



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

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Welcome to College Fields Montessori Nursery School.

This pack aims to give you all the information you need to start and settle your child into College Fields. If there is anything unclear or you would like more information about us, please don't hesitate to get in touch at any time.

In the Montessori philosophy, we believe that children internalise lessons most deeply when the motivation comes from within. Rather than relying on external rewards or punishments, we guide children to develop intrinsic motivation—choosing what is right because it feels right, not out of fear or the hope of praise.

Montessori education is grounded in respect for the child as a capable, thoughtful human being. We don't seek blind obedience but rather authentic understanding, empathy, and self-direction.

This approach is not permissive—it involves clear boundaries, guided with consistency and compassion. My team of qualified practitioners will help children recognise the natural consequences of their actions, encouraging reflection rather than imposing artificial penalties. When a material is broken, the child is not shamed—they are supported in understanding what happened and how to make it right. Learning emerges from experience, not guilt.

Montessori classrooms are rooted in mutual respect, emotional connection, and clear expectations. Freedom is always paired with responsibility; children are free to explore and choose within limits that protect the community and the environment.

Conflict resolution is a key component of discipline. Rather than using punishment to control behaviour, we support children in resolving disagreements through peaceful dialogue. Children are given the tools and language to express their needs, listen to others, and find collaborative solutions. The adult acts as a calm mediator, helping children learn to repair relationships and restore harmony.

The environment itself teaches order, logic, and care. Children thrive in spaces that are purposeful and predictable. The structure provides security, while the freedom allows for genuine growth.

In Montessori classrooms, discipline isn't something done to a child—it's something cultivated within the child. We see children revisit work not to earn a gold star, but because they are proud of their progress. They learn to say "I'm sorry" and truly mean it. They see mistakes as opportunities, not failure, building resilience, confidence, and a deep love of learning.

Educating without rewards or punishment does not mean a lack of guidance, it means trusting the child, walking beside them, and helping them develop the internal tools they'll carry for life. This kind of education doesn't just change how children learn, it changes who they become.

When children are educated with respect, they grow into empathetic, independent, and conscious human beings, ready to engage with the world with curiosity, confidence, and compassion.

A Day at College Fields Montessori Nursery.

If you have booked your child a place with us for a full day you should bring your child in at 0900.

Between 0900 and 1030 the children are encouraged to work from the shelves around the room. The younger ones to gain confidence from the practical life shelves, the older ones to refine their senses from the sensorial shelves. Children can paint or draw at leisure. As a small group we share the responsibilities of keyworker and will follow your child's lead.

During the morning we have a short circle time to bring everyone together and talk about our theme and discuss any news within the group. We encourage children to bring in one item from home to aid these discussions; this could be anything from leaves or shells or a favourite toy or photos of their siblings or holidays etc. After Circle time we wash our hands for snack time.

Our adult led activity, which could be craft based, cooking or involve music, movement and drama will be linked to the half termly theme. We try to have as much outside play as possible in our lovely big garden.

Just before midday we move into story time and end with the Quiet Game. This is just a few moments of mindfulness so we can listen and relax together to mark the end of the morning session. The children going home at the end of the morning session at 1200 will say their farewells, shake hands to the leading teacher and go to their family member. Parents/carers should enter the room quietly at this time.

We then move into lunch time at 1215 which takes as long as it takes – there is no rush and children can sit wherever they like. During lunch the teachers will sit with the children to model good manners and aid conversation skills.

Some children will leave at 1300 and others arriving for the afternoon session.

The afternoon is often a quieter session and involves presentations of the practical or sensorial shelves and then guided free play inside or in the garden. Afternoon snack is a drink and biscuit at 1430 and then stories to end the day. Our day ends at 1500 when all children should be picked up promptly. We can offer extended hours at either end of the day to help working parents or multiple school run timings

These are from 0830h and finishing at 1545h. Please note that the extended periods are not covered by government funding and will be charged accordingly.

Snack time 1030h

This is a social occasion where we sit down at the tables for a snack. The room is tidied, and tables are cleaned and set by the children. All hands are washed before snack to encourage routine hygiene. For snack we provide a selection of fresh apples, bananas, cream cheese and crackers. Children are encouraged to cut their own soft fruit and use a fork to eat. The children can have a drink whenever they want by pouring their own water at a table set out in the classroom.

Lunch time 1215h

All children bring in their own packed lunches. Lunch is an important social occasion for the children so they can choose where they would like to sit. During fine weather we often have a picnic lunch in the garden in the shade. We encourage children to engage in conversation with friends and Teachers. The Teachers always sit and eat with the children, so help is at hand to open difficult lids or packets and they are able to use the opportunity to model good manners and healthy eating choices.

We encourage the children to eat the savouries and fruit first before something more exciting! A drink of water is always available and we will always encourage drinking from an open cup. However, on hot days you can pack your child's own water bottle. We sometimes have children with nut allergies so please try not to pack peanut butter sandwiches or nuts without checking first.

We encourage the children to eat everything in their lunch boxes but the uneaten bits are put back in the lunch box so you can see how much your child has eaten and we will feedback if a child shows a dislike for anything. If your child wants to save something for the afternoon, the lunch box can be brought out at afternoon snack. Afternoon snack is a drink and fruit and the remainders of lunch time food.

The children can get down from the table to commence work when their table has finished, providing that they do not disturb those who are still eating.

We are able and qualified to cater for any allergies and intolerances so please let us know on your application form and please discuss your child's requirements with us at every stage.

We expect packed lunches to be healthy, nutritious and colourful, ensuring variety. If you would like some ideas on food items or portion control please don't hesitate to ask.

Illness. If your child is ill and will not be coming to nursery, please call / WhatsApp as soon as possible to let us know. If your child is sick or has diarrhoea at nursery you will be asked to come and collect your child immediately. If this happens at home, please do not bring your child to nursery for 48 hours. Impetigo, Hand Foot and Mouth and conjunctivitis are very contagious; again, please do not bring your child to nursery with these conditions as we will only have to send them home as we have to think of all our other children's health. Even if your child is feeling 'well in themselves' they may still be contagious. If you think your child needs Calpol or is feeling under the weather in any way in the morning they should be kept at home to rest and recover.

Extra sessions. You are welcome to take extra sessions on a casual basis. These, like early drop offs or late pick-ups, must always be booked and paid for in advance so we can confirm and ensure we have the availability/staff ratio. I am only able to allow swapping sessions in cases of emergency or with discretion. If you have a medical appointment or are struggling with childcare for a particular time please let us know as we will always try to help.

Policies and procedures. These are on our website, please feel free to spend some time reading these. In the book rack are the latest Early Years magazines and information on many early years subjects from potty training to speech and language support. If there is anything you wish to know or require more information about please do not hesitate to ask. We endeavour to support our local community and are here to advise and inform when it comes to you and your child.

The Team. All of my team are qualified in Early years childcare from Level 2 and up, We are all Mothers and some of us are Grandparents. We have a consistent training programme where staff can choose areas of training to meet the needs of our cohort. Everyone is Paediatric First Aid trained, and we all have extensive qualifications in child protection. Our continuous professional training and development includes: Forest school, allergy awareness, behaviour management, Montessori practice, SEN, FGM, British Values and Mindfulness and wellbeing. We are always looking to develop our own knowledge and update our understanding. I have been working with my team for many years now which provides consistency and confidence for your child

The Programme of Education and 'Every Child Matters'. Alongside our Montessori based curriculum and teaching ethos we also ensure that we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum by covering all areas of learning. In the EYFS there are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in early years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These three areas, the prime areas, are:

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

The specific areas are: • Literacy • Mathematics • Understanding the world • Expressive arts and design

All your child's work will be stuck into their workbook in their tray in chronological order for you to see their progress at any time. A Progress check at aged 2 and a Summative Statement in their final Summer term will be sent to you directly and the latter will also be passed on to your child's chosen school when they leave College Fields. Our door is always open so please feel free to come in anytime if you have queries or concerns about your child's development.

Making Steps...

In order for your child to thrive and gain confidence and independence we will support them and you through the following:

Toilet learning and training: When children are potty training, please dress your child in comfortable easy access clothing. Loose elastic trousers are often easiest (usually girls find this easier than lifting a skirt) and make sure that difficult buttons and dungarees are not worn which could slow the process down. In the early days of toilet training please provide 2 changes of clothes. If your child is still in nappies, please provide 2 for each session. We supply wet wipes and nappy sacks but if you have a brand preference or would like us to use rash creams, please provide them in your child's bag.

We will follow your lead and support using the guidance from ERIC website <https://eric.org.uk/potty-training/> . Whilst still in nappies we will go through the same motions as toilet going: discussing and showing them the potty and telling them what it's for during the nappy change. Where possible we will change your child standing up so they do not have to lie on the mat like a baby change. We will always help them to wash their hands afterwards to embed the importance of hygiene. At the beginning of toilet training we will remind your child every hour asking if they need the toilet and we will clean up accidents without fuss. As a Montessori setting we do not rely on rewards of stickers or treats but try to encourage the child to want to learn for their own satisfaction and sense of achievement – not for reward or praise.

Independence: Children as young as two can learn and gain a great deal from becoming more independent. We will always give a child choices, small responsibilities and jobs and support them in practical learning; putting on their own clothes and shoes, washing their hands, laying the table for snack time, pouring and drinking from a cup and using cutlery and caring for our fish and plants in the room. We will embed an ethos of self care as well as caring for the environment around them. To give a child choices automatically builds on confidence and independence as they begin to understand that their actions have consequences. This is a huge lesson for starting school.

Inclusion: When your child starts at College Fields we will spend some weeks getting to know them and their interests. If we find any concerns with their behaviour or development, we will discuss this with you to see if you have the same concerns when your child is in their home environment. With your permission, we then refer to our Inclusion Officer to request advice on how best to support your child going forwards. In these cases we will need your support so we can communicate progress every session.

Nutrition: Healthy eating gives us healthy minds and bodies. At College Fields we supply a nutritious snack that includes all the main food groups and we ask that your child's lunchbox should also include varied healthy options. If your child is particular in what they like to eat we can support this in the nursery. It is surprising how many children will tuck in to something new if all their peers are eating it too. We have literature and guidance on what are healthy food choices, ideas for packed lunches and portion sizes for children. If your child has an allergy or intolerance or you are currently consulting and testing for triggers – we can support you every step of the way. We can provide dairy free/ gluten free snacks and where possible can offer organic alternatives. We follow the DfE nutritional and allergy guidance: <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/nutrition>

Behaviour Management: Now there are many schools of thought on behaviour management and as a Montessori setting we endeavour to eliminate conflict. Where possible we will remove any conflicting issues; this may mean we ensure we have enough of everything to go round or we remove a single item that is proving so popular to cause stress. At the same time we will promote sharing is caring and turn taking within every interaction and activity. It is a hard lesson to learn and one of the main reasons that having a room of mixed aged children works so well: The older ones will show the younger ones how to do it. Every lesson will promote caring and encourage consideration for the environment around us. We encourage children to tidy up, clean and care for their toys, books, materials. If a conflict or upset arises we acknowledge the child's feelings whether right or wrong and explain. "Teddy, I can see you are feeling angry that you can't have the bike right now, but if you ask nicely, Amy will let you have it as soon as she has finished'.

As Montessori Directors we try only to intervene when we can see a child struggling or a situation escalates. This is to help the children to learn how to resolve things by themselves.

Resilience: Here are just a few points which will help you and your child settle into College Fields.

There is a big difference to the children's first day and subsequent weeks, if they are well rehearsed in what is going to be happening.

Over the course of the weeks before your child starts nursery, point out the nursery as you go by and let them know what a fun time they will have. You can also explain that they will:

- ❖ Go into the nursery through the big blue door.
- ❖ Take off their coat and hang it on to their peg
- ❖ Put their name card in the red post box
- ❖ Say 'goodbye' to you
- ❖ Reassure them that they will be picked up 'after story time'.

These few seeds of information will make all the difference to them settling confidently.

It is also very important that you, the parent, is ready to leave your child. If you show reluctance or anxiety your child will pick up on it and copy your emotions. As hard as it sounds, a confident, short drop off always works better than prolonging any upset or questioning your child's resilience. Show your child that you are clear and confident in the choice to join nursery and they will feel confident and happy to do so. I have worked in early years for nearly 20 years and have often observed previously clinging, crying children, suddenly clap their hands and say 'what are we doing today?' as soon as their parents leave.

Rest assured: We will never let a child get distressed, we will always call you back in if we feel they have had enough. We will also send you photos and messages to reassure you, throughout the day, that they are doing fine.

Once your child is comfortable and settled and getting to know the daily routine, we would like our nursery to feel like a second home for your child and for you as parents. We are here for the whole family and hope to support you through this very special period of your child's life.

Kind Regards

Sophie Shepard

Owner, EYT, BA Hons

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Funded hours apply to 0900-1500 6 hours per day x 5 days =30 hours

Our open hours will still be 0830 – 1600 and the unfunded hours (0830-0900 and 1500-1600) will be charged at normal hourly rate of £8.50 / increments of.

Our session times are:

0900- 1200

0900-1300 includes lunch

0900 – 1500 full day

1300-1500 afternoon only

Early starters (0830) or late pick ups (1600) can be arranged on request

From September all children with both parents working (or one parent if single parent) can access up to 30 hours of funded childcare. If you are not already claiming working parent funding you can apply here. <https://www.gov.uk/free-childcare-if-working/apply-for-free-childcare-if-youre-working>

If you already have a code the change to 30 hours will be automatic.

3 and 4 year olds will automatically receive 15 hours even if you are not working.

The funded hours are available free but we do ask for a voluntary contribution to cover some of the things that the funding doesn't include:

- Quality art materials and activities such as specialist food, music and costumes
- Nutritious snack
- Summer party and Christmas party
- Krazy Kangas sessions
- Yoga
- Nappy bags, suncream and wipes
- End of year gifts
- Christmas photos and gifts
- Annual group photograph

If you opt out of the voluntary fee then please be prepared to supply the above where possible. Fees can be found on the application form or our website.

ALL ABOUT ME

What is your name?

What do you like to be called?

Do you know how old you are?

What colour eyes do you have?

What colour hair do you have?

Is your hair short?

What is your Mummy called?

What is your Daddy called?

Do you have any brothers or sisters?

What are their names?

Do you have a favourite book and what is about?

Do you have a favourite song?

Do you have a favourite toy?

Do you have any animals and what are their names?

Please feel free to provide copies of family photos so we can make up a little 'Book of Me' to keep at nursery.

Date:

Age: