **IMMEDIATELY** if the child's circumstances change, e.g. a dose has been given at home, or a change in strength/dose needs to be given;
- The Nursery will not administer a dosage that exceeds the recommended dose on the instructions unless accompanied by written instructions from a relevant health professional such as a letter from a doctor or dentist;
- The parent must be asked when the child has last been given the medication before coming to nursery; and the staff member must record this information on the medication form. ***Similarly when the child is picked up, the parent or guardian must be given precise details of the times and dosage given throughout the day. The parent's signature must be obtained at both times;***
- Medication must be checked by both the witness (Room Leader/Deputy Room Leader) and administrator (Manager) against the information given and recorded by the parent on the medicine form, including child's name, medication name, amount due, time due, any special instructions. If there is any change to the scheduled time to be administered a Manager must be informed and the parent will be contacted. At the time of administering the medicine, a senior member of staff (room leader or above) will ask the child to take the medicine, or offer it in a manner acceptable to the child at the prescribed time and in the prescribed form. (It is important to note that staff working with children are not legally obliged to administer medication);

- If the child refuses to take the appropriate medication then a note will be made on the form ***and the parent/guardian will be notified; and***
- Where medication is “essential” or may have side effects, discussion with the parent will take place to establish the appropriate response.

#### **NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION**

- The Nursery will not administer any non-prescription medication containing aspirin;
- The Nursery will not administer non-prescription medication for longer than 72 hours, dependant on the medication or the condition of the child. After this time medical attention should be sought;
- If the Nursery feels the child would benefit from medical attention rather than non-prescription medication, we reserve the right to refuse nursery care until the child is seen by a medical practitioner ;
- If a child needs any non-prescription medication including liquid paracetamol or similar medication during their time at Nursery, such medication will be treated as prescription medication with the onus being on the parent to provide the medicine;
- On registration, parents will be asked if they would like to fill out a medication form for a specific type of liquid paracetamol, which can be given in the case of an increase in the child’s temperature reaching 39 degrees or above. This form will state the dose to be given, the circumstances in which this can be given e.g. the temperature increase of their child, the specific brand name or type of liquid paracetamol and a signed statement to say that this may be administered in an emergency with verbal consent from the parent. If they CANNOT contact the parent medicine will only be given if the child has been in Nursery for at least 4 hours. In the event of any child’s temperature reaching 39 degrees the parent is required to collect their child. This decision will be made by the Manager, taking into consideration the medical history of the child on their registration form.
- An emergency Nursery supply of fever relief (e.g. Calpol) will be stored on site. This will be checked at regular intervals by the designated trained first aider to make sure that it complies with any instructions for storage and is still in date;
- If a child does exhibit the symptoms for which consent has been given to give non-prescription paracetamol during the day the Nursery will make every attempt to contact the child’s parents. Where parents cannot be contacted then the Manager will take the decision as to whether the child is safe to have this medication based on the time the child has been in the Nursery, the circumstances surrounding the need for this medication and the medical history of the child on their registration form. Giving non-prescription medication will be a last resort and the Nursery staff will use other methods first to try and alleviate the symptoms, e.g. for an increase in temperature the Nursery will remove clothing, use fanning, tepid cooling with a wet flannel. The child will be closely monitored until the parents collect the child;
- If any child is brought to the Nursery in a condition in which he/she may require medication sometime during the day, the Manager will decide if the child is fit to be left at the nursery. If the child is staying, the parent must be asked if any kind of medication has already been given, at what time and in what dosage and this must be stated on the medication form;
- For any non-prescription cream for skin conditions e.g. Sudocrem, prior written permission must be obtained from the parent and the onus is on the parent to provide the cream which should be clearly labelled with the child’s full name;

- As with any kind of medication, staff will ensure that the parent is informed of any non-prescription medicines given to the child whilst at the Nursery, together with the times and dosage given; and
- The Nursery DOES NOT administer any medication unless prior written consent is given for each and every medicine.

### **Who can administer medicine?**

Medicine will be administered by a member of the Management team, witnessed by a Room leader or Deputy Room leader. This will be in almost all instances unless:

- It is an emergency medicine such as an inhaler or Epipen, then this can be given by the most senior member of staff present in the room at the time and if they have received appropriate training to do so. A member of management should be called as soon as possible for assistance.
- If it is an ongoing daily medicine, it will be to the Managers discretion to who can administer this depending on the medication needed and the possible risks.

### **INJECTIONS, PESSARIES, SUPPOSITORIES**

As the administration of injections, pessaries and suppositories represents intrusive nursing, we will not administer these without appropriate medical training for every member of staff caring for this child. This training is specific for every child and not generic. The Nursery will do all it can to make any reasonable adjustments including working with parents and other professionals to arrange for appropriate health officials to train staff in administering the medication.

### **Healthy Eating:**

At the Mulberry Bush the provision of high quality food and well balanced, healthy and very tasty meals is extremely important to us. In order to help ensure that the children in our care receive the best possible diet we work with state registered paediatric dietitian & public health nutritionist Rebecca Weeks (BSc Hons RD, Msc PHN). Rebecca helps us to structure nutritionally balanced and appealing menus for the children. We follow the national guidelines to help us ensure that there is an appropriate balance of all the food groups. All of our fruit and vegetables are provided by our local green grocer and all meat sourced from our local butcher. We have a dedicated chef who is passionate about producing the very best food for growing children. We produce as much as possible from our own kitchens, even down to the dough for pizzas and fruit yoghurts made with homemade fresh fruit puree and natural yoghurt! We have two menu's Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter, these are adapted each year and regularly reviewed. We provide breakfast, morning snack, lunch and tea each day.

It is vital that the children have a good understanding of which foods are good for them, which are okay in moderation, and which are simply not healthy. We therefore prioritise talking about food, especially during mealtimes. We also use this as an opportunity to talk about how we grow food and where it comes from and the origins of the dishes that are served to them. This is a useful tool to access their understanding of the world around them.

If your child has special dietary requirements such as vegetarianism or religious requirements, or allergies then please discuss this with your key person at your induction (or with managers beforehand if possible). We will usually be able to accommodate all

requirements to ensure that your child is kept safe at nursery. Please see our allergy policy for further details.

If you would prefer to provide a packed lunch for your child then we are happy to accommodate this. Please let us know and we can provide you with our guidelines for packed lunches.

PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT ACCOMMODATE INDIVIDUAL PREFERENCE

### **Accidents and Incidents:**

Accidents do occasionally happen, especially when children are learning to crawl, walk, run and climb. In this event the majority of staff are trained to administer first aid.

If your child has an accident at nursery the practitioner who has witness the accident will completed an accident form. This will be shared with the adult who collects at the end of the session and they will be asked to sign it. The form will also be counter signed by the manager or deputy manager of the setting.

If a child received a significant bump to the head then parents will be informed by telephone immediately. Usually it will be fine for the child to remain at nursery for the rest of their session and practitioners will keep a close eye on them.

### **Parents as partners:**

Essential to our support of your child is the relationship between the nursery and you as parents and carers. This relationship is crucial to the well-being, development and progress of your child. During your time here at the Mulberry Bush we will encourage and promote a two way flow of information, knowledge and expertise. The more we know about you and your child and the more you know about us, the more successful we will be in creating a partnership that is fully supportive of your child. There are a number of ways that we build a relationship with yourselves and share information with you and will ask you to share information with us:

We use a number of mediums to help us to provide as many channels of communication as possible:

- **‘Open door’ policy:** The management door is always open to parents to address questions or concerns. We ask that parents always feel confident to talk to their key person, room leader, deputy manager, manager or company directors. This can be done in person, on the phone or by email at any time. We really value parents feedback on the nursery and will do all that we can to address any parental concerns as quickly and thoroughly as possible.
- **Facebook:** Our Facebook page is very popular with parents and grandparents. We regularly up-date photographs and information about the events that happen at the nursery. Children’s photographs are only used with parental permission given during initial induction. This can be changed at any time. (For use of social media for staff pls see below)
- **Newsletter:** Our newsletters are sent out each month. They give lots of information about what has been happening over the previous month with plenty of photographs. We also give information about up and coming events, changes of staff in the nursery and many other pieces of information.
- **Notice board:** In the entrance and hall way of the nursery you will find our parent notice boards. We use these to post all sorts of information from our insurance details

and OFSTED registration to information about government funding schemes or events around the nursery. Please do take a couple of minutes to glance over the information when you are in the setting.

- **Email:** we regularly send information out by email. We find that this is often the easiest way for parents to give and receive information. We ask that all changes to sessions are confirmed by email so that both parties have an electronic record.
- **Induction:** During your induction process we will try to find out as much as possible about your child, their needs and their life in general. We will also pass as much information to you about the nursery and our procedures as possible.
- **Room inductions during transitions:** When your child comes to move up to the next room we will arrange a meeting between yourself and your new key person and your child will conduct visits to their new room prior to moving up.

### **EyLog:**

EyLog is our online learning journal system that allows us to share each child's learning journal with their parents continuously. It is a completely secure system that you access by a personal pin number. Shortly after you start at the nursery you will be provided with log in details and you can download an app to access the system from your phone or tablet. One of the best features of the programme is that it allows parents to contribute directly to the learning journal; to support development alongside the nursery, and to share with us information about their child's interests and experiences outside nursery. The learning journal is a working document that is created by and updated by your child's key person to track and record their development in line with the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage). Alongside this parent handbook you will be provided with our parent's guide to the EYFS which will give you lots of information about how the EYFS works and how it is relevant to your child. We are always eager to help parents to understand how we support their child's development and to make any contributions that they can, so please do ask questions, we can provide lots of information.

- **Parent's evenings:**  
We hold parents evenings regularly throughout the year. These are held after the nursery has closed for the day and we ask that children do not attend. It is rare that parents and practitioners have a chance to talk without the distraction of children and we feel that it is important to give you and your key person the chance to have a fully focussed consultation. We do appreciate that this can be difficult in some instances so your key person will be happy to arrange a different time to meet during working hours if you are unable to attend without your child/ren. During your consultation your key person will talk to you about your child's development in relation to the EYFS and their general experience at nursery. It is a great opportunity for you to ask any questions that you may have about how we are supporting your child and how you can help support this at home. We always emphasises however, that any concerns that you have should be raised with us as soon as possible, please don't leave important questions until a parents evening.
- **Parent Committee:**  
The Mulberry Bush Parent Committee meet with the Management team every couple of months. We discuss developments of the nursery and share ideas to help us to improve the setting, our practice, the children's experience and the general smooth running of the nursery. We find their input is invaluable to our ability to grow and

develop the setting. We are always keen to have new members so please let us know if you would be interested in becoming involved.

### **Babysitting:**

There are a number of staff members who are happy to provide babysitting services outside of their working hours. However Mulberry Bush staff are not permitted to take on babysitting/childcare, of children who attend the setting at times when the nursery is open (Monday-Friday 7.30am – 6pm). Mulberry Bush staff are permitted to take on no more than 3 babysitting commitments per week and only one of these may be midweek. This is to ensure that staff are sufficiently rested and fit to carry out their duties caring for children in the nursery.

The nursery does not manage this process or take fees for babysitting. The Mulberry Bush takes no responsibility for work undertaken by our staff outside of their working hours.

### **Facebook and Social Media:**

Employees of the Mulberry Bush are not permitted to be ‘friends’ with parents on social media (Facebook/ Twitter etc). Please do not put staff in a compromising position by requesting this. To accept a request may lead to disciplinary action against the staff member.

### **Room structure:**

- **Blueberries – 0 – 14 months**

Ratio 1 adult to 3 children

The Blueberries is an intimate space specifically for our youngest babies. It is connected to the Strawberries room and the children mix regularly throughout the day but their own room gives them a peaceful and specifically planned space.

The Blueberries sleep in our dedicated sleep room.

Children usually move up to Strawberries around the time they start to walk but this is adapted to each child as children can reach this physical milestone at such different times and does not necessarily correspond to their development in other areas. This is something that your key person will work on with you as your child progresses through their time in the nursery.

- **Strawberries – 14 months – 24 months**

Ratio 1 adult to 3 children

The Strawberries have 2 designated rooms at their disposal as well as the sensory room. This gives the children an excellent variety of messy play and creative cuddles and stories.

Both Blueberries and Strawberries have access to a specific baby garden area with age appropriate content and activities. We do encourage the Strawberries to use the larger garden whenever appropriate as well as this provides excellent challenges and experiences for the older children.

- **Raspberries – 2 – 3 years**

Ratio 1 adult to 4 children

The Raspberries’ room spans two rooms over two floors. The rooms are bright and spacious, allowing lots of room for active toddlers to play and explore. Working with the EYFS 7 areas of learning the different areas of play become more defined in

Raspberries. They have their own, bespoke sensory room for their individual use. There is direct access outside to allow free flow play to the garden. Raspberries have their own lavatories in each room and nappy change.

- **Elderberries – 3 – 5 years**

Ratio 1 adult to 8 children

The Elderberries' room spans two floors providing fantastic spaces with lots of natural light. There is a bespoke sensory room specifically designed and stocked for this age group. The Elderberries also have easy access to the garden. As children move into the Elderberries they follow a structured daily routine based around the EYFS. This routine encourages them to become more independent, taking a more conscious lead in the structure of their play. Using children's interests and learning through play, we help to prepare them for school. We encourage the children to mark make using a tool correctly, to solve a conflict independently, we help them to learn why it is important to share, how to dress themselves etc. These are vital skills to prepare them for the big move to school and life beyond. Please see Transitions to School for further information.

We vary the environment as much as we can to create different and interesting spaces that change and grow all the time. Throughout the nursery we ensure that there are plenty of age appropriate and carefully chosen books available freely to the children. We encourage them to be excited by the prospect of reading and, as they come into the Elderberries, to begin to take the first steps towards numeracy and literacy.

For more information on the layout and facilities of the individual rooms please refer to our website

## **EYFS**

**Please see our Parent's Guide to the EYFS provided with induction material**

### **Transitions:**

#### **Internal transitions:**

Moving from one age group to the next can be a challenging experience for both children and parents. We work hard to make this transition as smooth and stress free as possible.

Approximately a month before your child is due to make the move into their next room you will receive a letter notifying you as to who your new key person will be and asking to make an appointment for you to meet them. During this meeting they will ask you to help them update your child's 'All About Me' document with information about their routine, likes and dislikes. They will talk to you about the changes that your child will experience in their new room, these will include changes in routine and procedures, changes in staff and changes in staff to child ratios. There may be a difference in the way in which you receive information about your child's day, for example, in Blueberries each child has a daily diary detailing information such as sleep times, nappies, food and general information about their day. When they move into Raspberries they will no longer have a diary and you will receive daily information from their key person in a verbal handover.

Your current key person will also give a detailed handover to their new key person before their transition date.

Following your meeting we will start transition visits for your child. These visits are tailored to each child. If a child is particularly anxious then we may send them on their visits with a member of staff whom they are confident with and start with very short periods that we

gradually lengthen. If a child is very confident in their new room then they may be happy to start with longer visits unaccompanied by a familiar staff member. We will usually move a child as soon as possible after their birthday.

### **Transition to School:**

One of the biggest transitions for any child, and of course for their parents, is the transition from nursery to school. We support this process in many ways.

Many schools produce their own transition material including picture booklets for the children to see their new environment and often photos of their new teachers too. If they do not produce their own then we will visit and make them ourselves. We invite all the reception teachers to visit the nursery if they can. We ask that the schools donate to or lend us samples of uniform, book bags etc for our role play area, this helps the children to explore their own feelings and ideas about the move to school. Wherever possible we will accompany children on their visits to school. Most importantly we encourage the children to talk about school and express any thoughts or anxieties that they may have. We encourage and support them to leave the Mulberry Bush confident in the skills that they need to thrive in a school environment. To hold their pens correctly, recognise numbers, handle scissors, recognise their names and be confident in their own hygiene care. Some children will of course be ahead of this and happily write their names and even some simple words. Each child will learn at their own rate and we will support them on their own, individual journey.

### **Funding:**

At the Mulberry Bush we accept government funding for 2yr olds and 3yr – 5yr olds.

#### **Funding for 3-5 Year Olds Early Years Education:**

Following the beginning of the term after your child's third birthday your child will be entitled to claim up to 30 hours 'free time' for 38 weeks in the year. At the Mulberry Bush we 'stretch' this over 51 weeks of the year so you receive the benefit of up to 22 hours per week. We offer two contract types: a basic funded offer and a guaranteed session funded offer. Please ask the management team for further information.

Any additional hours in excess of funded hours will be charged at the hourly rate for that session. Please see our website for details on rates. We will organise all funding on your behalf and work out fees across the year so that you pay the same amount each month. Please note we are not registered as a crèche and so any additional hours need to add up to one of our available sessions. We do however have multiple options in relation to sessions, with differing start times, so if you have any further questions do not hesitate to pop in and have a chat with us. In addition the government scheme does not fund food costs so we need to add a small additional food charge. Food charges are also available on our website. Guaranteed session charges may also apply.

#### **Funding for 2 Year Olds Early Years Education:**

This is a scheme that allows eligible children to receive free early years care and education from the term after their second birthday. This is part of a national offer from the Department for Education (DfE) and has been developed to improve outcomes for identified two year olds who would benefit from accessing high quality early years and childcare provision. It will also help to tackle challenging circumstances, through family support. Please check the council websites for further information including eligibility criteria.



### **Late collections:**

Unforeseen events can occasionally lead to parents being unable to collect their child at the end of their scheduled session. We appreciate that sometimes this is difficult to avoid but we ask that parents do their best to avoid this eventuality. If you are unable to collect your child on time then please do the following:

- Notify the nursery as soon as possible
- Please do your best to appoint a designated person to collect in your absence
- If this is possible then let us know the full name of this person and give them and us a password.

If you are not able to appoint a designated person then we will carry out the following procedure

- If your collection time falls within operating hours, and staffing allows, then we will continue to care for your child in their room as usual
- If we are unable to keep your child in their room due to staffing restrictions then they will be taken care of by the manager of the setting in the office until you or a designated person collects them
- If the collection time falls outside operating hours then two members of staff will remain with your child at the nursery until you or a designated person collects them

Please note that late collection fees are applicable immediately at the rate of £15 for each 15 minute period

In the event of a child not being collected and no notification given please see our Late Collections and Non Collections Policy.

### **Promoting positive behaviour:**

At The Mulberry Bush we believe that children flourish best when they know how they and others are expected to behave. Children gain respect through interaction with caring adults who act as good role models, show them respect and value their individual personalities. The nursery encourages and praises positive, caring and polite behaviour at all times in and provides an environment where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their surroundings.

Children need to have set boundaries of behaviour for their own safety and the safety of their peers. Within the nursery we aim to set these boundaries in a way which helps the child to develop a sense of the significance of their own behaviour, both in their own environment and those around them. Restrictions on the child's natural desire to explore and develop their own ideas and concepts are kept to a minimum.

### **When children behave in unacceptable ways:**

- We never use or threaten to use physical punishment/corporal punishment such as smacking or shaking;
- We only use physical intervention for the purpose of averting immediate danger or personal injury to any person (including the child) or to manage a child's behaviour if absolutely necessary;

- We recognise that there may be times where children may have regular occasions where they lose control and may need individual techniques to restrain them. Any restraints will only be done following recommended guidance and, wherever possible, with a signed agreement from parents on when to use it. We will complete an incident form following any restraints used and notify the parents;
- We do not single out children or humiliate them in any way. Where children use unacceptable behaviour they will, wherever possible, be re-directed to alternative activities. Discussions with children will take place as to why their behaviour was not acceptable, respecting their level of understanding and maturity;
- Staff will not raise their voices (other than to keep children safe);
- In any case of misbehaviour, we always make it clear to the child or children in question, that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome;
- We do not use the term naughty to describe a child;
- We decide how to handle a particular type of behaviour depending on the child's age, level of development and the circumstances surrounding the behaviour. This may involve asking the child to talk and think about what he/she has done. All staff support children in developing empathy and children will only be asked to apologise if they have developed strong empathy skills and have a good understanding of why saying sorry is appropriate;
- We help staff to reflect on their own responses towards challenging behaviours to ensure that their reactions are appropriate;
- We inform parents if their child's behaviour is unkind to others or if their child has been upset. In all cases we deal with inappropriate behaviour in nursery at the time. We may ask parents to meet with staff to discuss their child's behaviour, so that if there are any difficulties we can work together to ensure consistency between their home and the nursery. In some cases we may request additional advice and support from other professionals, such as the educational psychologist.
- We support children in developing non-aggressive strategies to enable them to express their feelings;
- We may complete an ABCC (Antecedents, Behaviour, Consequences, Communication) form, or a series of ABCC forms, to help us to analyse and understand the child's behaviour;
- We keep confidential records on any inappropriate behaviour that has taken place. We inform parents and ask them to read and sign any incidents concerning their child;
- We support all children to develop positive behaviour, and we make every effort to provide for their individual needs;
- Through partnership with parents and formal observations, we make every effort to identify any behavioural concerns and the causes of that behaviour. From these observations and discussions we will implement an individual behaviour modification plan where a child's behaviour involves aggressive actions towards other children and staff, for example hitting, kicking etc. The key person, working along-side the managers will complete ABCC forms identifying any potential triggers or warning signs ensuring other children's and staff's safety at all times. In these instances we may remove a child from an area until they have calmed down; and
- In the event of consistent unmanageable behaviour, where all agreed methods of behaviour management are ineffective and the wellbeing of other children or staff is effected, the nursery reserves the right to insist that a child is removed from the setting for the remainder of that session/day. The parents/carers will be contacted and asked to collect the child as soon as possible. This will not result in the refund of fees for the

session. If a child's behaviour remains consistently unmanageable, despite the best efforts of practitioners to implement agreed methods of behaviour management, we may exclude the child from the setting permanently, with immediate effect.

### **Compliments:**

The Mulberry Bush encourages parents to provide us with feedback both positive and negative. Compliments are always gratefully received and fed back to the whole team. They are a fantastic source of inspiration for everyone. Individual team members who receive particular praise will be recognised by the management team.

### **Complaints procedure:**

At The Mulberry Bush we believe that parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their individual needs and wishes as well as those of their children. We welcome any suggestions from parents on how we can improve our services, and will give prompt and serious attention to any concerns that parents may have. Any concerns will be dealt with professionally and promptly to ensure that any issues arising from them are handled effectively and to ensure the welfare of all children, enable ongoing cooperative partnership with parents and to continually improve the quality of the nursery. We have a formal procedure for dealing with complaints where we are not able to resolve a concern. Where any concern or complaint relates to child protection, we follow our Safeguarding Policy. (Please see full Complaints Procedure and Safeguarding Policy for further information)

### **Other Agencies:**

We work with other agencies to ensure that your child receives the best consistent care possible, this includes speech and language therapists, portage, paediatricians and social services. We ask that Parents inform us if you are receiving any support from such agencies so we can liaise with them. Confidentiality is treated very seriously meaning that discussions are on a need to know basis.

### **Policies:**

A selection of our most used policies and procedures will be provided to you on registration [www.themulberrybush.co.uk](http://www.themulberrybush.co.uk), these and other policies are also available by email or hardcopy on request. Please contact the management team for further details.