

PARENT HANDBOOK 2024



Busy Beacons

NURSERY

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Welcome to our Nursery

Busy Beacons is a happy and vibrant nursery where we strive to provide an outstanding early years education for all children. It is set in a woodland space which enables children to experience the awe and wonder of the natural world through a forest school programme.

Forest School Principles are at the heart of our philosophy at Busy Beacons Nursery.

Forest school is a form of early years education which takes place in a woodland or forest environment. It is a child-centred inspirational learning process, that offers opportunities for holistic growth. It is a long-term programme that supports play and exploration.

The benefits of a Forest School are extensive: fostering self-esteem, building confidence, managing risks, stimulating cognitive growth using all five senses, enhancing mindfulness, developing physical literacy, and most importantly utilising nature.



Vision and Values

We are committed to holistic outdoor educational learning and reconnecting children with nature in a stimulating environment. Each child has the opportunity to grow in confidence and develop the skills they need for a successful future, providing an exceptional foundation for lifelong learning.

We ensure our children reach their full potential and beyond. Every child has an equal voice as we value and encourage their views. We love to celebrate the achievements of our children and pride ourselves on the attention we give to each individual child's needs.

We are a setting where your voice is heard. Our open-door policy helps to ensure that we create an honest and open communication network with parents and children.



A Day in the Life of...

[Click here to read more](#)



Through the eyes of a baby



Through the eyes of a 2 year old



Through the eyes of a 4 year old

Curriculum and EYFS

Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS)

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework is the statutory framework for early years education in England. The framework sets the standards that schools, and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development, and care of children from birth to 5.

The EYFS Framework was amended in 2023:

- To include a focus on early language and extending vocabulary
- To reduce workload such as unnecessary paperwork so staff can spend more time teaching children

In keeping with the EYFS framework, we place a huge emphasis on children developing the 3 Prime Areas of Learning first as well as the Characteristics of learning. This is because they lay foundations for future success in all other areas of learning and in life.

The Prime Areas are:

- Communication and Language: **Listening, attention and understanding, speaking**
- Personal, Social, Emotional Development: **Self-regulation, managing self, making relationships**
- Physical Development: **Fine motor, gross motor**

The Specific Areas are:

- Literacy: **Word reading, comprehension, writing**
- Mathematics: **Number, numerical patterns**
- Understanding the world: **People, cultures and communities, the world, past and present**
- Expressive arts and design: **Creating with materials, being imaginative and expressive**

The Characteristics of learning are:

- Playing and exploring: **Children investigate and experience things and 'have a go'**
- Active learning: **Children concentrate and keep on trying as well as enjoy their achievements**
- Creating and thinking critically: **Children think of their own ideas and make links in learning**

For more information on the statutory requirements of the early years please [CLICK HERE](#)

Quality Assurance

Quality needs to be measured in a range of different ways and times to ensure we get a true evaluation of all aspects of practice. Below is our Quality Assurance Cycle.

Autumn Half Term 1

- a. **Leaders learning walk**
- b. **Tapestry**
 - Tapestry accounts for new children
 - Story wall check
 - Message function check
- c. **Room observations**

Autumn Half Term 2

- a. **Supervision of staff**
 - Key children discussed.
Gaps identified and intervention plan created.
- b. **Peer observations**
- c. **Room observations**
- d. **Parent surveys**

Spring Half Term 1

- a. **Leaders learning walk**
- b. **Tapestry**
 - Story wall check Message function check
- c. **Room observations**
- d. **Children's views**

Spring Half Term 2

- a. **Supervision of staff**
 - Key children discussed.
Gaps identified and intervention plan created.
- b. **Peer observations**
- c. **Room observations**

Summer Half Term 1

- a. **Leaders learning walk**
- b. **Tapestry**
 - Tapestry accounts for new children
 - Story wall check
 - Message function check
- c. **Room observations**

Summer Half Term 2

- a. **Supervision of staff**
 - Key children discussed.
Gaps identified and intervention plan created.
- b. **Peer observations**
- c. **Room observations**
- d. **Parent surveys**

We encourage our staff to be reflective about their practice as this is a critical component of a high-quality setting. Nursery staff will have access to a full professional development programme, including forest school training for all alongside statutory and complementary training opportunities.



What you need to know

Fees, Funding and Help with Nursery Costs

Busy Beacon's Day rate is £55 which includes am/pm snacks and lunch. We do not offer half days.

Breakfast and tea can be purchased in advance for an additional cost of £3 per meal.

If you are entitled to 30 hours of funded childcare it equates to three full days at the nursery.

[Tax-free-childcare & \[www.childcarechoices.gov.uk\]\(http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk\)](#)

How to Contact Us

T: 020 8418 2607

E: admin@busybeacons.co.uk

W: www.busybeacons.co.uk

[Click here for our Terms & Conditions](#)

Staff

For a staff list, please see our website.

Opening and closing hours

Monday to Friday (term time only)

7.30am – 5:30pm

Breakfast	7.30am – 9.00am
AM Snack	10.00am – 10.30am
Lunch	12.00pm – 12.30pm
PM Snack	3.00pm – 3.30pm
Tea	4.45pm – 5.30pm

Settling in

We recognise and understand the anxieties for both parents and children when starting at nursery. Some children will settle in on their first visit and others will take a little longer to become familiar to a new environment.

To support you and your child when settling, the head of nursery will contact you before your child's start date to arrange a convenient time for your child's first settling in session. The number of settling in sessions will then be discussed and agreed with you during your first visit.

During the settling in sessions, your child's key person will discuss with you your child's needs, likes/dislikes, favourite foods, sleep patterns, routines, etc. This information will enable us to cater for your child's individual needs and assist in the settling in process. We will also discuss with you our documented policies and procedures and answer any questions that you may have.

The First Day

Once your child has completed their settling in sessions, they will be ready to start their first day at nursery. Please make sure they have the correct items with them from the kit list below. When you arrive, make your way to the front entrance, ring the bell and someone will let you in. Once you have settled your child, a member of staff will show you where you need to collect them from at the end of the day. This will then be your drop off and collection point for all future sessions. Staff will keep in contact with you throughout the day and if your child is upset you may be asked to come back to give them some reassurance.

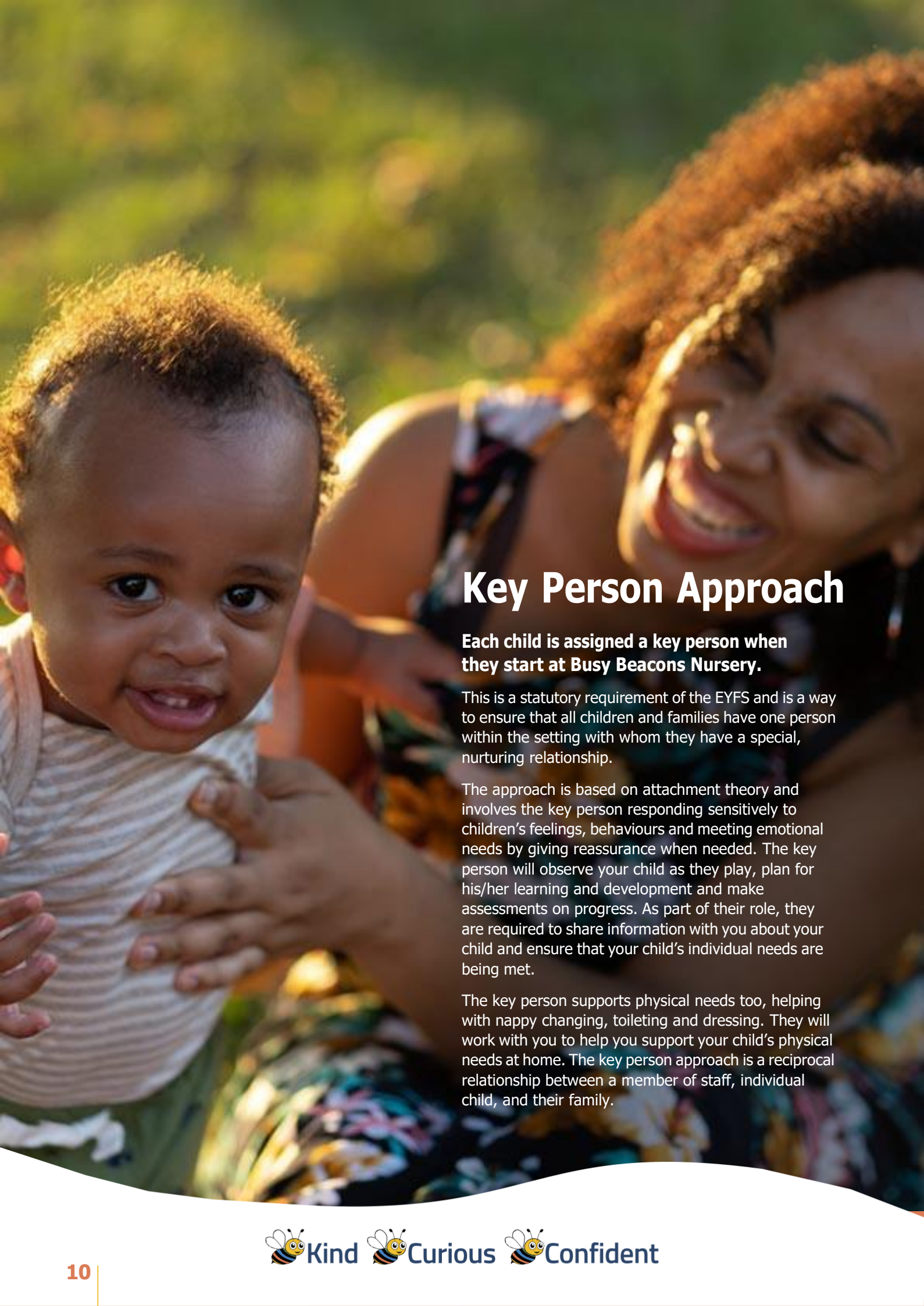
Collection of Children

We must have written consent for any person collecting your child from nursery. This written consent is in the registration pack that you complete before your child starts. If there is an emergency situation and you need someone to collect your child who is not named on your registration form, please call us and we can create a password that the collecting person will need to give.

Absence Protocols

If your child is absent from nursery, you must call the setting to let us know that they are not attending. Although children are not statutory school age, we have a duty under safeguarding to make sure we record any absence and the reason for this absence. If your child will be absent for an extended period of time, then you need to complete the absence form.





Key Person Approach

Each child is assigned a key person when they start at Busy Beacons Nursery.

This is a statutory requirement of the EYFS and is a way to ensure that all children and families have one person within the setting with whom they have a special, nurturing relationship.

The approach is based on attachment theory and involves the key person responding sensitively to children's feelings, behaviours and meeting emotional needs by giving reassurance when needed. The key person will observe your child as they play, plan for his/her learning and development and make assessments on progress. As part of their role, they are required to share information with you about your child and ensure that your child's individual needs are being met.

The key person supports physical needs too, helping with nappy changing, toileting and dressing. They will work with you to help you support your child's physical needs at home. The key person approach is a reciprocal relationship between a member of staff, individual child, and their family.

Parent Information

Food and Drink

We try to give our children food variety, eating in the forest, working in the allotment, making hot chocolate to drink around the campfire and making home-made cakes for cold days.

Through these experiences, we teach our children about healthy lifestyles and encourage healthy eating habits as this influences the child's long-term relationship with food.

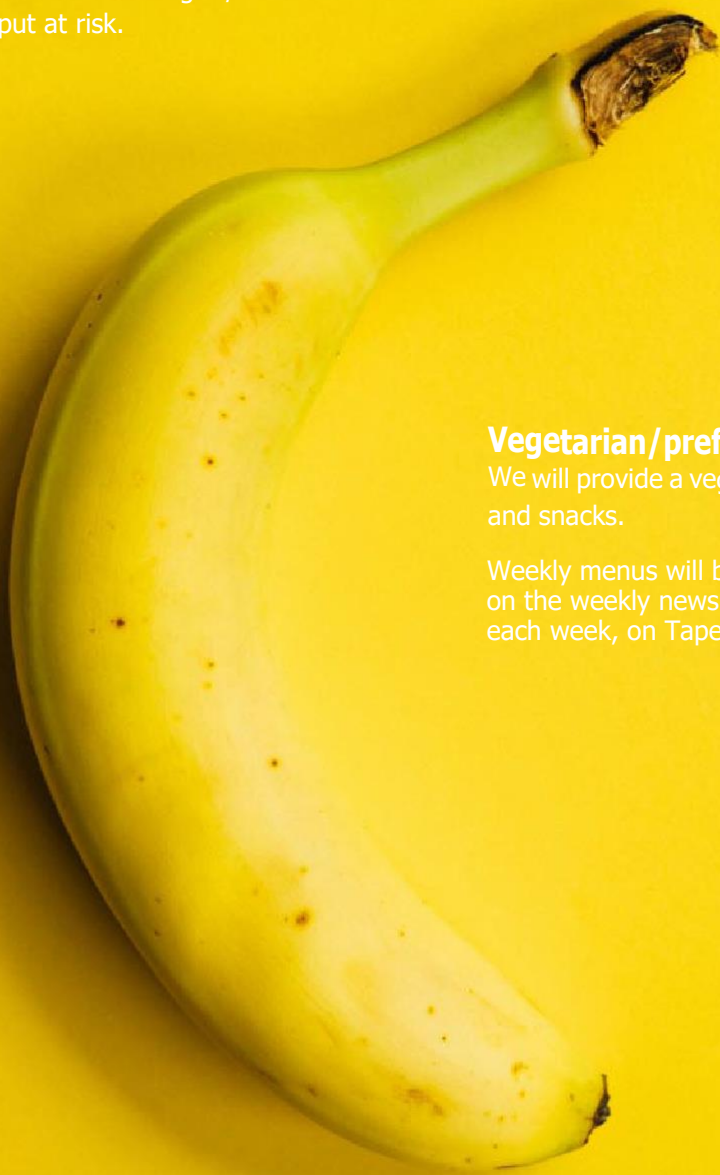
We provide a diverse menu of balanced and nutritious meals and snacks. Please do not send your child in with their own food without prior agreement with the nursery to ensure children with allergies/food intolerances are not put at risk.

Allergies and intolerances

If your child suffers from a food allergy, the head of nursery and the key person will carry out a risk assessment during the settling in visits.

A care plan and emergency procedures will be agreed with you, based on the information provided to us. If required, we will work with health visitors and other medical professionals to ensure that we are able to meet your child's needs.

All allergies are displayed in the nursery, so all staff are aware of what children are able to eat and drink safely.



Vegetarian/preferred options for food

We will provide a vegetarian alternative to all meals and snacks.

Weekly menus will be provided and can be viewed on the weekly newsletter shared at the end of each week, on Tapestry.

Example of a healthy lunch menu

WEEK 1	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
Breakfast	Oatmeal	Scrambled Eggs and Toast	Bagel	Cereal	Veggie Sausage and Muffin
Morning Snack	Banana Milkshake	Flapjacks	Fresh Fruit	Cheese and Crackers	Fresh Fruit
Lunch	Vegetable and Chickpea Korma with Rice and Cucumber	Salmon Pasta Bake with Green Beans (Veg option available)	Chicken and Mushroom Pie with Broccoli (Veg option available)	Lentil and Veg Bolognese	Mini Jacket Potato with Beans
Pudding	Yoghurt	Jelly	Yoghurt	Rice Pudding	Custard
Afternoon Snack	Cheese and Crackers	Carrot and Cucumber Batons with Yoghurt Dip	Rice Cake with Cream Cheese	Fruit Smoothie	Fish Fingers on Wholemeal Toast
Drinks	Milk and/or Water is available with morning and afternoon snacks				

WEEK 2	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
Breakfast	Banana and Wholemeal Toast	Boiled Egg and Soldiers	Cereal	Pancake with Jam	Oatmeal
Morning Snack	Fresh Fruit	Breadstick and dips	Fresh Fruit	Cheese and Crackers	Jam on Toast
Lunch	Pea and Paneer Curry with Rice	Fish Pie and Broccoli	Pasta with Tomato Sauce and Cucumber salad	Fish Fingers with Wedges (Veg option available)	Shepherd's Pie (Veg option available)
Pudding	Jelly	Satsuma	Rice Pudding	Melon	Rice Krispies Cake
Afternoon Snack	Spaghetti Hoops on Wholemeal Toast	Mini Jacket Potato with Cheese	Bagel with Cream Cheese	Mashed Avocado with Crackers	Breadstick and dips
Drinks	Milk and/or Water is available with morning and afternoon snacks				



Suitable clothing / outdoor clothing

What does your child need?

The nursery provides all educational materials, bed linen, morning and afternoon snacks and lunch. Please can you provide the following items:

- Nappies, wipes, nappy sacks, nappy cream (if your child is in nappies)
- A spare set of clothes (or more if your child is toilet training)
- Any personal items, such as a comforter or favourite teddy, which your child may require for sleeping
- Formula/breast milk (if your baby still requires this, in named bottles)
- Named drink bottle

All items **must** have the child's name clearly labelled in them

Clothing requirements

- Wellies
- All in one rain suit
- Long sleeved top
- Full length trousers

Summertime

- Sunhat
- Sun cream (must be applied before nursery)

Wintertime

- Appropriate winter coat
- Gloves

The nursery plans to stock branded items including rain suits and wellies for purchase.

Toilet Training

What does your child need?

- Stick to a toilet training routine where possible. Children find the process easier when there is consistency.
- Give short, clear instructions so they know what behaviour you want.
- Don't rush the process – potty training can take weeks or months.



Be aware of how your behaviour influences your child

- Try to stay calm. Your child will look to you to know how to feel and react, so show them it's OK to make mistakes.
- Give lots of praise every time they try hard or do something well.
- Don't make a big deal about accidents. They're nothing to be ashamed of.
- Be patient. Encourage your child not to give up (and follow your own advice).
- Share your potty routine with other carers. Different approaches from adults can be confusing for a child.



Nursery Calendar

Sept 2024 – Aug 2025

 School Holidays
 Bank Holidays

The nursery is open term-time only, this includes inset days.

SEPTEMBER 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

OCTOBER 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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28	29	30	31			

NOVEMBER 2024						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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DECEMBER 2024						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

JANUARY 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

MARCH 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

APRIL 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MAY 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

JUNE 2025						
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

JULY 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

AUGUST 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Bank Holidays: September 2024 - August 2025

Christmas Day	25 December 2024	Easter Monday	21 April 2025
Boxing Day	26 December 2024	Early May Bank Holiday	5 May 2025
New Year's day	1 January 2025	Spring Bank Holiday	26 May 2025
Good Friday	18 April 2025	August Bank Holiday	25 August 2025

Parent Partnership

Communication - Tapestry

We aim to make your child's early years experiences as positive as possible. In order to achieve this, it is important that we communicate effectively with you and build positive relationships between you and the nursery team.

Our main channel of communication is via Tapestry. Tapestry is a digital app that connects teachers, children, and families all in one space. At its most basic, it is a platform for sharing class/individual photos and videos between parents and teachers. There is a main story wall that all parents can access and also a direct messaging route which is perfect for direct contact between parents and their child's key person.

Throughout the year we give parents as much information about the nursery as possible and do this through Tapestry so please make sure you have the app and check it daily.

Signing up is quick and easy: [Tapestry](#)

Parent consultation meetings

We hold termly consultation meetings so your child's progress can be discussed with their key person. 'Next steps' are things that we want your child to learn, and these are shared via Tapestry throughout the term.

Two-year progress check

The EYFS statutory guidance requires that parents and carers must be supplied with a short, written summary of their child's development in the three prime areas of learning and development of the EYFS. This is completed when a child is aged between 24-36 months.

At Busy Beacons we understand that early intervention is key to better future outcomes so we will endeavour to complete the progress check as soon as possible after your child turns two. The idea of the progress check is to celebrate what your child is doing well and identify any gaps in learning that we think they have. You will be asked to share your views and will also be given a copy of the check.

Your child will also have a two-year progress check with the health visitor so it is beneficial to let us know when that appointment is so we can do our best to get our progress check completed so you can share a copy with the health visitor at your appointment.



Readiness for School

Between the ages of four and five children leave the secure and familiar environment of their nursery to go to school. This can often feel like a daunting experience, and you may worry if your child is ready or how they will cope being in a new environment. Staff at the nursery liaises with your child's school to help make the transition as easy as possible for both you and your child. School readiness is defined by the following opposite:



Children should:

- Be able to separate from their main carer
- Follow simple instructions, listen, and concentrate for short periods of time
- Have an interest in a variety of subjects, paying attention to the activity they are taking part in
- Use a range of vocabulary and language to express their needs, feelings, thoughts, and ideas
- Have a sense of identity, for example, knowing their name/age and being able to share things about the people who are important to them
- Be able to interact, share and take turns in a developmentally appropriate way
- Begin to understand emotions and have developed some self-regulation skills
- Have an interest in what goes on around them and be able to ask simple questions to find out more
- Understand simple rules and boundaries and mostly follow them
- Engage in books and understand the meaning of more words
- Use the toilet independently
- Dress and undress themselves
- Manage their own hygiene such as hand washing
- Feed themselves food using a knife, fork, and spoon

Although we teach children other skills at nursery such as counting objects, recognising numbers, reading, and writing their name, it's important to understand that these things are only a priority when your child can confidently do the things listed above. The EYFS is birth to 5 years so it's important for children to become independent and confident learners before focussing on more academic skills. We encourage you to also work on the developing the above skills with your child at home as when they are developmentally ready.

Fees, Funding and Help with Nursery Costs

Busy Beacon's Day rate is £55 which includes am/pm snacks and lunch. We do not offer half days.

Breakfast and tea can be purchased in advance for an additional cost of £3 per meal.

If you are entitled to 30 hours of funded childcare it equates to three full days at the nursery

[Tax-free-childcare](#) & www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Funding for 3 and 4-year-olds

All 3 and 4-year-olds are eligible to receive 15 hours nursery education funding until they reach compulsory school age. The funding is not means tested. It is payable to children attending a private day nursery, pre-school, children's centre, independent school, or a child minder that is registered through Ofsted and included on the local authority's Directory of Providers to receive the funding.

Full details can be found on the links below.

[30-hours-free-childcare](#)

[Free childcare: How we are tackling the cost of childcare](#)

From September 2024, 15 hours childcare support will be extended to eligible working parents of children from the age of 9 months to 3-year-olds, use this weblink www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. This support can be used over 38 weeks of the year or up to 52 weeks if you use fewer than your total hours per week.

From September 2025, eligible working parents of children from 9 months to school age will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare a week.

Extended offer

Parents of three and four-year olds will need to meet the following criteria in order to be eligible for an additional 15 hours of childcare, bringing the total to 30 hours free childcare:

- They earn or expect to earn the equivalent to 16 hours at National Minimum or Living Wage over the coming three months.
- This equates to £120 a week (or c.£6,000 a year) for each parent over 25 years old or £112.80 a week (or c.£5,800 a year) for each parent between 21 and 24 years old.
- This applies whether you are in paid employment, self-employed or on zero hours contract.
- The parent (and their partner where applicable) should be seeking the free childcare to enable them to work.
- Where one or both parents are on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave, or if they are on statutory sick leave.
- Where one parent meets the income criteria and the other is unable to work because they are disabled, have caring responsibilities or have been assessed as having limited capability to work.
- Where a parent is in a 'start-up period' (i.e. they are newly self-employed) they do not need to demonstrate that they meet the income criteria for 12 months.
- If a non-EEA national, the parent must have recourse to public funds.



A parent will not meet the criteria when:

- Either parent has an income of more than £100,000
- Either parent is a non-EEA national and subject to immigration control (and has no recourse to public funds)

What happens if a parent no longer qualifies for 30 hours?

Parents will receive a “grace period” – this means they will be able to keep their childcare for a short period. Once the “grace period” has elapsed, the parent will only be entitled to the universal 15 Hour Entitlement.

When can my child get funded nursery education?

A child born on or between	Will become eligible for a free place from
1st April and 31st December	The start of the term beginning on or following 1st September after the child’s third birthday
1st September and 31st December	The start of the term beginning on or following 1st January after the child’s third birthday
1st January and 31st March	The start of the term beginning on or following 1st April after the child’s third birthday

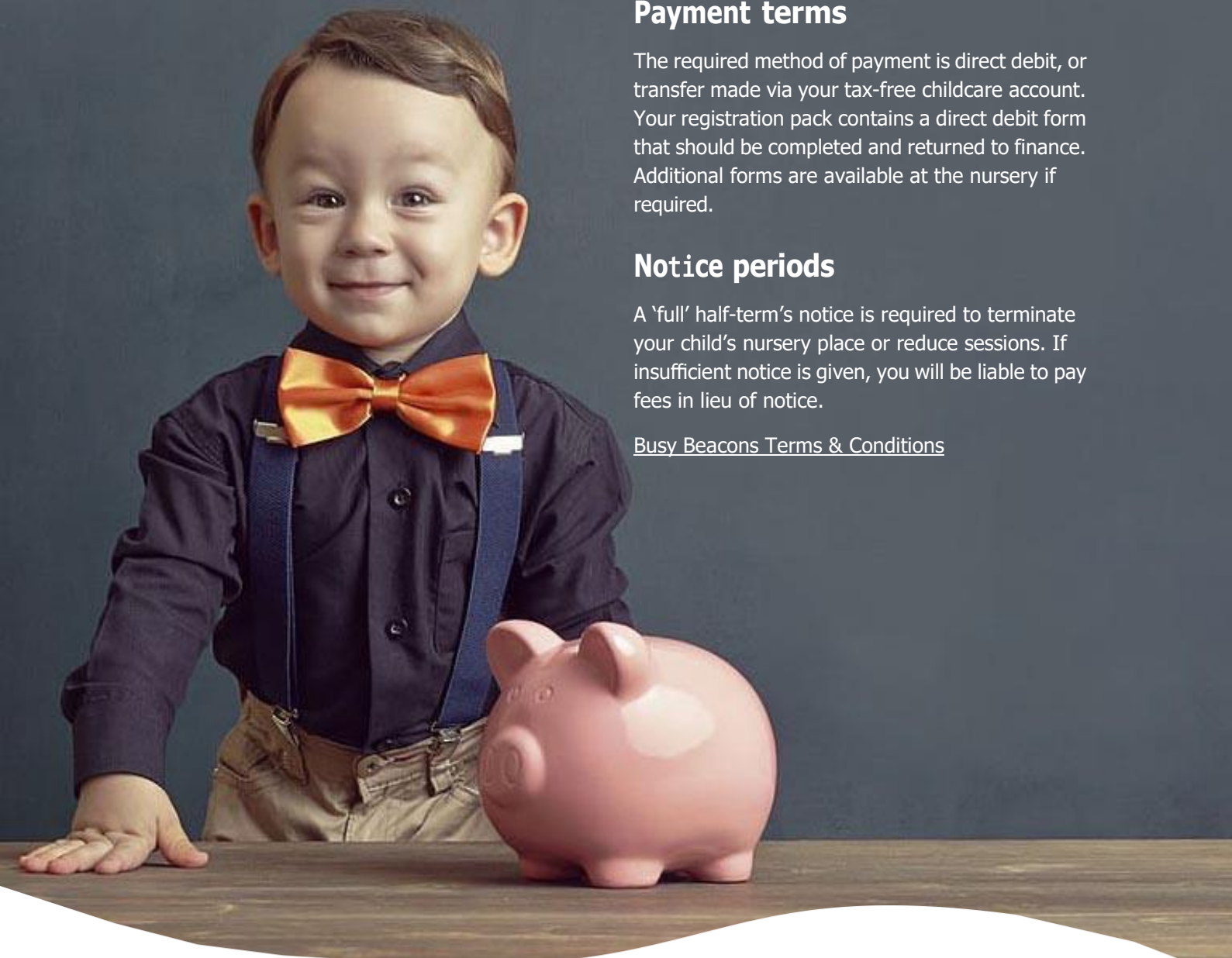
Payment terms

The required method of payment is direct debit, or transfer made via your tax-free childcare account. Your registration pack contains a direct debit form that should be completed and returned to finance. Additional forms are available at the nursery if required.

Notice periods

A ‘full’ half-term’s notice is required to terminate your child’s nursery place or reduce sessions. If insufficient notice is given, you will be liable to pay fees in lieu of notice.

[Busy Beacons Terms & Conditions](#)



Policies and Procedures

Click [here](#) to view

Frequently Asked Questions

1) Is the nursery registered with Ofsted?

It is a legal requirement for nursery settings to be registered with Ofsted.

2) Does my child have to attend the nursery for 5 full days?

You can enrol for as many days as you require.

3) Is payment of fees taken from my salary? If not, how is payment made?

Fees will be invoiced to you one month in advance, you can set up a direct debit.

4) Will the nursery be offering free funding?

- You may be eligible for 30 hours free childcare if your child is 3 to 4 years old. [30-hours-free-childcare](#)
- You may be eligible for 30 hours of free childcare per week for 38 weeks of the year (during school term time).

From September 2024, 15 hours childcare support will be extended to eligible working parents of children from the age of 9 months to 3-year-olds, use this weblink www.childcarechoices.gov.uk. This support can be used over 38 weeks of the year or up to 52 weeks if you use fewer than your total hours per week.

From September 2025, eligible working parents of children from 9 months to school age will be entitled to 30 hours of childcare a week.

- [Free childcare how we tackling the cost of childcare](#)

If you are eligible for any of the childcare funding the nursery will be registered to accept this funding and offset against your nursery fees.

5) Will the nursery be registered for tax free childcare?

The nursery will be registered for tax free childcare, please check your eligibility using the link [Tax free childcare](#) if eligible you can sign up using the same link.

6) Do you offer a discount on siblings?

Each child requires the same level of support, and we have to ensure our adult/child ratios are compliant, this is factored into the not for profit day rate, therefore a sibling discount cannot be offered.



Frequently Asked Questions

7) Can I pay extra for breakfast or tea?

In addition to the am/pm snacks and lunch, which are included in the day rate, there will be a breakfast/tea option, this will be charged at an additional £3 per meal. You are not able to bring food into the nursery yourself, as we have children with allergies, with the exception of baby formula.

8) Are half days available?

We do not offer half day sessions. You are able to drop off your child at a time which suits you and collect your child early if you wish to, but you will be charged for a full day.

9) Am I able to drop off my child after 7.30am and collect before 5:30pm?

You can drop off and collect your child at the times which suit you, but you are still required to pay for a full day.

10) If my child is unwell, or does not attend for any other reason, do I still need to pay for the day? Fees are charged a month in advance and will not be refunded if your child is absent.

11) Are you term time only or is a holiday club available?

We are term time only and there are no plans for a holiday club at the moment.

12) What happens if my child doesn't settle?

We will work with you to create a settling plan that is best for your child.

13) Are parents able to come in for stay and play sessions?

We will be offering stay and play sessions after the first term that may suit your working pattern but will limit the number of adults per session.

14) Which app will be used to keep me informed of my child's day?

Tapestry is the app that we use.

[Tapestry](#)





T: 0208418 2607 E: admin@busybeacons.co.uk
www.busybeacons.co.uk