



Sunflower Montessori Nursery
9 Palmer Street, Frome, BA11 1DS Tel: 01373 453853
Email: sunflowernurserygroup@gmail.com
www.sunflower-nurseries.com

Welcome to Sunflower Montessori Nursery!

Take a look at our prospectus and get to know a little bit more about us.

STAFF

Mrs Rachael Emmett (Owner/Manager)
Mrs Carly Maggs (Business Manager)

Mrs Anne Davies - Sunflower

Mrs Alison Penn - Sunflower

Mrs Jayne Gallo - Sunflower

Mrs Lauren Wilcox - Seedlings

Ms Lindsey Evans - Both

Mrs Lisa Doughty - Seedlings

Mrs Mary Dorgan - Supply

Mrs Sharon Evans - After-School Club

We are registered by Ofsted Early Years Directorate under part XA of the Children's Act 1989.

A copy of our most recent Ofsted report is available upon request or visit the Ofsted website www.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Nursery Day

Age: Two to five years.

Opening hours:

38 or 50 weeks of the year

Short AM session	8.55 - 12.00
Short PM session	12.00 - 3.00
Short day session	8.55 - 3.00
Long AM session	8.00 - 12.00
Long PM session	12.00 - 18.00
Long day session	8.00 – 18.00

A packed lunch is required if your child attends all day and needs to be brought in if your child attends afternoon sessions.

A term is approximately 12/14 weeks. Parents choose the number of sessions they wish their child to attend, so therefore we have some children for mornings, some for all day and some for the afternoons. A minimum of 2 sessions on separate days is recommended. It is advisable to return the registration form promptly to get the sessions of your choice.

We have a wealth of talented, loving staff with a variety of training and experience, all working together with one aim in mind – the care of your child and his/her preparation for life.

A rough guide to a day in the Sunflower room.

Children arrive and are free to choose an activity, there will be an organised activity relating to the topic for them to choose should they wish to. There are a great many activities for them including paint, playdough, cutting etc. as well as the Montessori equipment.

At 10.30 – 10.45 everyone tidies up, the children fetch their cups and sit quietly at the tables. We provide milk and water, a piece of fruit or sultanas/banana chips, the children pour their own drink. Once they have finished they wash and wipe their cups. Having done this we all then sit on the carpet for 'register time'. This involves a member of staff sitting with the children, calling out their names which they may reply to. After this we have various tasks which we do every day, such as counting the children, talking about the date weather etc. Having completed this, we then have stories, talk about our topic, play games or sing songs, we vary this every day, this session lasts between 15/20 minutes.

After register time we have a quieter time, sitting at tables, playing board games or using the Montessori equipment – this continues until 11.50 when we tidy up for lunch.

Children going home will collect coats etc., and sit on the carpet for a story until parents arrive. Children staying all day will wash hands, collect lunch boxes from fridge and sit at the table for lunch. Children coming for afternoon session, come in with their food and sit down to eat, this is the start of their session.

Once a child has finished lunch, the plate has to be washed and lunch box returned to fridge, the child is then free to choose an activity. Once everyone has finished the tables are cleared and floor swept ready for the afternoon. There will be a different prepared activity for the afternoon so that a child that is in nursery all day has something different to do. It is very hard to write down exactly what the children will be doing as it is up to them to choose. A child may want to trace a picture, so an adult will assist with this. The items in the room are always in the same place, so that if a child wants to draw she/he knows where the paper, pencils etc. are and they can help themselves.

We tidy up at 2.15pm, have drinks again and an afternoon register time. This continues until 2.50pm when we get ready for parents, and have a story until 3.00 – end. As you will appreciate this is only a very rough guide as everyday is different depending on what the children wish to do.

The children go outside everyday for fresh air and exercise.

A rough guide to a day in the Seedlings room.

- 8.00AM - Children arrive and settle in.
- 8.30AM - Breakfast time. Cereal or toast, fruit and a drink of milk or water.
- 9.00AM - Children arrive and settle in.
- 9.30AM - Register time. We discuss who is in today, the day of week and the weather. We might read a story or sing some songs too.
- 9.45AM - Outside play. We dress according to the weather and go outside to do an obstacle course, or some chalk drawing for example.
- 10.15AM - Nappy changing/toilet time.
- 10.20AM - Snack time. We have some fruit and toast, breadsticks or oatcakes.
- 10.40AM - Play time. We will have a structured activity to take part in as well as some time for free playing too.
- 11.45AM - Story time and then get ready for lunch.
- 12.00PM - Lunch time.
- 12.45PM - Nappy changing/toilet time.
- 12.50PM - Sleep time/free play
- 13.50PM - Together time. We do an activity all together, like musical instruments or act out a song.
- 14.00PM - Outside Play. We dress according to the weather and go outside to ride trikes or do water play.
- 14.30PM - Drinks. We have a drink of water or milk after playing outside.
- 14.40PM - Nappy changing/toilet time.
- 14.45PM - Register time. We talk about what we have done today and might sing some more songs. Some children get ready to go home.
- 15.00PM - Home time/Table top activity.
- 15.30PM - Big movement activity. We might do some dancing, balancing or tunnel play.
- 16.00PM - Get ready for tea. We wash our hands and sit to the table.
- 16.10PM - Tea time. We have a light tea, paninis, beans on toast or crumpets for example.
- 16.30PM - Play time. Free play.
- 17.45PM - Nappy changing/toilet time.
- 17.50PM - Storytime/Get ready to go home.
- 18.00PM - Home time.

Our aim

- Is to enhance the development and education of children under statutory school age in a parent involving, community based group.
- To provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment
- To work within a framework, which ensure equality of opportunity for all children and families so that the children feel valued as individuals each with their own experiences and needs.
- Is to encourage independence and to have happy, confident and well-balanced children – play is as unsupervised as we can allow, however, we help the children to be able to accept certain rules of behaviour and not to abuse the freedom of other children. Our environment, which promotes individual choice, also relies heavily on collective responsibility.
- Is to promote the three prime areas and four specific areas of learning, development and welfare by putting the principles of the EYFS into practice without compromising our Montessori approach – to build on what they can already do and to match the different levels of needs, interests and abilities to activities as we are looking at each child as an individual . We aim to prepare children for life, not school, but we recognise that school is a part of life. We feed into a variety of schools and do not compromise our Montessori principles just to suit particular educational ethos.
- Is to be committed to continually update staff training in order to provide the children with learning experiences of the highest quality.

When dealing with young children it is essential to recognise that the prime motivation for children's early learning is their own joy in life and the pleasure they gain from the experiences offered to them. Also that childhood is not merely a means of preparing children to future stages of their lives it is a unique and precious time to be experienced and valued for itself.

The Sunflower Montessori Nursery

Dr. Maria Montessori graduated as the first woman Doctor of Medicine in Italy in the 1890's after which she became involved in working with children of varying abilities. She developed her own methods of educating and stimulating children which are still being used today.

This method of education aims to encourage young children to carry on their learning process in the same way they have done since birth, not by teaching them in the formerly understood sense of imparting knowledge, but by providing them with apparatus and carefully thought out materials for them to learn at their own pace. Learning is fun if they are encouraged at the right time.

In our nursery school there are many opportunities for the children to learn at their own pace and level. This encourages self-discipline so they are not doing something because we tell them to, but because they want to and are learning for themselves, each other and their environment, for example washing up their own cups and helping clear up after activities. The Montessori method is informal and encourages the children to develop their own individuality and hopefully relieve any competitive pressure a child may feel in more formal surroundings.

The Montessori Approach to Education

- Is a philosophy based on scientific observation of child development
- Is based on the real needs of the child, as opposed to the adult concept of what a child should be given
- Is a comprehensive method of guiding child development so that each one can be helped to realise his full potential
- Cultivates and encourages each child's inner urge to learn
- Takes into account the inner mental powers possessed by each young child, to absorb knowledge and learn from his environment.
- Emphasises that the first six years are the most important, in that her/his learning experiences in those early years will colour her/his whole approach to learning through to adulthood
- Recognises that each child deserves respect as an individual who has a deep need for purposeful work. Unlike the adult, whose interest is to complete the activity, the child achieves self-development through the effort of perfecting the activity.

The Montessori Classroom

- Encourages children to explore a range of carefully thought out materials in their own time and pace – they learn by their own choice of work and have the excitement of making their own choices.
- Supports the child's activity by means of a framework of simple rules which gives her/him the freedom she/he needs without abusing the freedom of other children.
- Makes learning a pleasant and rewarding activity – much of the equipment is self-correcting and the child can see for her/himself when successful. The activities encourage independence and an orderly approach to problem solving from an early age
- The Montessori preschool classroom is a 'living room' for children. Children choose their activities from among the self-correcting material displayed on open shelves that allow the child to learn through their senses. The preschool environment unifies the psycho-social, physical, and academic functioning of the child. It's important task is to provide children with an early and general foundation that includes a positive attitude toward school, inner security and a sense of order, pride in the physical environment, abiding curiosity, a habit of concentration, habits of initiative and persistence, the ability to make decisions, self-discipline, and a sense of responsibility to other members of the class, school and community. This foundation will enable them to acquire more specialised knowledge and skills throughout their school career.

The Curriculum

Within the group, all the children are supported in developing their potential at their own pace. By means of developmentally appropriate play activities and Montessori equipment we offer a curriculum that follows the nationally approved EYFS guidelines, (further information in starting pack) and prepares children to progress within a relaxed environment.

Prime areas

Communication & Language

Children's learning and competence in communication, speaking and listening must be supported and extended. They must be provided with opportunity and encouragement to use their skills in a range of situations and for a range of purposes, and be supported in developing the confidence and disposition to do so.

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening, and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes.

Children learn language skills from:-

- Interesting and challenging experiences which give them plenty to talk about in the nursery and afterwards at home
- Encouragement to talk about experiences that are important to them
- Lots of time, adult attention and response when they talk
- Hearing language used by adults talking to children and other adults, in pair or small groups

Personal, Social & Emotional

We aim to create a stimulating and caring environment in which children are encouraged to become independent and self disciplined. The staff aim to build children's self esteem by developing confidence in their abilities and by raising their awareness of the needs of others in both the immediate and wider environments. Through activities, conversation and practical example, they learn acceptable ways to express their own feelings and to have respect for the feeling of others, their different cultures and beliefs.

Physical development

A range of equipment and opportunities allow the children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their bodily skills. Children create and meet physical challenges, developing increasing skills and control in moving and balancing. At the same time children are supported in the development of the fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision. When outside in our play area, the children are encouraged to explore and develop their gross motor skills. We also set up an indoors obstacle course to encourage their control and coordination. They are

supported in developing an understanding of the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

Specific areas

Mathematics

By means of practical experience, children become familiar with the sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities which form the basis for early problem solving.

Problem solving encourages children's thinking and reasoning skills are developed by building on their own experiences. It embraces natural curiosity and develops the confidence to tackle situations which arise in problem solving and in other areas of the curriculum.

As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems children are assisted to learn and use the vocabulary of mathematics, identifying objects by shape, position, size and volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences and when they are ready, to use simple mathematical operations such as adding.

Literacy

Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves. A large emphasis is placed on pre-reading skills and as the children become familiar with the letters of the alphabet they are encouraged to word build using the phonic approach. A well stocked book box gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, able to handle them and be aware of their uses, both for reference and as a source of stories and pictures.

Understanding of the world

Children have a natural curiosity about their surroundings and science gives them the opportunity to gather the experiences they need to understand the world in which they live. We encourage them through discussion and observation to understand their environment, sometimes recording their findings but the emphasis is on practical work. Children are encouraged to handle materials and to learn from their own discoveries in a collaborative setting. With visits around the local environment children are able to experience many features and services of the town and discuss their purposes. Children are encouraged to find out about the uses of everyday technology and use information and communication technology to support their learning

Expressive Arts & Designs

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings and to construct their individual two and three dimensional models. Art equipment, including paint, glue, crayons and pencils as well as natural and discarded resources provides for exploration of colour, shape and texture and the development of skills in paint, drawing and collage. Through music, dance and drama the children are encouraged to use their imagination and express their ideas and communicate their feelings.

British Values

Here at Sunflower Montessori Nursery we help children to become well-rounded members of society. The way in which we do this is by promoting 'British Values', the fundamental values and how we promote them are as follows:

- Rule of law - we create our 'golden rules' with the children, so they feel included and to help them understand the importance of rules and abiding by them.
- Democracy - we encourage group decision making and discussion around different ideas and questions.
- Individual liberty - we encourage the children to talk about their own preferences and also allow them to experience a range of opportunities to develop their interests as well as promote independence.
- Mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs - we arrange visits around the local area so the children make links with the wider community. We also celebrate festivals and special days from many cultures and religions.

Learning Activities

The following activities are presented in alphabetical order because it would be misleading to arrange them in a way which implied any order of priority.

1. Books, stories, storytelling and the written word

- a. In nursery there is a range of suitable books which the children can use at any time, or look at along with an adult, or in a small group.
- b. Children will also use books in conjunction with other activities to increase their understanding of plants, animals, how things work and other people's lives.
- c. Experience of books and stories will, of course, extend children's vocabulary and their familiarity with spoken and written language. In addition, the conditions of a story-telling session, the closeness of an adult and the sharing of a pleasant experience, stimulate children's own speech by providing something to talk about and a supportive atmosphere in which to voice their own ideas and responses.

2. Building and construction

Children encounter in nursery a wide range of material which they can assemble or build with, in their own way. These may range from raw materials to interlocking bricks, wooden blocks, construction sets, large boxes and planks or assorted paper and cardboard which can be used for 'junk modelling'.

3. Cookery

We aim to cook every half term with each child, in a group situation, during this time we discuss the merits of healthy food and the importance of it. By doing this the children acquire the language of tastes, textures, smells and colours as well as the names of the necessary ingredients and techniques.

4. Dough and clay

Nursery offers both dough and clay for the children to explore and manipulate. These materials offer direct sensory experience which can lead from a satisfying exploratory stage to learning in many other areas.

5. Games

We have a large collection of boxed games for cooperative play, .eg.lotto, dominoes, snap and as they play children talk about many things such as:-

- A. Rules (whose turn is it now, how many spaces to move)
- B. Similarities and differences in matching games
- C. The pictures
- D. The objects shown in the pictures (where an animal lives etc)
- E. Puzzles range from inset to 40+ pieces to extend the children as they become more competent.

6. ICT

We have two programmable toys – Pixie and Beebot – which the children learn to program using arrow keys. We also have 2 laptops which have a variety of software for the children to experience and gain confidence using a mouse, and complete suitable educational programmes.

7. Magnets/magnifying glasses/mirrors/nuts & bolts/keys & locks etc

The use of such equipment introduces children to the tools of science and encourages them to look closely and carefully. In these circumstances, increased scientific knowledge can go hand in hand with a sense of wonder and mystery. It also develops fine motor control as they investigate.

8. Make believe

Children engage in make believe:-

- A. In the home corner - with dressing up clothes
- B. With small scale models with construction toys
- C. With dolls - with puppets
- D. In group drama sessions

Imaginative play of this sort helps with intellectual, emotional, social and physical development.

9. Manipulative play

We have a range of materials to develop manual dexterity and to facilitate manipulation e.g. threading, peg boards, bead mazes and lacing discs.

10. Montessori equipment

A wide and diverse range of Montessori equipment is always available for the children to choose from. Much of it is self correcting and particularly useful in developing the child's senses. You are welcome to come and have a look when the equipment can be explained to you.

11. Music and sound

Most children take delight in music and rhythm. Through an active involvement in listening and performing, we aim to foster children's understanding and enjoyment of music. As they do so the child learns to:

- i. Control breathing and pitch when singing
- ii. Compose their own tunes
- iii. Improve their listening skills
- iv. Join in with the group, listening to other people and starting and stopping when everyone else does.
- v. Express themselves through creative dance

12. Painting/creative activities – collage/printing

Children may encounter a single sheet of paper at an easel, on a table or sometimes at floor level, or an enormous strip/sheet of paper for group work. The papers provided will vary in shape, colour and thickness. This range of materials gives ample opportunity for exploratory open-ended play with paint and other mark-making equipment. Children are also offered a variety of media and materials, glue, scissors etc and through their experimenting learn to use these creatively and successfully.

Children's first experience of painting and mark-making offer them the opportunity to:-

- 1. Identify colours
- 2. Experiment with mixing them
- 3. Discover how paint of various thickness behaves
- 4. Find out how to make different marks on paper by changing movements and pressure, re-charging or wiping

a brush, using different techniques, using/combining colours.

13. Physical development

- a. We provide a large indoor and outdoor area where children can practice their physical skills using bats, balls, hoops, ropes, beanbags, skittles, music and movement tapes etc. Obstacle courses provide the opportunity for children to improve their gross motor skills.
- b. At every opportunity children go outside for fresh air and free play as well as experiencing the structured PE activities. Children also walk into town to learn about the local environment and use the towns facilities i.e. library, museum, Post *Office* etc.

14. Communities

We have a range of resources which introduced children to cultures and religions to enable them to have a positive attitude and behaviour towards people who are different to themselves. This knowledge is enhanced by our sponsorship of a child in Africa.

15. Treasure Baskets

We provide a range of treasure baskets which are filled with everyday objects made from natural materials wherever possible, and these have been carefully chosen to provide an interesting range of starting points for exploration and discussion around a particular area of learning.

- A. Encourage children to use all of their senses
- B. Introduce children to a wide range of natural materials
- C. Balance the use of bright colours and man-made materials with the subtle colours, textures and shapes of natural objects
- D. Use collections of familiar objects to stimulate play
- E. Provide opportunities for children to make choices and develop preferences from a very young age

Stimulate movement, communication and language through simple materials.

Assessment, Planning and Record keeping.

The planning cycle starts with observation in order to understand children's current interests, development and learning.

In the Sunflower room we observe the children and keep records in order to recognise the small steps which make up each child's individual and unique development

A lot of observation is done on an informal basis. We take in information about children as we talk to them, play with them, and support their learning activities. The observations we make then have an effect on what we provide for the children.

Each child has an online journal, we use tapestry to log and record journal entries for your child. You will be given your own unique log on details when your child starts with us, so that you can also see how your child is developing.

We make observations and record them against the EYFS, which then enables us to decide upon an individual goal for each child for the following term.

Our records are kept:

- To show what the child can do now
- To ensure that each child is developing in a recognised way
- To identify any significantly different aspect of development
- To complete 2yr progress check

The areas of development covered by the record sheets are:

- Personal, social & emotional
- Communication & language
- Physical
- Expressive arts & designs
- Understanding of the World
- Literacy
- Mathematics

We assess the children's development against the developmental ages under the above headings.

From our records and observations we are able to fill in accurately pre-school transfer forms to inform future schools of your child's development. Copies of records and transfer forms are available on request.

In the Seedlings room we use a planning technique called ‘in the moment planning’. young children have a natural desire to learn, explore and question. Settings and Practitioners offer core provisions and an environment that enables this activity in order to capture the moment of engagement for each child. Careful observation by Practitioners is key to utilising the in the moment planning approach – opportunities to seize the moment when a child shows a level of interest and curiosity that can be drawn out and then enhanced and built upon need to be recognised - these are normally called ‘teachable moments’. Written ‘planning’ is then done retrospectively in the form of observations, records of the interactions and notes on outcomes.

This fits in very nicely with the Early Years Framework:

“1.6. Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and stage of development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all of the areas of learning and development.”

Teachable Moments During Child Led Play

Teachable moments are about recognising that children often learn in an unconscious way during casual or less formal interactions. These are the ways in which we do this:

- Provide opportunities and environments that stimulate curiosity (each child will have different things that stimulate them – while one might enjoy painting, another might like dressing up)
- Observe and listen closely so you can follow the child’s lead
- Pick up on the thing/place/person/idea that has sparked the child’s interest
- Use open ended questions that ask for a description, rather than a yes/no or other single word answer – these usually start with what/how/why rather than do/is/can - (‘What do you like about that?’ rather than ‘Do you like that?’)
- Praise and reinforce positive learning experiences

A good example of this child led play approach might be that there are areas in the setting for a number of different activities and/or many items of interest around the setting. Children are given the opportunity to choose of their own accord with what or where they will play instead of being told or focussed by the practitioner on what they should do. When the practitioner engages with the child they go to the child to enquire about the activity, rather than calling the child to them. The practitioner is then curious and enthusiastic about what the child is doing, which leads to a moment where child led learning can take place.

For example, if a child is playing with a ball, and they are asked what they like about it they might reply ‘it’s round’. This can be capitalised on to engage the child in curiosity and conversation about other shapes.

Policies

We have the following policy documents at nursery, there is a copy of each one in our documents file in the hall which you are free to read, should you require a copy of any particular policy, please ask a member of staff.

Admissions

Answering the Door/collection of children

Behaviour Management

Complaints from Parents

Complaint from staff or owners

Confidentiality

Diet

Emergency closure – Parents/staff

Equality and Diversity

Equipment/toys

Fees

Fire

Health & Hygiene

Key person

Lost Children

Outings

Parental Involvement

Partnership

Physical environment

Risk assessment

Safety

Safeguarding Children

Self Esteem

Settling in

Special Educational needs

Staffing/employment

Staffing – appointing new staff/introduction of new staff

Staff appraisals and supervisions

Transition

Uncollected children

Volunteer/student/work experience

Whistle blowing

Useful links of those we work in partnership with :-

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk>

<http://www.operationencompass.org>

<http://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

Thank you.....

Rachael and the team