

The Column Nursery is set in a single storey building surrounded by a playground and forest school area, conveniently situated on the edge of Shrewsbury.

Babies and children are cared for in a safe and stimulating environment, complying with the statutory fire, environmental health, Early Years and OFSTED regulations. Our overall aim is for a happy nursery where there is plenty of fun and laughter with hugs and kindness. Staff and families enjoy good relationships. Our children thrive in our happy, homely environment.

Parents are welcome at all times and encouraged to participate in their children's lives at nursery. We look forward to welcoming new children and their families and continuing this tradition of very special care. Most summers we have a BBQ and fete, providing a social evening for families and staff.

We can offer 24U funded places and free nursery education for 3 & 4 year olds.

We aim to provide a happy and stimulating environment and we like the children to think of the Column Nursery as a 'home from home'. Parents are very welcome to come into nursery and see their child's work on display and look at photographs taken of activities and see the ongoing achievements of their child in their personal file.

The children have a large, light room with specially equipped areas for messy play and art and craft activities, and spaces for role play, reading, cooking, and music, construction, small world, mark-making, drawing and early writing. There is a separate room for young babies and it includes a quiet space to sleep.

The children have the option of going outside freely during the day to work in our outdoor quiet area, or the forest school, or sand and water play with the support of our qualified and experienced staff.

We have a large playground for playing in the fresh air, enjoying wheeled toys, running, sports and games, time for chatting and gardening in our special quiet area which has benches and tables and pretty flowers, investigating and exploring the natural world in forest school. The children go outside as much as possible each day all year round, but especially during the summer months, when we play in the shade under the trees, cool off in the paddling pool and have a picnic tea in the garden.

Opening times, holidays and fees

- We are open from 7.45am – 6pm Monday – Friday.
- We are closed between Christmas and New Year, and for all statutory Bank Holidays.

Fees are payable by the 10th of each month, invoices are issued on the 1st of each month.

Fees can be paid by cash, cheque, BACS payment.

No fees are payable for bank holidays and the Christmas holiday; dates are published through our regular newsletter.

Half fees will be charged as a retainer for family holidays. These *must* be booked using a holiday form a month in advance so that we can invoice you correctly.

Your child is at risk of losing his/her place if you do not pay your fees in full each month.

Staff

Led by a teacher and Early Years Professional, our staff are experienced, qualified, and committed to the care and welfare of children; some of them are mothers (and grandmothers!) themselves. Our staff have been working at The Column for many years and provide continuity of care for families.

We have part time staff, who work regularly and know the children and staff well. They cover for staff who are on holiday or attending training or off sick. Staff work to the following ratio's; in the baby room, 0-2 years; 1 adult to every 3 babies, toddler room, 2-3 years; 1 adult to every 4 children, preschool room, 3-5 years; 1 adult to every 8 children.

Training

All our staff are qualified. We continue our professional development through short training courses; staff undertake mandatory courses such as first aid, food handling, and safeguarding, as well as training for activities / curriculum, safety, behaviour management and others.

Safety and Security

Your child will not be allowed to leave nursery with someone unknown to our staff unless previous written arrangements have been made, this can include the use of a password agreed between you and the person collecting and advising nursery of its use.

Please drive slowly into the car park when dropping off or collecting your child to keep children, staff and other parents safe. When walking through the pedestrian gate please ensure that it is closed and bolted behind you.

Settling in to nursery

Parents are offered the opportunity to visit and stay and play with their child prior to the child's start date to enable both child and parent to build a relationship with staff and become familiar with the new surroundings and other children. We suggest short visits of an hour or two prior to starting nursery initially with parents in attendance and then the child on their own. Your child will have a key person who will take time to talk with you and find out about your child's preferences and complete an All About Me form to start our records.

Record Keeping

We keep personal records for each child, making observations which show stages of development and helping us to plan the next steps for each child, records of any concerns, and photographs of activities and your child's participation, parents are welcome to share these records at any time and also to contribute to them. These records are maintained and updated regularly by us until your child moves to on school. Progress checks are made for all children at regular intervals. We also keep plans of activities daily and weekly, which are on display.

Learning through play

Our nursery curriculum provides a firm foundation for later learning. At the Column Nursery our staff team aim to work together, in partnership with parents, carers and

the local community and other agencies. We aim to provide the very best possible care and education for all the children. The Column Nursery offers a high level of childcare in a calm and caring atmosphere. It is essential that a consistent code of conduct and discipline is maintained. Difficult behaviour will be managed with a considerate and constructive approach. Parents will be included in discussion and strategies.

The groups integrate during the day which offers extended learning opportunities for all ages and engenders the family atmosphere. Our activities are based upon individual interests, freedom to explore, promoting developmental learning, social skills and care.

When babies first start at nursery we follow the routine you have developed at home for each child or can help you to develop a new routine if required. This often changes as the child gets older and develops new skills.

The babies and toddlers have an individual daily diary completed, detailing all that has happened during the day, including all that they have eaten and drunk, nappy changes, the time and the length of their naps and so forth.

We give the children a wide range of activities and experiences including messy play such as shaving foam or gloop. The textures and properties of these activities make for fun experiences. Shaving foam can be spread on the table and we draw patterns and shapes into it. We also paint, chalk, draw, play with dough and cook. Some of the art work is part of our wall displays, and some is sent home. We follow the interests of the children and introduce activities to develop their knowledge and interest further.

Preschool

Three year old children can claim free nursery education sessions in our preschool. All children become eligible for 15 hours per week from the term after their third birthday. Please ask for more details about claiming this entitlement for your child.

We focus on the children's own interests and developing projects.

We offer opportunities in preschool which extend the knowledge, understanding and skills of young children by learning through play and carefully introduced new experiences, such as watching caterpillars turn into butterflies. We also have visitors to nursery for example the librarian, police, dental health or visits out to the park, the library or into town for special events using public transport buses.

The Column Nursery's curriculum is based on play activities and experience. The children are encouraged to think and talk about their learning and to develop self-control and independence. They develop a sense of achievement through pleasurable and rewarding experiences.

We understand that children progress at different rates. At the Column Nursery all children are given the opportunity of developing their full potential. Children with additional needs or special educational needs are welcome to attend and we will work with other professionals to ensure the needs of the child are met.

We discuss activities and events at nursery, in the community and at home to encourage speaking and listening skills, we find that sharing photographs or objects can enhance their speech and language development. Photographs are taken regularly of activities to share events and fun times and displayed via a digital

photograph frame and printed for inclusion in our records. We also include photographs in our displays and in picture frames around nursery.

Outings and walks

We take the children out on short walks in the community, to see the changes in the seasons at The Reabrook, visit the play-park, enjoy different spaces, visit shops and local people.

Occasionally the oldest children make educational trips into town on the local bus; you will be given a letter about the trip, its purpose, length of time out of nursery, travelling arrangements and be asked to give your permission for your child to attend.

Transition to school

Our preschool prepares children for entry to school; children go to St Giles, Coleham, Springfield, Crowmoor and other primary schools across Shrewsbury and the wider area. We help children to gain the skills and confidence they need to start school, such as being part of a larger group, taking turns and speaking and listening, asking questions, playing with others, leading activities, recognising and writing their own name, counting, pouring their own drinks and eating with others using the cutlery correctly and taking part in conversation around a dinner table.

Staff can also help with the transition to school, talking about school, reading stories, and sharing relevant information with the child's new teacher. Your child's file of achievements to date and development records will be given to you to share with your child's new teacher at school.

Holiday Club

We also offer holiday care and activities for primary school aged children, open on P.D. days and during school holidays. Please ask for our leaflet for more details and activities.

Belongings at nursery

Please label all your child's clothes, bag, shoes, Wellingtons, coat, etc, as it does make it easier to return items left behind. Your child will have his/her own peg in the hall for a coat and bag, please send in nappies/ wipes/spare clothes and a pair of Wellington boots for outside play and a pair of slippers for wearing inside. We suggest a drawstring bag for their belongings. In the summer your child will also require a sun hat.

If your child has a special comforter to help them go to sleep, or in the early days of settling in to nursery they are welcome to bring it, but please avoid bringing in lots of toys.

Sick children

We endeavour to comfort and care for any child taken ill during the day; however, we cannot take responsibility for a child arriving at nursery with a high temperature or other symptoms.

- Parents are notified if there is an infectious disease such as chicken pox via a notice on the door.
- We cannot provide care for children who have an infectious disease or sickness and diarrhoea. Children or adults who have these symptoms must stay away from nursery for a minimum of 24 hours **after** the last symptom has cleared.
- Staff are trained to give emergency first aid

Medicine

A form must be completed with a member of staff giving parental permission for staff to administer medicine. We are happy to care for children with long term conditions, and undertake any extra training that maybe necessary to administer medicines.

Food

Shropshire council have awarded us a GOLD healthy eating award. We prepare lunch and snacks on the premises on a daily basis, using fresh fruit and vegetables. Meals for babies are adapted on an individual basis i.e. it can be blended or mashed according to stage and preference.

Vegetarian options are also provided. Please discuss any other dietary requirements with your child's key person or the manager we will do our best to accommodate them and ensure your child has the diet he/she needs.

We encourage good table manners and the correct use of a plate and cutlery. The children will also be encouraged to use an open beaker as their confidence and skills progress.

Compliments, comments and concerns.

We are happy to hear about things that have pleased you about the nursery, for example; the way a member of staff reacted to a situation, activities your child has enjoyed or something we have helped you with.

If parents have any worries or concerns they are welcome to discuss them at any time. The staff and/or manager will have a chat with you at either end of your child's session and can speak to you on the telephone during the day.

Parents who wish to make a complaint about anything relating to the nursery can, in the first instance, discuss it with the manager, Kay Rogers, who, in the majority of cases, will immediately be able to rectify any problems to the satisfaction of the parents. If this does not provide a satisfactory outcome you should write to the proprietor Mrs Vanessa Doran, who will respond within 20 days in accordance with our policy.