



**Welcome to Acorn Class
Bishops Down Nursery School**





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Welcome to Bishops Down School

Bishops Down Nursery School is a sessional nursery, led by qualified teachers, for children aged 3-4 years old. We are very proud of our provision and, we believe, we offer our children the best start possible.

Our Nursery School - Acorn Class - is on the same wonderful site as Bishops Down Primary School and the children get to enjoy and share the amazing grounds, facilities and dedicated staff.

The Nursery provides a stimulating, exciting, secure and friendly learning environment where every child's contribution is valued. We aim to give each child a sense of achievement and success. Through practical activity children broaden their growing understanding of the world.

Our Values

We want everyone in our school to be:

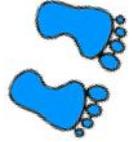


- Encouraging, kind, caring and inclusive
- Happy, confident and excited
- Unique and independent whilst able to learn together as a team

Our Vision

We want our children to:

- Learn together and fulfill their potential, laying the foundations for a lifelong journey of discovery and exploration
- Enjoy learning through an active and challenging curriculum



Our School Ethos

At Bishops Down we are committed to accepting and respecting individual difference. Pupils of all ages and stages are encouraged to challenge their own limits and be the best they can be.

We encourage independence from the earliest years, expecting children to be active participants in the learning process. Activities offer children opportunities to think, plan, choose and make decisions - to do, then to reflect, review and evaluate experiences.

We work within a caring and supportive framework which facilitates educational endeavor and rigor. We celebrate achievements before setting off on new targets. We are great believers in the 'I can', in empowerment.

Children thrive on success. At Bishops Down we aim to enable children to identify and build on their strengths and learn to succeed.





Aims of the Nursery Class

We aim to provide a stimulating, exciting, secure and friendly learning environment where each child's contribution is valued.

We aim to encourage language skills and pre-reading and writing skills. Through practical activity we aim to develop early Mathematical and Scientific skills.

We aim to foster an enjoyment of music and drama, to develop physical skills and to stimulate imagination and motor skills through Art and Design. We aim to give each child a sense of achievement and success and therefore raise self-esteem.

We aim to broaden each child's growing understanding of the world and to encourage the spirit of joy and wonder.

At our school we take children from early childhood to early adolescence - an exciting, challenging and fulfilling journey of development in spiritual, personal, moral, physical, academic and aesthetic education.





The Early Years

These are special years. Our emphasis at this stage is on learning through play. The casual observer might consider that children are merely playing with sand, dough, bricks and so on. The children are in fact working hard to make sense of and to master their environment.

As educators we aim to provide a stimulating learning environment which encourages skill development. Appropriate interventions from adults ensure that language development takes place and that early concepts are instilled as skills are mastered. Our role is also to share the joy and wonder of the world around us and to encourage the enjoyment that discovery brings.

The Early Years Team comprises of teachers and teaching assistants. The Nursery and Reception classes work very closely together to ensure continuity and progression within the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum through planning and assessment.

Nursery Sessions

We can offer all children the universal 15 hours in nursery and also the extended 15 hours – a total of 30 hours - if you are eligible. We know how important it is to support working parents. We can take up to twenty-six children in each nursery session. The morning sessions run from 8.45am to 11.45am, the afternoon sessions run from 12.30pm - 3.30pm and full day sessions run from 8.45am to 3.30pm. To find out if you are eligible for extended 15 hours of funding please go to:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>



Extra Buy In Sessions

If you are using all your universal 15 hours and are not entitled to the extended hours then you can buy sessions. These are payable in advance and are £15.00 per session (£5.00 per hour). You can secure the same sessions each week for a whole term or you can book them on an ad-hoc basis – whatever suits your circumstances. Extra sessions are only available if the nursery is not full.

Nursery Lunch Club

Lunch is from 11.45am to 12.30pm each day. The cost for lunch club is £3.75 for the care element and you can either provide your child with a packed lunch or you can purchase them a cooked school dinner. If your child is with us all day (morning and afternoon session) you can collect them at 11.45am and return them at 12.30pm if you do not wish to pay for Lunch Club. If your child is here for just the morning or just the afternoon you can also tag on a school lunch.

Breakfast and After School Club

Our school's Wrap Around Care facilities offer all children the chance to join their breakfast club and their after school club. Breakfast club starts at 7.50am and children from Nursery can join After School Club from 3.30pm until 6.00pm. Further details are available from the school office and there is a WAC leaflet in your starter pack.

The Nursery Team

Bishops Down Nursery is led by a fully qualified teacher. The teacher is supported by qualified teaching assistants. Children with physical difficulties are supported by experienced assistants who assist with academic as well as physical management programmes under the guidance of the physiotherapist and SENCO.



An Overview of the Nursery Curriculum

Our Nursery follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum (EYFS).

There are seven areas of learning and development with prime and specific areas which provide a balance of opportunities allowing the children to work towards the Early Learning Goals of the revised EYFS 2012 (Early Years Foundation Stage). It seeks to provide:

- Quality and consistency
- A secure foundation
- Partnership working
- Equality of opportunity

The revised EYFS 2014 has replaced the EYFS 2012. The EYFS areas are interconnected to characteristics of effective learning which are:

- Playing and Exploring
- Active Learning
- Creating and thinking critically





All areas of learning within the Development Matters document are underpinned by four guiding themes and their principles:

- Positive Relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and Development

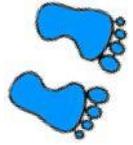
The areas are:

Prime Areas (work together to support development in all other areas)

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific Areas (essential skills and knowledge)

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design



The Prime Areas

Communication and Language

The Nursery language curriculum is delivered on a daily basis. This is topic linked whenever relevant. Speaking and listening skills are developed through daily discussion which is often geared to the weekly topic theme at circle time, in small groups or individually. The children are encouraged to discuss and describe ideas, events, feelings and so on. They are encouraged to report, reason and ask questions and listen to others talking.

Listening skills, auditory discrimination and auditory memory are developed through rhymes, songs, stories and games.

Physical development

The children will have opportunities to climb on, over, in through large apparatus when the children may concentrate on finding interesting and unusual ways of travelling or they may follow a simple instruction, for example backwards/ forwards. They have opportunities to watch each other and to comment on what they have seen. The children also have opportunities to use small/ large balls, bats, bean bags and hoops.





Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Our Nursery setting provides experiences and support to enable children to develop a positive sense of themselves by:

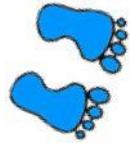
- Establishing constructive relationships with the children, taking account of differences, different needs and expectations.
- Finding opportunities to give positive encouragement by acting as positive role models.
- Planning for children to work alone and in small and large groups.
- Ensuring that there is time and space for children to focus on activities and experiences and develop their own interests.
- Providing positive images in, for example, books and displays that challenge children's thinking and help them to embrace differences in gender, ethnicity, religion, special educational needs and disabilities.

The Specific Areas

Literacy: Reading and Writing

Visual skills, visual discrimination and visual memory are developed through games and activities which enable the children to see similarities and differences.

Fine motor skills are developed through games and activities which concentrate on hand-eye co-ordination leading onto handwriting patterns, letter formation and the beginnings of emergent creative writing.



Children are encouraged to enjoy books and become familiar with how to handle them. They learn that words and pictures carry meaning and that print is read from left to right. They are asked to predict and project and to recall stories read as a class, group or individually. The weekly story allows individuals to choose a story from home and to explain why they have chosen that particular story.

Mathematics: Number, Shape, Space and Measure

The Nursery Numeracy curriculum is delivered on a daily basis.

Visual skills, visual discrimination and visual memory are developed through games and activities which enable the children to see similarities and differences.

The children have opportunities to experience the following through games and activities:-

- Sorting for colour, shape, size and type and naming these.
- Sub-setting.
- Ordering, matching and pairing.
- Comparing the size, shape, length, mass (weight) and capacity of objects.
- Developing an awareness of time.



The development of spatial awareness and hand-eye co-ordination through, for example puzzles and threading.

- Experience of number through games and activities involving counting one to one correspondence, recognition of numerals, making sets, matching numerals to the sets, ordering the sets and comparing equivalent and non-equivalent sets. Through number songs and rhymes the children are introduced to the concepts of addition and subtraction.
- Other mathematical experiences are geared to the weekly topic theme, discussed during planning or circle time on a daily basis. Weekly themes give the children the opportunity to bring contributions from home. For example the theme 'Ordering objects for size' enabled children to bring in Russian dolls which were then ordered for size as a class group and individually.

Understanding the world: People and Communities

Scientific experiences are offered on a daily basis in the nursery. The children have opportunities to develop their understanding of scientific concepts through problem solving, discovering similarities and differences, classifying, learning simple cause/effect relationships, looking at the properties of sand, water and various materials, opportunities to experiment with different forces, gaining an understanding of the nature/ function of familiar/unfamiliar items.

Daily sand and water tray activities may be topic or non-topic related or chosen by the children when planning for the session.

Other scientific experiences are geared to the weekly topic theme. These are often discussed during planning or circle time on a daily basis. The weekly theme gives the children the opportunity to bring contributions from home. For example a balloon was brought in for the theme 'changing the size of an object'. The children discussed how they could change the size of the balloon.



They did this with a pin. We then followed this up with a balloon that was not blown up and discussed how its size could be changed.

Technological experiences are offered through craft and construction activities. These may be related to a theme or chosen by the children during the planning session.

Children have access to a computer and other forms of ICT, including a digital camera and the use of an Interactive Whiteboard. We also have access to a set of i-pads.

The children are encouraged to share and show respect for others as well as self-respect. They develop an understanding of what is right, what is wrong and why. They learn about relevant cultural and religious events.

The children are encouraged to talk about themselves, their environment and their families and past and present events in their own lives.





Expressive arts and design: Exploring and using media and materials, being imaginative

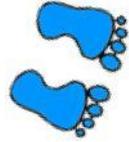
Music is offered on a daily basis through singing, rhymes and action songs. The children have the opportunity to use instruments to develop an understanding of rhythm patterns and to listen and move to music.

Children have access to art activities and materials and they have daily opportunities to engage with activities planned for them and planned by themselves. These may involve paint, glue and could be 2/3D.



Contributions from home

The children may be asked to bring contributions from home relating to a theme. There is a monthly learning letter on the notice board outside the nursery for you to read (also sent home via ParentMail) reinforcing these requests. It is important that you do read the notices on a regular basis to enable your child to become more involved in what is happening in his/her Nursery. There are sometimes other relevant notices on the notice board, please read those as well.



Please ask your child if she/he has been asked to bring in anything first of all, as remembering a message from school is a first-step towards independence.

There is also a stories from home poster on the notice board which invites two children each week to bring in a story from home. Please name any books children bring to school. Discourage your child from bringing toys to school as we cannot be responsible for any losses or breakages. Encourage the children instead to bring relevant or unusual exciting items to school which relate to our learning.

The Home School Partnership

Learning begins long before school starts. We acknowledge parents as the child's first teachers. At school we aim to continue the learning in partnership with parents. Each child will be given a "Marvelous Me Book", this is an opportunity for your child to record experiences from home, these could be drawings, photos, brochures etc.

This is achieved through regular informal and formal consultation through a sharing of knowledge, next steps and celebrations of achievement. You will be offered an initial consultation, and a further two formal consultations where written and verbal feedback are given.

Please let us know if you have a worry or concern and the teacher will arrange a suitable time to talk with you.



During your child's time with us we compile a detailed learning journey for them. This year we will be introducing a new online journal called Tapestry to Nursery and Reception. This will allow parents to view photos and observations on a smartphone/tablet or computer as well as uploading your own contributions.



Clothing & Outdoors

Please dress your child in practical clothes. We encourage independence right from the start and children use paint, glue, water, clay or dough freely. The Nursery provides aprons.





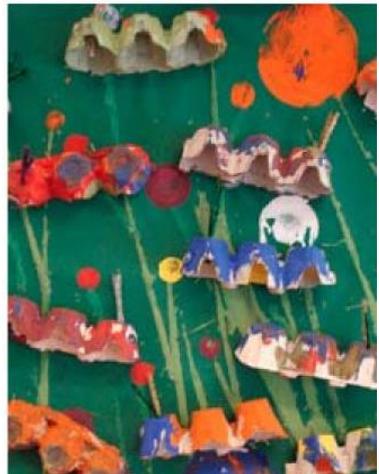
Being and learning outdoors is vital to your child's development. We are firm believers that there is no bad weather only bad clothing. The children will have access to the outdoors nearly all the time. We ask that the children have a raincoat and wellies at school at all times whenever possible. The children will need outdoor coats and shoes every day. Again please ensure these are named!!

Recycling Resources in the Nursery

In the long-term please look out for any of the following for us:

1. Dressing-up clothes, hats and shoes.
Bikes, bikes with stabilisers, trucks and push-alongs for outdoor play.
2. Old sheets and duvet covers for painted background drops to display.
3. Material suitable for display.

Please would you save items for art and craft activities, especially exciting textures and bright colours.





We receive many boxes, yoghurt pots etc. but are often short of the following:-

- Rice, pasta etc.
- String, rope, thread (different colours/ thicknesses).
- Wool.
- Ribbon.
- Corks. Pipe cleaners.
- Straw/hay/sawdust/wood shavings.
- Plastic bottle tops (from drinking bottles, bubble bath, shampoo bottles etc).
- Paper bags (all sizes).
- Coloured cellophane.
- Straws.
- Sweet wrappers.
- Coloured shredded paper.
- Feathers.
- Lolly sticks.
- Paper/card.
- Pizza bases.
- Material.
- Dried flowers/leaves/seeds/ pods.
- Used party poppers and their contents.
- Used stamps
- Margarine tubs with lids (to contain glue)

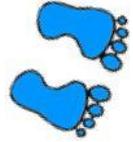




Parking

Please do not park in the turning circle at the bottom of the school drive and the school car park if for staff only. Most parents do act sensibly, but the few who don't cause severe frustration and congestion and put our children at risk. School trips can also be delayed if the coach cannot get in.

If you have been issued with a disability blue badge please do let the office staff know and arrangements can be made.



Absence

If your child is absent from school please telephone the office, 01892 520114 as soon as possible to let us know. Regular attendance at Nursery helps your child develop a routine.

If your child is due to attend lunch club and an afternoon session please let the office know of absence by 9:30am. We do not encourage Nursery children to take a holiday during term-time although we appreciate that sometimes this is unavoidable. If this is the case you will need write a letter or email the school office with the dates your child will not be attending. It is not statutory that your child attends nursery however Bishops Down does require regular attendance in order for your place to be maintained.

Communication

Please watch the Nursery notice board and Nursery Newsletter for up-to-date information. The whole school newsletter will keep you informed about what is going on also throughout the school. The school email is: office@bishops-down.kent.sch.uk.

All nursery sessions, change of sessions, lunch club and buy in sessions are organised by Jo Sheldon, Admissions Secretary. Please contact her for all enquiries regarding the above. Her email is: jsheldon@bishops-down.kent.sch.uk.

We have a very active PSA who organise seasonal events and raise considerable amounts of money for the school. They will make contact with you when you start.



We look forward to welcoming you to our school and nursery and hope that you and your child will be very happy at our school.