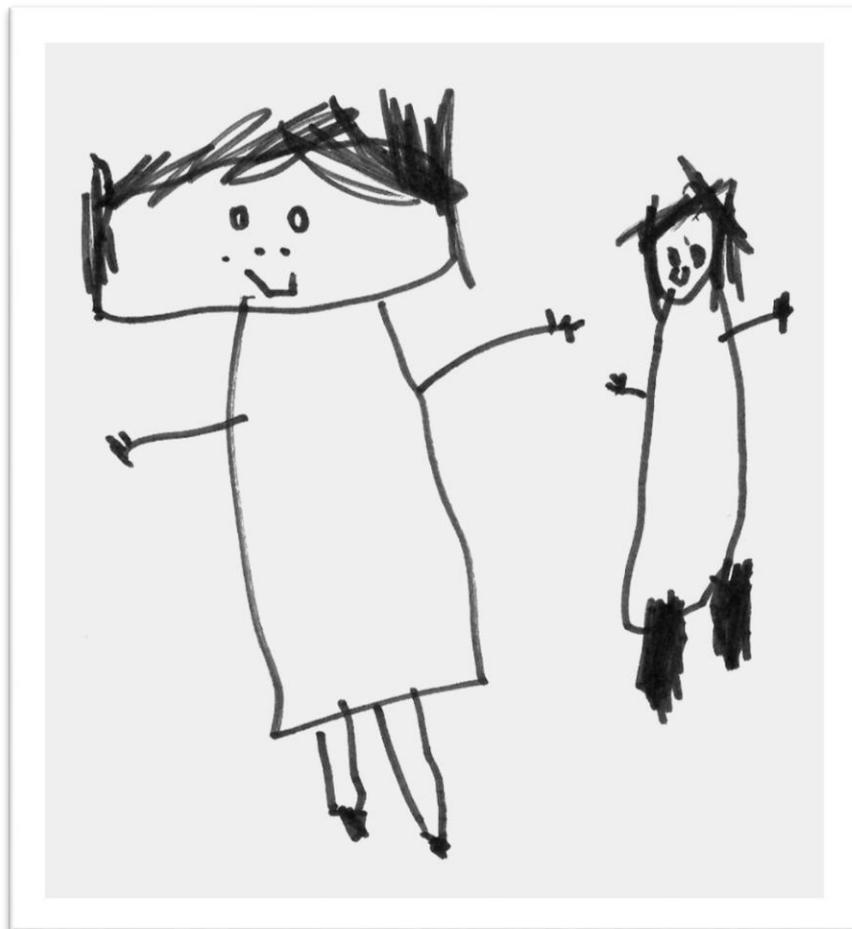


St. Mary's Nursery



Tynebank Road

Haddington

EH41 4DN

Nursery Tel: 01620 825695

Website: www.edubuzz.org/st-marys

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Welcome

Welcome to St. Mary's Nursery.

We look forward to getting to know you and your child, and aim to ensure that their time at nursery is happy and motivating. We hope this handbook will help to answer any questions you may have regarding your child's time with us at nursery, however, please feel free to contact us personally if you have any further questions. We operate an 'open door policy' and are always happy to discuss any queries you may have.

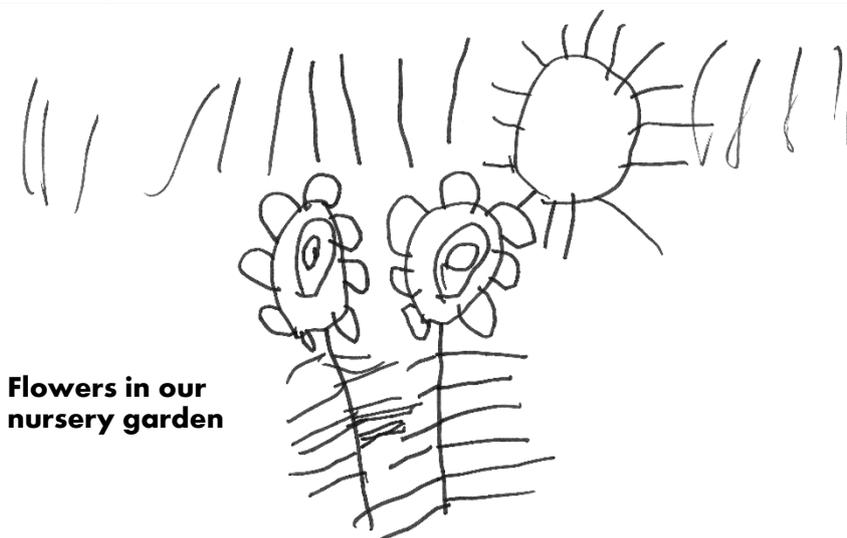
St. Mary's Nursery is a non-denominational nursery, welcoming all three and four year olds. We have 40 places in the morning session and 40 in the afternoon. At the end of the preschool year, approximately one third of our children will go on to St. Mary's RC Primary school and two thirds will attend Haddington Infants School. Our staff liaise with Haddington Infant Nursery, St. Mary's RC School, and Haddington Infant School, to provide a full and positive transition into Primary One.

Our Vision Statement

We aim to provide a secure, happy environment where staff, parents and children work together, recognising and celebrating achievement both in nursery, at home and within the community.

We strive to offer our children a motivating and fulfilling experience, to enable them to achieve their goals.

We believe that consistently high expectations of behaviour help children to develop a sense of wellbeing and confidence, which we promote by praising our children's efforts, their commitment to the nursery and to each other.



Flowers in our nursery garden

Aims for Early Education at St. Mary's Nursery

- to provide a safe and nurturing environment where all children feel happy, secure, respected and valued
- to provide a stimulating and challenging curriculum that will encourage the emotional, social, intellectual and creative development of all children
- to promote effective communication and partnership between home, school and the wider community to create confident children
- to liaise with local schools and other nurseries in order to provide a smooth transition between nursery and school
- to work with other agencies and people within our community to meet the needs of all our children
- to develop respectful relationships based on trust, fairness and equality
- to promote enquiring and enjoyable learning experiences, encouraging children to have a positive and resilient approach to learning

Staffing

There are always four adults working in the nursery at any given time and our team consists of a Senior Early Years Practitioner, two full-time nursery nurses, three part-time nursery nurses and two ASN's.

Our Headteacher is Mrs C. Graham. The school contact number for the school is tel: 01620 823298.

From August 2014, the amount of early learning and childcare increased from 475 to 600 hours each year. This means your child is entitled to approximately 16 hours per week.

In accordance with East Lothian Guidelines, from August 2015, St Mary's Nursery Sessions are:

	Monday and Tuesday	Wednesday and Thursday	Friday
Am Children	Drop Off between 8:32 - 9:15 Pick Up between 12:15 - 12:30	Drop Off between 8:33 - 9:15 Pick Up between 12:15 - 12:30	No Nursery

	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday	Friday
Pm children	Drop Off between 1:15 - 1:30 Pick Up 1 between 3:00 - 3:15 or Pick up 2 between 4:00 - 4:15	Drop off between 8:30 - 9:15 Pick up between 12:05 - 12:20

Starting Nursery

Once you have received notification that you have a place at St. Mary's Nursery, the school will send you an enrolment pack with information about the nursery and a date to come and visit us with your child. This allows you and your child to meet the nursery staff prior to starting, and the opportunity to share any relevant information with us. **Please remember to bring your child's birth certificate with you.** Following enrolment, your child will be invited to attend the nursery for an hour increasing to 2 hours day two, 3 hours day three and so on. The settling period is very individual to each child and staff and families will work together to make the settling period go as smoothly as possible. This 'gentle start' is an important step in helping children to settle. Even if they have previously attended a playgroup or nursery, it can take time to become secure and comfortable with new routines, new faces and a new setting.

Helping your Child to Settle in to Nursery

Every child is an individual and will settle in their own time. Even a child who appears to have settled quickly may appear less secure after a day or two. Don't worry, this is quite normal.

Help your children to prepare by talking to them about who will take them to nursery and pick them up; what you will be doing while they're at nursery, and reassure them that you will be back for them. For many children, the separation from their parent/carer is the hardest part of settling in and they may become clingy and tearful. Often the best way to manage this is to tell them you'll come back, give them a kiss and hug, and then leave them with a member of staff. Usually children will settle and engage in the nursery activities within a few minutes. You will be given advice if this is not the best strategy and rest assured that we will contact you if your child is not settling.

Collection

For the protection of your child, you will be asked to give the names of the people who will be regularly collecting them from nursery. Please note that anyone collecting your child must be over the age of 16.

Creating a Safe Environment

The nursery and entrance doors are kept securely closed during session times, and are only left open when the janitor or a member of staff is standing in attendance. If you arrive out with official 'door opening' times, please press the intercom button and a member of staff will come to help you. **We would also respectfully ask that you wait for a member of staff to open the nursery door when you arrive at the beginning of the official pick up time,** as we follow an 'end of session' routine and it may be that the children are not yet seated and ready for collection. We would also respectfully request that children are not permitted to press the (green) security button to open the entrance door when you drop them off or collect them.

Road Safety Around the Campus

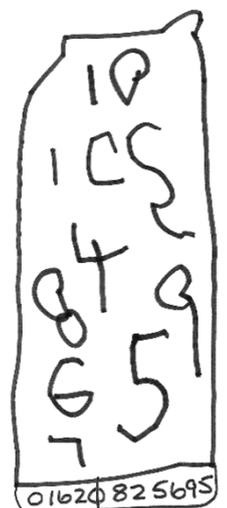
Driver behaviour around the school can severely compromise child safety. We encourage all parents and carers who have to drive to school, to avoid Victoria Road or Neilson Park Road as these roads have restricted access during peak times.

The car park also has restricted access, controlled by rising bollards. Please be aware that the bollards can cause extensive damage to cars if drivers try to gain entrance to the car park without a pass. Please let a member of staff know if you have a blue badge and require disability parking.

Road safety procedures are an essential life skill. Please help set a good example for your child and use the 'lollipop' crossing patrol officers whenever possible. They are positioned at Sidegate, Station Road by Peachdales, the Railway Hotel, Knox Place and Court Street. There are pedestrian crossings at Rosehall, the Railway Hotel, Market Street/Hardgate junction, Court Street and on the High Street. We encourage active ways of travelling to nursery, such as 'Park and Stride'; that is, parking at Tesco or the Aubigny Sports Centre, and walking the rest of the route.

Absence from Nursery

If your child is absent, for any reason, we would ask you to keep us informed by phoning either the school office, tel: 01620 823298 or the nursery direct line - tel: 01620 825695. Please contact us before 9:15 am for the morning session and before 1:30 for the afternoon session (messages can be left on the school phone). We are required to make contact with you if your child does not attend and this can take a considerable amount of time, which would otherwise be spent attending to the needs of the children in the nursery.



Phoning the nursery

In bed



Illness and Accidents

Please let us know if you need to keep your child at home due to illness.

Even if they ask to come in, it is very important that they stay at home until they are fully recovered. This is particularly important in the case of sickness and/or diarrhea, when your child must not return **until 48 hours after the last episode**, even if they seem better. Please remember that the immune systems of pre-school children are still developing, and their hygiene is not always very good. Illness spreads quickly.

Bumps and bruises can sometimes happen during a nursery day. If your child has a bump or accident during the session you will be given an accident slip, which will give you details of what happened and how it was managed. The nursery staff are First Aid trained. If your child requires medication during their time at Nursery please speak to a member of staff.

If your child needs to be changed due to a toileting mishap, we will record this for your information and give you a note with the details. We recommend keeping a change of clothes in your child's peg bag, just in case.

Snack Money and other Donations

At the beginning of each term, you will receive an envelope and letter asking for your contribution to cover the cost of snack for that term. At the moment, the cost is set at £1:00 per week. Any money left over goes towards activities such as baking and making play dough. Parents can opt to pay snack money online, or as a lump sum at the beginning of each term.

We are also grateful for any donations of the following:

- *clean, washed out junk such as yoghurt pots, boxes, kitchen roll tubes, corks, beads, ribbon, plastic bottle tops, buttons etc... (no toilet rolls please, or packaging from food that contains nuts or meat). All these items need frequent replenishing and are used for craft and technology activities.*
- *natural items such as cones, conkers, pebbles, shells; metal objects, eg sieves, spoons etc, and wooden objects such as cotton reels, baskets, spoons etc..*
- *items for outdoors mud kitchen (eg wooden spoons, whisks, sieves, colanders etc..)*
- *garden plants, gardening equipment.*

Clothing and Footwear

Please remember that when a child is absorbed in nursery experiences, they are likely to get quite messy from time to time! We encourage the children to wear our nursery aprons for water and painting activities, but it is advisable to avoid clothing which is new or needs to be kept clean. Alternatively, you may prefer to order a nursery sweatshirt or polo neck, available in navy, red and light blue.

During their time at nursery, the children are developing their independence, and need clothing that they can manage with the minimum of effort. Tight jeans, belts and dungarees can cause a problem when children go to the toilet. Easy clothing (such as trousers with elastic waists) help them to avoid mishaps.

Your child will need soft shoes for gym. (gym shoes or trainers are safest - slippers are not suitable for P.E. sessions in the hall). Children are given the freedom to choose when they want to play outdoors, so **outdoor shoes with Velcro fastenings (not laces) will enable them to do so easily and independently.**

We offer our children the opportunity to use our outdoor area in all weathers. During the winter months, a pair of wellies and a waterproof is often the best option and will ensure that your child is equipped, whatever the weather. On sunny days, children will need sun cream (applied by guardian), sunhats, as well as a cardigan or jumper.

Please remember to label all your child's clothing, particularly their shoes, coats, hats etc, and any other items they may take off in the course of the day.



Splashing in puddles

Birthdays

If your child has their birthday on a nursery day, we like to make it special by inviting them to make a hat and have the nursery children sing 'Happy Birthday' to them. We will either make a cake with them that day or have a joint celebration later on in the week, depending on the number of birthdays we will be celebrating. Could we please ask parents/carers not to bring in birthday cakes or treats to hand out, as their nursery friends may have special dietary requirements.

The Curriculum

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The curriculum is designed using the Experiences and Outcomes outlined in 'The Curriculum for Excellence'. It aims to maintain high standards, developing core skills and attributes that will equip our children for a successful future in a vastly changing world. Full details of the curriculum can be found online at www.educationscotland.gov.uk .

In the nursery, your child will be working at Early Level, which is for the pre-school years and Primary 1.

'Building the Ambition' (2014), the government guidance on early learning, stresses the importance of play as the means of teaching and learning in the early years. With this in mind, our curriculum is delivered through a mixture of free-flow play and adult-led activities. These activities are developed through planning with the children, using their interests to guide us through the Experiences and Outcomes outlined in the curriculum and The East Lothian Frameworks.

Over the year, we will collect information about your child's learning in their learning journal. As well as being a record of your child's experiences at nursery, the journal is a way of sharing your child's progress with you. You are welcome to come and look at their work as you wish and the journals will be sent home three times a year to enable learning to be shared at home too. We also provide "Stay and Play" sessions which is another opportunity to come into nursery and see what your child is learning. Other examples of our learning can be found in the nursery floor book, displayed at the nursery entrance. We hope that this, along with the 'What we are Learning' notice, also at the nursery entrance, will offer you an insight into your child's time at nursery and an opportunity to support their learning at home. We also contribute regular posts to the St Mary's website.

The Learning Environment

We aim to provide an environment that offers our learners choice and the opportunity to follow their personal interests. This will include activities to explore the theme developed by the children, and 'open ended' resources, used symbolically in their play, which allow the children to develop their own creativity. Activities focus on the *processes* involved in the making, allowing the children to explore materials, take control of their learning and build on their problem solving skills.

Role of the Adult

Through careful observation, we aim to extend the interests and learning of the children. This is often done through open questions that provoke deeper thinking from the learner... 'what would happen if...?' Conversations that create shared, sustained thinking help children to become resourceful, independent thinkers, who know that their ideas are valued. Sometimes, however, this can be best achieved by observing without interrupting the child's own thinking processes.

By facilitating these experiences in a sensitive way, our goal is to help your child to begin to develop good learning skills: to be resilient in the face of challenge; reflective and motivated to learn, and able to assess risk and be independent.

Outdoor Learning

Learning outdoors is a vital part of the curriculum, helping children to make connections with the world we live in:

- to engage in the wonder and beauty of nature
- to explore the cycles of life and decay
- to develop a sense of responsibility for all living things and our environment
- to give them a sense of time and process, through seasonal changes
- to allow them to involve all their senses in 'real life' problem solving activities
- to allow physical development- balance, agility, coordination and stamina

All areas of the curriculum can be explored outdoors in creative, enjoyable and adventurous ways. Children love getting involved in nature, and we make use of our garden space to grow different plants, vegetables and fruit, as well as offering opportunities for imaginative play in areas such as the mud kitchen. We use the school setting and local environment to search for signs of the seasons, or hunt for minibests. Even when, as adults, we might be reluctant to be outdoors, children will often ask for time outside, if only to experience the weather.

For these reasons, we play outside in all weathers and request that you make sure your child has suitable clothes: outside play is often wet and muddy and even on sunny days our garden can be cold. Please also apply sunscreen before the session on sunny days, and provide a sunhat.

We are continually collecting resources to enhance our outside space, so if you have access to any seeds, plants, bottle crates, plastic tubes, logs, or any other materials you think we could use, please let us know.

Story sacks and Lending Books

We have a large variety of story sacks, which are available for borrowing by the pre-schoolers. You will receive a letter, giving details of how to take part, and information such as when the sacks go out and when they should be returned.

Each story sack contains a book for you to read with your child, plus related games and toys. There is a suggestion card in each bag, offering ideas about how to share the books and items with your child. The items in the story sack are all designed to be used with and support the story. Please supervise your child when they are using the items from the sack and we would be grateful if you would check the sack's contents before you return it, to ensure that it is complete. If anything does get lost or broken, please tell a member of staff.

We rely on parent helpers to hand out and check the bags ready for the next lender. Please let us know if you'd like to help.

We also offer a book lending service for the ante preschoolers too.

Moving on to Primary One.

We aim to ensure your child's transition into Primary One, is as smooth and positive an experience as possible.

If your child is in their preschool year, we will inform you of the enrolment days for both St. Mary's Primary and Haddington Infant School. This usually takes place in the November, prior to starting school.

We work with Haddington Infant Nursery, and both primary schools, to ensure all nursery children receive the same transition programme into either Haddington Infant Primary School or St. Mary's RC Primary School. By the time your child begins visiting their intended school, they will already have had experience of using the shared areas such as the gym hall and music and dance room, and be familiar with other spaces, eg the dinner hall.

The joint transition activities start at the beginning of the summer term to allow the children to become familiar with many aspects of their new school, such as the staff, the playground, dinner hall and their classroom. They will also have had shared playtimes, and have met their teacher.

You will be given a full timetable of events to help you support your child and discuss the coming changes. We would be happy to discuss this with you at any time, should you have any concerns or queries.

Parent Helpers and Nursery Outings

We enjoy sharing nursery experiences with parents and would be delighted if you would like to come and spend some time with us. Whether you want to find out more about how your child learns in a play environment, or to offer your services reading, baking or helping the children to garden, we'd love to hear from you. We have a helpers' calendar in the nursery cloakroom for you to choose a date which suits you - or any other family member who would like to lend a hand.

We strive to offer the children a range of activities to enrich the curriculum, such as seasonal walks, visits to the library, and end of term events, eg singing at a local nursing home, or trips to the zoo or East Links Farm. These activities require a high parent/child ratio and we are very grateful for the support of our parent volunteers to enable these events to take place.

The nursery currently has two working groups: the Parent Fundraising Focus Group, which supports children's learning and nursery experiences by helping to organise events such as the Christmas Fundraiser, tea and coffee mornings and the nursery Sports Day, and the Garden Development Group, which helps to focus on areas for developing and maintaining the nursery grounds. If you are interested in helping in either of these groups, please speak to a member of staff.

Consulting our Parents as Partners

We appreciate that the most important educators in a child's life are the people who know them best - their parents. They have been learning from you since birth, and come to nursery with many diverse experiences and interests. Sharing this information can only have a positive effect on a child's development, and we welcome opportunities to work

with you to enhance their experience at nursery.

- We welcome your comments and ideas about the nursery curriculum, resources, environment etc. and have a suggestions box in the cloakroom.
- We want to be a part of your child's interests and achievements in nursery and at home. One way we do this is through our 'Wow Wall!' - fill out a wee note and we'll share these special moments together.
- At the beginning of the school year, we will invite you to a curriculum evening to listen to information on aspects of nursery learning.
- We will keep you informed about activities taking place in, and around, the nursery using our notice board beside the nursery entrance and by newsletters posted in your child's pigeonhole (in the cloakroom).
- We provide you with an opportunity to give feedback on the nursery, through our annual questionnaire and on the feedback slip on our newsletters. We will also ask for your feedback after curriculum evenings/ parents' consultations, and will use what we learn to improve our service.
- We hold Stay and Play sessions where we discuss your child's progress and plan for their future learning using "Next Steps" in our Learning Journals.
- Parents are also invited to attend Parent Council meetings if they wish to become more involved in the life of the school. Dates of meetings are posted in our newsletter.
- We involve parents in the running of the nursery, through our story sack scheme, as helpers on trips and special events, and through our garden development and fundraising focus groups.
- We record your child's experiences, interests and achievements in their learning journal, which we encourage you to share with your child.
- We are happy to discuss any queries you may have, either informally in the nursery or in a more private space. We¹³ welcome the opportunity to answer questions about any aspect of your child's time in nursery.

If you have any worries or questions about your child's time in nursery, please don't hesitate to speak to a member of staff.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

At St Mary's Nursery, we recognise that the behaviour of our children is of paramount importance in their development towards achieving the values set out in 'Curriculum for Excellence': that is, becoming Responsible Citizens, Effective Contributors, Successful Learners and Confident Individuals.

"Social, emotional and behavioural skills are key skills for learning, life and work. Readiness to learn, and on-going positive relationships and behaviour, depend upon social and emotional wellbeing".

Building Curriculum for Excellence through Positive Relationships and Behaviour 2009

When children have good social, emotional and behavioural skills, and are educated within an environment that supports the ongoing development of these skills, children are able to play cooperatively, make friendships, solve problems, resolve conflict, manage feelings and respect others' beliefs and opinions.

Our Aims are:

- to set reasonable expectations and clear boundaries
- to encourage children to take responsibility for their behaviour and understand why the boundaries are there
- to promote positive behaviour, and recognise it wherever possible
- to encourage children to show respect for themselves, others, and property
- help children to recognise and manage their feelings
- be consistent in how we deal with certain behaviour

We will achieve this by:

1. Using our Nursery Rules, and regularly discussing them with the children.
 - Be kind and helpful
 - Gentle hands
 - Good listening to everyone
 - Look after our toys

2. Non-verbal and verbal positive recognition, e.g. a smile or a word of praise, or discussing what the child has done, so that others hear. Examples of good behaviour seen that day are often talked about at circle times. Stickers are often given for tidying up, and also for any 'Wow!' moments which happened during the day.
3. Our daily circle time is a time when the children come together as a group to share thoughts, feelings and ideas. This encourages the children to listen and empathise, and promotes positive relationships, and self-discipline.

4. Using emotion picture cards to convey a variety of positive and negative feelings to children with communication difficulties.

Thinking time

If a child is having difficulty moderating their behaviour, we might ask the child to leave the activity to discuss what is happening with a member of staff. This could be if they are not being safe, or kind, or not looking after our nursery property. This allows a member of staff to speak with the child concerned, to ensure that they understand why their behaviour is not helping them or others around them. It also allows the child time to be calm and collect their thoughts, before returning to play.

If a child's behaviour has been more of a concern during the nursery session, we will inform parents/carers when the child is collected, so we can work together to support them. Likewise, if parents and carers have any questions or concerns, we would encourage them to speak to a member of staff at the earliest opportunity.



Our Health Promoting Ethos

In line with local and national guidance, we aim to promote healthy living and eating. We offer children a healthy snack, including fresh fruit or vegetables along with milk or water, which is available throughout the day. The children are encouraged to take responsibility for their healthy diet, by helping to plan the weekly menu with staff and buy the fruit and vegetables from a visiting grocer, as well as helping to prepare it.

We ensure the children have opportunities for physical exercise each day, either through outdoor play or time in the school gym. The nursery also takes part in the national Childsmile Toothbrushing Programme. Every child will be offered regular opportunities to understand the importance of, and practise good toothbrushing skills, as part of their dental care. For more details, please ask a member of staff.

Equality and Fairness

We aim to promote equality and fairness, through the curriculum and across all aspects of our work. We want all children to feel included and to know that we respect and value diversity. We will do our best to ensure children, parents/carers, staff and all visitors to the nursery are treated equally, with respect and in a fair and just manner.

Culture and language, disability, gender, race, religion and additional support needs should not be barriers to participation and achievement. Everyone in our nursery should feel valued, safe and secure.

Policies

A copy of our nursery policies, and our latest Care Inspectorate Report, can be found in our folder in the entrance area of the nursery.

Complaints Procedures

We hope that your child's time at nursery is a happy and positive one. We offer an 'open door' policy and welcome the opportunity to discuss any queries you may have, either informally when dropping off or picking up your child, or by private appointment if preferred. If you have any concerns or worries, please feel free to approach the nursery staff at any time. You may also raise concerns with our Head Teacher, Mrs C. Graham.

If you still have concerns with any aspect of your child's experience you may contact:

The Department of Education and Social Services,
John Muir House,
Haddington,
East Lothian,
EH42 3HA
Care Inspectorate
Tel 01620 827631

or

Care Inspectorate
Compass House,
11. Riverside Drive,
DUNDEE
DD1 4NY
Tel: 0845 6030890



Playing in the brick area