



**Sandal**

Primary School & Nursery

# *Nursery Handbook*



2025 - 2026



### Contact the School

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# Welcome to Nursery at Sandal Primary

We would like to welcome you and your child to our Nursery Class. We hope the time you spend with us will be both happy and valuable.

This booklet contains information that we hope you will find interesting and helpful. We look forward to building a good relationship with you and your child.

## Our Nursery aims

We aim to...

- Create an environment that is safe, warm and welcoming so that children and their parents will feel respected and at ease.
- Carefully plan the environment to suit the needs of the children within the setting, providing an environment indoors and outdoors that is stimulating and appropriate to the enhancement of each child's development socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically.
- Develop relationships between staff and children that supports interaction of a high level in order to assess, develop and extend each child's capabilities in all areas of learning.
- Encourage in each child the development of self-motivation, independence and confidence through provision of resources and attitude of staff.
- Plan for the development of skills, knowledge and concepts and to provide a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriate for the needs of three and four year olds.



# Staff at Sandal



Headteacher

Mr Paul Douglass



Deputy Headteacher

Miss Emma Malone



Early Years Leader  
SENDCo

Miss Christina Sperduto



Nursery Teacher

Mrs Caroline Smith

# The School Day

**The Nursery day is from 9:00am to 3:00pm**

## Arrival

At 8:50am a member of staff will open the entrance doors for your child to enter the building. When they come in, they should put their coat on their peg in the cloakroom and their lunchbox in the box provided.

Once any important messages have been passed on to the team, have a hug, kiss and off they go. We understand that initially this separation may seem hard for both you and your child, but it really is a case of the sooner the better! We would like the children to be as independent as possible; therefore, we ask that parents encourage their children to come into school on their own. Children who attend breakfast club will be brought down to nursery by a member of staff at 8:50am to join their peers.

School updates will be available weekly through email and through the school website [www.sandalprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.sandalprimaryschool.co.uk)

## Departure

At the end of the day, we will call children to the door ready for them to leave at 3:00pm. No child is allowed to go until we have seen their responsible adult in the playground and we have called them to come to the door. Please ensure that you have provided the names of approved adults who are able to collect your child (in the information pack).

Children who go to Funtastik or After School Care Club are collected by the relevant members of staff.

Your patience is appreciated at this very busy time as the children's safety is our first priority. Please call school if you think you may arrive late to collect your child.

## Wednesdays

Part time children who attend at the start of the week leave nursery at 11:45am before lunch and the end of the week part time children arrive at 12:15pm, ready to have lunch with the full time children. Please note, the external gate will be locked during the school day so a member of the nursery team will come to open it for your child to leave or arrive.

## Attendance: How do I report an absence?

Daily attendance is important to ensure continuity and progression in learning. If your child is unable to attend Nursery for any reason please ring before 8.30am and leave an answer machine message (01274 598115), email the office at [office@sandalprimaryschool.co.uk](mailto:office@sandalprimaryschool.co.uk) or send a school comms message using the gateway app.

We are aiming for over 98% attendance as a school.

If for any reason you know your child will be missing from Nursery, you need to fill in a 'Leave of Absence' form, even if it is for only one day!



# What does the Nursery Day look like?

8.50 - 9.00	Welcome, Self Registration & Continuous Provision
9.00 - 9:15	Morning Register & Group Teaching
9.15- 10.00	Adult Led and Child Initiated learning activities - (indoor/outdoor provision)
10:00—10:10	Group Teaching
10:10-10:20	Snack Time
10.20—11:20	Adult Led and Child Initiated learning activities - (indoor/outdoor provision)
11:20—11:30	Tidy up Time
11:30—11:45	Whole Class Teaching
11.45—1:00	Lunch
1:00—1:15	Afternoon Register & Whole Class Teaching
1.15-2.30	Adult Led and Child Initiated learning activities—(indoor/outdoor provision)
2.30-2.40	Tidy up Time
2.40 - 2:50	Circle Time/Story Time
2:50 - 3.00	Getting ready for home time

The structured teaching sessions (group and whole class) will range from;

- Maths
- Phonics
- Understanding the world/ topic
- Religious Education (RE)
- Physical Education (PE, 2 lessons per week)
- PSHE
- Love of reading



## Milk and snack

The children gather together for milk and snack time every morning. Milk is provided free of charge until your child's fifth birthday.

We also provide a variety of fresh fruit each day. Every child is required to bring their own water bottle to school daily. They will have access to this throughout the school day.

## Lunchtime

Lunchtime is at 11.45-1.00pm for children in Nursery. The staff have a staggered lunch break so there is always someone familiar with the children during this time.

Nursery children are required to bring a healthy packed lunch each day. If you would prefer, some parents opt for putting an ice pack in their child's packed lunch to keep it cool.

**Rubbish to be taken home so you can see what they've eaten.**

## Suggestions for a healthy packed lunch

- Sandwich - meat, fish, dairy, salad.
- Yoghurt, fromage frais or custard.
- A drink: water, milk, fruit juice, smoothie
- Cereal bars rather than cakes and biscuits.
- Seeds, fruit, crackers and cheese and vegetable or bread sticks with a dip.



## Suggestions for food to include less often in a healthy packed lunch

- Snacks such as crisps
- Chocolate coated biscuits
- Cakes
- Meat and pastry products such as sausage rolls or pies

## Suggestions for food to not include in a healthy packed lunch

- Sweets
- Nut or nut products (We are a nut free school - some pupils have serve allergies)
- Fizzy drinks

**If your child has any allergies or dietary requirements, please make sure to inform the school office.**

## What will my child need?

The first steps to ensuring your child feels confident and settled in Nursery is ensuring they have everything they need and are ready for the day ahead. Initially your child will need:

- A named coat
- A named water bottle containing water only please to be brought into the classroom
- A named pair of wellington boots (to stay in school)
- A bag containing spare clothes (this can stay in school if it hasn't been used)
- Waterproof trousers / an all in one waterproof when we are timetabled to go to the woods

Nursery children wear school uniform (see list in pack). It would be helpful if children could wear clothes that they can fasten and unfasten themselves. Please avoid trousers with clips and jumpsuits. We do encourage them to go to the toilet independently.

**Please clearly label all your child's clothes.**

In Nursery, we do painting and gluing activities almost everyday. We provide aprons, but please appreciate that your child might go home a little messy. We try to ensure our paint and glue is washable. However, if your child does get paint on their clothes, we recommend that you soak them in cold water first.

Our learning takes place indoors and outdoors so they can go outside in all weather. On cold or snowy days, it is essential that children bring coats, warm jumpers, extra socks etc. On warmer days, children must be suitably covered for protection from the sun. Sun protection cream, sun hats and cool clothing are essential for safety. Children's footwear must be safe to wear for climbing, balancing and running as these are all part of the day. Please help your child to be independent at fastening their shoes, velcro fastenings are best for 3-4 year olds.

## P.E

Nursery children have timetabled PE lessons each week in the gym. Although they don't need a separate PE kit, some lessons require them to take their own shoes and socks off so please help them to practise this skill at home.

## Jewellery

If your child has pierced ears, they will be able to wear studs only. No hoops please. These must be covered up or taken out on PE days. No other jewellery should be worn.

## Book Bags

Your child will receive a plastic reading bag in the Autumn term so that they can borrow a weekly library book.





# Foundation Stage Curriculum

In Nursery just like preschool, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS), developing children's skills across 7 defined areas of learning. These areas of learning are divided into 2 groups.

## Prime Areas of Learning

### **Communication and Language**

(Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking)

### **Physical Development**

(Gross Motor Skills; Fine Motor Skills)

### **Personal, Social and Emotion Development**

(Self-Regulation; Managing Self; Building Relationships)

## Specific Areas of Learning

### **Literacy**

(Comprehension; Love of Reading; Writing)

### **Maths**

(Number; Numerical Patterns; Shape and Space)

### **Understanding of the World**

(Past and Present; People, Culture and Communities; The Natural World)

### **Expressive Arts and Design**

(Creating with Materials; Being Imaginative and Expressive)

The Early Years Foundation Stage is an important stage in which we lay the foundation for the National Curriculum. We provide a broad and balanced curriculum promoting the seven areas of a child's development. All areas of learning are equally important and interconnected. However, during the children's first term in Nursery, we focus on developing the prime areas of learning, to ensure that each child builds a strong foundation for learning.

## The Characteristics of Effective Learning

### **Playing and Exploring**

(investigate and experience things, and 'have a go')

### **Active Learning**

(concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy activities)

### **Creating and Critical Thinking**

(having and developing their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things).

Facilitated by an engaging environment and nurturing adults, we encourage these characteristics, enabling children to develop into confident, independent and resilient learners.





# Sandal Primary School's EYFS mission statement

"We are enthusiastic about providing a responsive and aspirational environment that challenges, encourages and inspires curiosity for all our children. We are committed to maintaining a caring, stimulating atmosphere that nurtures confidence, self-esteem, respect and independence to support early learning and development."

Our school is a place where everyone is treated equally, encouraged and respected. We aim to support all children to become independent and collaborative learners, who are able to make their own decisions and reflect on their learning and actions.

We will provide a balanced curriculum that will enable each child to develop personally, socially, emotionally, spiritually, physically, creatively and intellectually to their full potential. It will be relevant and motivate young learners to set firm foundations for further learning as they move into each key stage. We use and value what each child can do, assessing their individual needs to help each child progress from their starting points, including those children with special educational needs.

We are committed to our school being a safe and inclusive place where learning is nurtured and in a happy, caring and curious environment. We will work closely with parents and carers to build a strong partnership in supporting their child's learning. We all aim for our school to be a happy place where excellent behaviour is expected and all children enjoy their educational journey in EYFS. Throughout their time in EYFS, the children develop a sense of belonging to a school community, ready for their transition into Year 1.

## Early Language development in EYFS

Being a successful learner in school depends greatly on feeling comfortable with language. Children need to be able to understand easily the spoken language used by their parents, teachers and peers. This helps them to decode the language used in text and storybooks and to be able to use language with confidence. You can help your child to progress at school by frequently having relaxed conversations with them about whatever is interesting them at the time.

Listening is also recognised as a vital communication skill. Always listen to what your child has to say and encourage them to listen carefully all of the time. The more your child talks and listens, the more thoughtful they become. Never ignore or brush aside questions. Answer them as simply, clearly, carefully and truthfully as you can and don't be afraid to introduce new words.

It is helpful if your child can:

- communicate their need
- respond to simple instructions

Play games at home which encourage your child to listen and follow instructions, such as 'Simon Says', taking part in a 'listening walk' or describing what they experience by touching objects in a feely bag. Don't underestimate the power of nursery rhymes either; children find them great fun to recite, making them an invaluable way of developing listening and learning skills.

If you are aware that your child may have an identified communication difficulty, please let us know and we will be able to support them accordingly.



## Early Reading development in EYFS

Children see words all around them. They start reading by remembering/recognising words and numbers inside and outside their home, on shop signs, carrier bags, the front of buses, traffic signs, packets, magazines and books for example.

Recognising words and sharing stories are enjoyable experiences for both you and your child. By sharing books together, children learn how to love books as well as handle them. It is important to have books at home. Aim to connect what is being read to other stories and experiences they may have had, so that every time they revisit the story it will mean something slightly different.

You might find the following guidelines helpful:

- Try to share a book at least 3 times a week, but stop as soon as you think your child is getting restless or tired
- Encourage your child to choose their own book to share and don't worry if the same book is often chosen
- Take time to talk about the pictures

Help your child to know how books work by pointing out that:

- A book starts at the front
- Books are read page by page to the back
- Words are read from left to right across a page
- It is easier to follow words running your finger under the words as you read them aloud



Let your child see you reading. This can be books, magazines, leaflets, recipes or instruction manuals. Encourage them to spot words around them, for instance: on street names; road signs; football shirts; buses; billboards; clothing labels, etc.

Reading together about school is a great way of explaining what school nursery is all about. Many libraries or book stores will have a section which includes children's stories about starting school. Here are some titles you may find useful:

- Starting School - A Ahlberg
- Billy and the Big New School - C & L Anholt
- Going to School - A Civardi
- Harry and the Dinosaurs Go to School - I Whybrow
- I am Too Absolutely Small for School - Lauren Child
- The Berenstain Bears go to School - Stan Berenstain & Jan Berenstain
- Lucy & Tom go to School - Shirley Hughes
- Don't Eat the Teacher - Nick Ward
- Do I have to go to School? - Pat Thomas & Lesley Harker

If English is not your child's first language, it is important to read to your child in his or her first language. Having a strong grasp of the first language will make it easier for your child to learn English.

Whilst at Sandal Primary, your child will visit our school library once a week where they will be able to borrow a book to share with you at home.



# Phonics at Sandal Primary School

Phonics is the way in which we teach children to recognise and understand letter sounds phonetically. In Nursery and Reception, we use a systematic programme for teaching phonics called Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. This is a consistent approach used from EYFS into KS1. In Nursery, we solely focus on Phase 1.

## **Foundations for Phonics (Phase 1)**

Phase 1 develops children's phonological and phonemic awareness through fun, engaging games and nursery rhymes. Developing these skills in Nursery lays the best possible foundations for learning phonics in Reception.

There are two aspects to Foundations for Phonics: Rhyme time and Tuning into sounds. Rhyme time explores rhyme to build up a bank of shared language, develop children's understanding of the world and familiarity with the sounds in words. Tuning into sounds teaches phonological and phonemic awareness through games.

### **Rhyme Time skills:**

- Listening
- Syllables
- Rhyming
- Alliteration
- Sound knowledge

### **Tuning into Sounds skills:**

- Identifying initial sounds
- Oral blending
- Oral segmenting



### **Nursery Rhymes to practise at home:**

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| • 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I caught a fish alive | • A Sailor went to Sea     |
| • Baa Baa Black Sheep                      | • Down at the Station      |
| • Hey Diddle, Diddle                       | • Hickory, Dickory, Dock   |
| • Humpty Dumpty                            | • Incy Wincy Spider        |
| • Jack and Jill                            | • Mary Mary Quite Contrary |
| • Miss Polly had a Dolly                   | • One, Two Buckle My Shoe  |
| • Pat—a—cake                               | • Ring—a—Ring a Roses      |
| • Round and Round the Garden               | • Row, Row, Row your Boat  |
| • The Grand Old Duke of York               | • The Wheels on the Bus    |
| • Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star             | • Wind the Bobbin Up       |

We will be holding a phonics evening during the autumn term to provide you with all the relevant guidance related to the Little Wandle programme so that you are able to support your child at home. In the meantime, if you would like to find out a little bit more yourself, please visit the parents section on their website:

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

## Early Writing at Sandal Primary School

A young child will communicate by making marks. This may be using a pen and paper, using a stick in the sand or soil or painting with a brush and water on an outside wall. Children benefit from having different mark making materials available to them - crayons, chalks, felts and brushes. It is important your child sees members of their family writing as this helps them to understand the need to write. Try to write shopping lists, a letter or birthday card in front of them, and then let them have a go for themselves. Let your child experiment with writing.



a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p  
q r s t u v w x y z

It is important that any mark, marking or writing is greatly encouraged and praised as this will boost your child's love for writing. When your child is ready, help them to write lower case letters - the first letter of their name should of course be a capital letter.

## Early Mathematical Understanding

Maths is everywhere. Routines, activities and the environment all offer rich sources of mathematical experiences for young children. To help your child develop their maths skills in preparation for Nursery here are some useful ideas:

- Read number books together
- Use correct language - more, less, short, long, heavy
- Read numbers on houses, cars
- Point out colours and talk about them
- Sing and say number rhymes
- Set the table together
- Sort the washing/match socks
- Play dominoes/snap
- Order objects
- Measure ingredients when baking
- Count how many plates are needed for tea
- Count/sort the letters delivered by the postman
- Predict - do you think it will rain today / tomorrow?
- Will that bag be too heavy to carry?
- Will all of the shopping go in the cupboard? Understand space and position through tidying up and by filling boxes with toys
- Make patterns by threading beads/alternating coloured bricks/ looking at tiles, wallpaper, bricks



It is important that when your child is ready, they learn to write numbers correctly. To help children remember the formations, we use a simple rhyme for each number. You may wish to use this same rhyme at home (a sheet will be sent home in the autumn term showing these rhymes and it will also be available on the website).

Please note that the EYFS curriculum requires children to have an in depth understanding of number rather than being able to count as far as they can. Nursery children need to be able to understand number bonds to 5.



## Early Physical Development

Children need lots of practice to develop both gross motor (big movements) and fine motor (small movements).

You can help your child in the following ways:

- Encourage your child to hold a pencil/crayon correctly which is between the thumb and forefinger supported by the middle finger. This is called the tripod grip.
- Encourage colouring within the lines
- Do lots of cutting, along straight lines, curved lines and shapes
- Catch, throw and kick balls
- Use construction kits such as lego, duplo, stickle bricks, meccano, loom bands
- Walk along stepping stones
- Use scooters/balance bikes
- Make things out of boxes, kitchen rolls, cartons, bottle tops etc.
- Complete lots of jigsaws together



Practise of these physical skills will help children develop balance, co-ordination, and strength.

## How can I encourage my child to be more independent?

Being 'school ready' isn't just about being able to hold a pencil correctly. It starts by enabling your child to be as independent as possible. Below are some of the skills that would be really beneficial and helpful for your child to be able to do before they start in Nursery.

- Put on and take off shoes
- Use the toilet independently, including flushing the toilet and washing hands afterwards
- Use a knife and fork
- Dress and undress themselves
- Fold and stack their clothes
- Tidy toys away
- Play with other children and share possessions
- Blow their nose
- Carry their own bag
- Zip up their coat



***But, do not worry if they can't!***  
**We will work together to foster and develop these skills for all children to learn.**

## Exploring the provision in Nursery

Nursery is split into areas to help promote all areas of learning. Here are some examples of the continuous provision that will be offered throughout the year to your child on a daily basis. Further resources may be added to an area of provision to promote a specific learning outcome, develop a theme or support a child's interest or need.

### **Role Play**

During the first term, we have a home corner as this provides an ideal opportunity for children to re-enact familiar experiences. This is crucial to their learning about themselves and each other. This area is key in promoting children's personal, social and emotional development and language for communication and thinking. Throughout the year it changes into a café, a vets' surgery and a shop.



### **Sand / Water Area**

Sand play helps with emotional and social development. In the sandpit, children learn collaboration skills as they dig, carry, and move sand with other children. They learn to wait patiently and take turns with the sand play materials. A lot of the materials are household items which provides a sense of realism for the children.

### **Creative Area**

This area develops children's imaginative and investigative skills. They learn to persevere when things don't quite go to plan. They develop a wide range of skills using different tools and techniques. They play an important role in building children's self confidence and independence.



### **Construction Area**

We have a wide range of construction sets, such as Duplo and Mobilo which children can use to create their own models which resemble their interests. We also have natural materials such as tubes, carpet pieces and wooden blocks for children to use their imagination with. This is another area where children can express themselves and be creative with their peers.

### **Investigation/ STEM (Science, Technology, Economics, Maths)**

Children have a natural instinct to explore the environment around them. Children can investigate and make their own enquiries through any area of learning. They will ask and answer their own questions, as well as develop a thirst for investigating!



### **Outdoor Area**

Our outdoor area is a very important part of Nursery. We provide a range of large scale activities outside for the children and aim for them to have access to outdoor provision at least once each day. These include: the giant sandpit, games trolleys, mud kitchen, water area and building area.





## Parent/Carer Involvement: How will I be kept informed?

We believe that education is a partnership and we value the things that you and your child have been involved with at home. When your child joins Nursery, we hope that you will feel welcome and join in with the many activities that we offer.

We have planned a range of events over the coming year, including a Spring Craft Afternoon, where parents and carers can enjoy craft activities with their child.

There will also be curriculum workshops to keep you informed of curriculum expectations.

Before school, Nursery staff are available to speak to informally or you could make an appointment to speak to Mrs Smith at the end of the school day.



After the first couple of weeks when your child starts Nursery, there will be an opportunity to discuss how you feel your child has settled if you feel this is needed. This will be optional if you feel there are things you need to discuss.

It will be a drop-in session with dates to be confirmed in the first half term.

There will be 2 points in the year where a formal parents' evening will take place to discuss your child's progress.

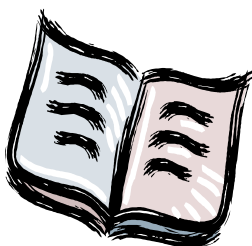
## Assessment and the Learning Journey: How does it work?

Your child will be assessed through a variety of different methods including group work, focused tasks and observations. We observe each child in the areas of provision which are outlined in this handbook. This allows staff to identify the progress they are making and their needs which will then be incorporated into planning and teaching.

Each child will have an online learning journal on a programme called Tapestry, where staff are able to upload observations and photographs of their achievements. This will be accessible to parents/ carers at all times, as you will receive a log in to the site. We hope that you will respect the terms and conditions of using Tapestry to view your child's progress.

Further information about this will be sent to you during the first few weeks in September.

Your child will also have many experiences and achievements outside of school which we would like to hear about. You can upload these achievements onto your child's learning journal on Tapestry. There will then be opportunities for your child to share some of these experiences with their class.



## Medication: What do I do if my child requires it?

If your child requires prescribed medication more than 3 times per day, this can be administered in school, under the supervision of a Nursery First Aider upon completion of the required form, available from the office. Where needed, Inhalers will be kept in the Nursery First Aid Cupboard and a form will need to be completed with the office when it is brought into school.

Please inform staff of any medical conditions, and ensure you complete the additional needs form which you will find in your pack.

## Safety: How can we keep our children safe around school?

We would ask you to help us to make our school a safe place, where you will be happy to leave your child. With this in mind, we hope you will bear with us on the following points:

1. The school car park and Woodland Burrow car park must **not** be used by parents/carers dropping off or picking up children.
2. If your child has pierced ears please use earrings with studs, as other types can be dangerous. Other jewellery is not allowed.
3. Please do not bring dogs into the school grounds.
4. You must not park in the 'Drop and Go' zone or on double yellow or zig-zag lines.

## Parent Partnership Group

The PPG arrange fund raising events and give invaluable help to our school.  
They are always in need of new members so if you would like to join them please ask for details.



Starting Nursery can be very exhausting - emotionally, physically, socially and mentally. Do not be surprised if for the first few weeks your child comes home tired and not wanting to talk about their day, other than to say they have 'played' or 'done nothing'. Give them a cuddle, a drink and something to eat. They will tell you exactly what they have been doing when they are ready to!

**Remember, children are .....**

**ALL DIFFERENT SHAPES AND SIZES**

**From different surroundings**

**Interested in different things  
and**

***They all learn differently.***

