



Elmore Kindergarten Parent Handbook

Last Updated September 2024



Broomhill Nursery

*Rated as a 'Good Provider' of
Childcare by Ofsted in April 2022 and
established for 32 years.*

Ecclesfield Nursery

*Rated as a 'Good Provider' of
Childcare by Ofsted in August 2023
and established for 20 years.*

Middlewood Nursery

*Rated as a 'Good Provider' of
Childcare by Ofsted in April 2023 and
established for 18 years.*

Our latest Ofsted reports and our policies are available to access on our website.

www.elmorekindergarten.com

Dear Parents

Thank you for your interest in Elmore Kindergarten. We aim to provide professional care for children from 3 months to 5 years of age, in a nurturing, stimulating environment which is safe and secure. In this supportive environment your child will be able to learn through play and follow the EYFS curriculum that will help them progress, learn and achieve.

We are always interested in your ideas, concerns, and your support. Communication with parents is critical to our care for your child. We seek to form a partnership with you to ensure your child's and family's individual needs and concerns are met.

Your child is about to start nursery, it is a very important stage in your lives and I'm sure that you probably have a lot of questions to ask. I hope that this handbook will answer most of them and help you to prepare yourself and your child for nursery.

Please remember when reading the contents of this handbook that our priorities are your child's safety and happiness. We aim to enable you to leave your child in our care; confident that they will be happy and well looked after, giving you peace of mind. We know that there is large amount of information however we do feel that this is needed so that you are able to make an informed choice.

We encourage prospective parents to visit the nursery to see us in action. The Manager or Deputy will be able to answer all your questions.

Yours sincerely



Richard Marshall
Director

Settling-in

We recognise and understand the worries for both parents and children when beginning their nursery journey. Some children will settle in on their first visit and others will take a little longer to get used to a new environment.

To support you and your child when settling, the nursery administrator/ member of management will contact you before your child's start date to arrange a convenient time for the first settling in session. The number of settling in sessions will then be discussed and agreed with you during your first visit. We aim to achieve this smooth process by offering three one hour settling in visits (any additional hours will need to be paid for) to help your child to settle in.

Prior to your child's settling in visit please complete the "All about Me" online form that will be provided to you on enrolment or is accessible on our website. This allows the staff in the room to begin to learn about your child's needs. 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.

Nursery Needs

The nursery provides all educational materials, bedding, refreshments, snacks, breakfast, lunch, and afternoon tea. You only need to bring with you a spare set of clothes (or more if your child is toilet training) and any personal items, such as a comforter or favourite teddy, which your child may require. As well as a water bottle if you wish. These should all be placed in the child's nursery bag.

Parents with very young children will also need to provide, nappy creams and formula/breast milk. Children will regularly take part in messy activities involving paint, glue, etc., so should not be brought to nursery in their best clothes. The nursery supplies nappies and wipes throughout your child's time at nursery.

Children will also spend time in the garden every day so suitable seasonal clothing is essential, for example, a warm coat, hat and gloves in the winter months, and sun hat and cream (minimum SPF 30) in the summer months. All items must be clearly marked with your child's name. Unfortunately, we cannot take responsibility for lost personal items.

The Key Person Approach

You will often hear the phrase 'key person' in the nursery. Whilst the children are cared for in groups, it is important that we meet the individual needs of your child and ensure that he/she has an opportunity to bond with one 'special person' at the nursery.

It is also important that you have a specific person whom you can get to know and share information with about your child. Each child is assigned a key person at the settling in stage. It is their role to share information with you about your child and ensure that your child's individual needs are being met. The key person will observe your child and plan for his/her learning and development and make assessments on progress as well as planning for your child's next steps within their learning journey.

Partnership with Parents

We aim to make your child's experience of nursery life as positive as possible. To achieve this, it is important that we communicate effectively with you and build positive relationships between you and the nursery team.

Parents are regarded as members of our nursery who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be valued and respected, kept informed, consulted, and involved and included at all levels.

The nursery aims to see parent as partners in helping each child to learn and develop. As well as enabling parent help to shape the service the nursery offers.

Policies & Procedures

All our policies and procedures are found on our Elmore Kindergarten website all information regarding safeguarding, health and safety, medical information, behaviour management, SEND, complaints and various other aspects of nursery life can be found within these. Please see below for a list of policies and visit the Parent Hub section of our website to access and read them in full.

- [Our Vision & Values](#)
- [Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#)
- [SEND Policy](#)
- [Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Health & Safety \(inc. First Aid\) Policy](#)
- [Healthy Eating Policy](#)
- [Outdoor Visits Policy/Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Policy/Procedure](#)
- [GDPR Policy](#)

Terms & Conditions

Full terms and conditions for the nurseries can be found in the Parent Hub section of the website. These will be shared with you upon enrolment for

you to ensure you have fully read and agree, prior to your child starting nursery.

Enrolment

Parents must complete and sign an online 'Enrolment Form', detailing in full contact details, any health, dietary, medical, medicinal, allergic, or other special needs, and the sessions required.

A minimum of 10 hours or two sessions per week are required. Elmore Kindergarten uses 'Family', a children's nursery management software, accessible via a Family App which allows you access to your child's Learning Journey, invoice information, nursery news and is a way of communicating with the nursery and your child's key person.

All contact details for both parents or those with parental responsibility, and emergency contact details must be fully completed and kept up to date by parents on the Family App. Remaining information from the 'Enrolment Form' is the responsibility of the nursery to complete. Emergency contact numbers: a minimum of three emergency contact numbers must be included in the enrolment form as soon as the child joins the nursery, and any changes must be notified immediately.

Days & Opening Times

The nurseries are open Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 6:00pm, 51 weeks a year, closing on all statutory Bank Holidays and for one week over the Christmas/New Year period. No charge is made for the Christmas/New Year period, inclusive of the Bank Holidays that week covers. Please see full year calendar on our website for details of term time dates and half-terms. Please be aware that term time only children start back a week later than the schools start back in the Autumn Term.

Session Times

Early Morning Session: should you require additional childcare in the morning from 07:30am to 08:00am, this should be arranged as part of your child's Booking Plan. Places are limited and subject to availability. Unless you have pre-booked an early start you may be asked to not enter the rooms with your child until your start time due to staff ratios.

Morning Session: 08:00am till 13:00pm this includes breakfast, morning snack, lunch, and dessert.

Afternoon Session: 13:00pm till 18:00pm this includes afternoon snack and tea.

School Day Session: 08:30am till 16:00pm this includes morning snack, lunch, dessert, and afternoon snack.

Communication

Daily feedback about your child's day at nursery is provided through the Family app and/or verbal feedback, depending on your child's day. Please feel free to discuss any issues with your child's key person at any time. A concern can often be easily resolved by talking about it at an early stage.

In addition, the nursery manager should be able to address any concerns that you may have within an effective timescale please do not hesitate to reach out to the management team at your child's nursery.

Parent Consultation Meetings

We hold termly parent catch up meetings to update you on the progress of your child and these are held either over zoom or in person. The nursery will give you notice of when these will occur to allow you to book in an appropriate time slot. We welcome any suggestions or feedback from you regarding all aspects of the nursery. Please feel free to discuss any ideas with us.

Arrivals & Departure

It is our ethos to give a warm welcome to each child and parents on their arrival. Parents are requested to pass the care of their child to a specific member of staff who will ensure the child's safety, and that their attendance is recorded on Family.

Please ensure that any changes concerning your child's routine, health or other requirements are passed on to the staff. If a child is not brought to the nursery on a day when s/he is normally present, the parent must inform the nursery manager by 10am the reason for the absence and the expected date of return. For lunch time sessions, parents must ensure that the child is present at the nursery by no later than 11.15am, to ensure that the appropriate preparations have been made to accommodate the child.

If the child is not to be collected by the parent at the end of the session, an agreed procedure must be followed to identify the nominated adult. Parents must inform the nursery of the name, physical description and agreed password of the nominated adult prior to the collection time. Should parents fail to do so, staff have the right to refuse collection of the child until this is confirmed by the parent. Any person collecting must be a minimum of 16 years of age and must be a nominated person.

The nursery must close promptly at 6pm and you should arrange to arrive in time to collect your child and exit the premises by no later than 6pm. In the event of an unavoidable delay please telephone the

nursery and inform staff. The nursery reserves the right to charge for attendance outside the agreed hours. If you have made no contact to the nursery within 30 minutes (6.30pm) after closing time, staff will have no choice but to contact Sheffield Safeguarding Hub.

If a parent appears to be under the influence of drugs or showing signs of inebriation, then nursery staff reserve the right to prevent the child from leaving our care. Staff will make all efforts to contact an alternative carer however should this not be possible then Sheffield Safeguarding Hub will be contacted.

Joint Parental Responsibility

In the event of a family dispute between parents, there are clear legal procedures that childcare providers must follow: parents who are married have equal rights over their child (joint parental responsibility), unless we are informed otherwise by way of a court order or through social services.

Fees

Fees are payable monthly in advance and are payable in cases of absence, and there is no reduction for sickness or holidays taken during any week the nursery is open. In cases of a termination of contract, 4 weeks written notice must be given to the nursery manager. Further information on fees can be found on our website.

Childcare Grant

If you are a full-time student with a dependent child, you may be entitled to the childcare grant. The childcare grant is money to help you pay for childcare costs while you are a full-time student. The amount you get will depend on your household income and your actual childcare costs. Please contact your education provider to enquire about this.

Universal Credits

You may also be able to get assistance with fees through Universal Credits. Please call the HMRC directly on 0800 328 5644 for further details or follow on the link below for further details. <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/contact-universal-credit>

Discounts

Where there is more than one child from the same family attending the nursery a 5% sibling discount will be applied to the eldest child's fees.

Elmore Holiday Club

Elmore does offer a holiday club service throughout the school holidays for children up to the age of eight years old, subject to availability. Please contact your individual nursery for further information

Sickness/Illness

Any child who has, or develops, an infectious illness must be kept at home. This includes conditions such as vomiting, diarrhoea, discharges, conjunctivitis, sore throat, and obvious rashes. To prevent the spread of illness, any child suffering from vomiting or diarrhoea must be kept at home until clear of symptoms for a minimum of 48 hours.

If your child appears unwell when arriving at nursery the staff have the right to ask the parents to resume care at home until well enough to return. We do not give any medication which is not prescribed including liquid paracetamol. If your child starts a new antibiotic, we ask your child is kept at home for the first 24 hours of the course to ensure your child is well enough to return and does not have a reaction to the medication. We do not take sleeping children into the nursery. On arrival to nursery all children must be awake and well to attend nursery this is to safeguard the child and staff.

If a child should develop a high temperature of 38°C or more while they are at nursery, or if your child is displaying other symptoms of being unwell parents will be contacted and requested to collect their child within an hour.

If a child becomes seriously ill or injured during his/her attendance at the nursery, the nursery reserves the right to call for emergency assistance and, if necessary, take him/her to hospital and give permission for emergency treatment to be administered. Please inform us as soon as possible if your child will be absent for a period due to illness.

Fees are payable at the full rate during the period of sickness absence from the nursery. Further information regarding exclusion periods can be found in the Parent Hub section on the Elmore Kindergarten website.

Nursery Outings

As part of their learning and development, children at the nursery undertake a range of local outings including walks and visits etc. off the premises. Permission will be sought for your child to be included in such outings. Outings and visits are planned to complement and enhance the learning opportunities inside the nursery environment and extend play opportunities for children.

Different types of outings take place, and each will require slightly different preparations and staffing levels and include visits to outdoors area, nursery playground, trips on foot, e.g., visits to the park, the library, local markets and places of interest, trips on public transport to places like museums, farms, etc. First aid equipment and any child's personal long-term medication will be taken on the outings.

Three/Four-year-old Funding

3 and 4-year-olds are entitled to 15 hours of free early education each week for 38 weeks of the year. Your child becomes eligible from 1st September, 1st January, or 1st April the term following their 3rd birthday. The nursery applies for this grant on your behalf. Please speak with the nursery for further information.

9mths -Two-year-old Funding

Some children aged 9 months to two-years-old in all local authorities may also be entitled to free early education. To find out if your child is eligible contact your local Family Information Service. The Childcare Choices website contains further information on the childcare grant. www.childcarechoices.gov.uk.

Termination

4 weeks written notice by email or via Family is required from the parent to terminate a child's place in the nursery. Verbal notification to any member of staff will not be accepted.

Where a child's place is terminated by the nursery due to non-payment of fees or other dispute a charge equivalent to 4 week's fees will be made by the nursery in lieu of notice.

In the event of fees or payment payable to Elmore Kindergarten being outstanding for more than one month beyond the due payment date, we reserve the right to immediately suspend care at our discretion. We then in all cases pursue payment plus legal fees through the County Court and additionally reserve the right to charge interest at 8% of the total per month.

Nutrition & Mealtimes

Mealtimes should be a happy, social occasion for children and staff alike. Positive interactions should be shared at these times and enjoyed. Elmore Kindergarten is committed to offering children healthy, nutritious, and balanced meals and snack which meet individual needs and requirements.

We will ensure that:

- A balanced and healthy breakfast, midday meal, tea and two daily snacks are provided for children attending a full day at nursery.
- We will provide nutritious food at all snack and mealtimes, avoiding large quantities of fat, sugar, salt and artificial additives, preservatives, and colourings.
- Menus will include at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

Fresh drinking water will be constantly available and frequently offered to children and babies throughout the day. Water will be offered at mealtimes. It is the nursery policy to encourage children to drink water rather than juice. Children are not allowed to bring in their own juice. Milk is provided at snack times.

Nursery Menus

Menus for individual nurseries are available on our website and follow a three-week cycle.

Weaning

At Elmore Kindergarten we follow the NHS guidelines in relation to Weaning therefore are unable to give a child food until 6 months of age unless there is a medical reason or advice which parents can provide documentation for. Please see the NHS website for further guidance on weaning.

Dietary Requirements

Individual dietary requirements will be respected. We will gather information from parents regarding their child's dietary needs, including any allergies and preferences, and work alongside parents to ensure the children have a mixed diet.

Nursery food is cooked fresh on site. The food we serve may contain one of the following allergens: Celery, Cereals containing gluten, Crustaceans, Eggs, Fish, Lupin, Milk, Molluscs, Mustard, Nuts, Peanuts, Sesame seeds, Soya, Sulphur dioxide (sometimes known as sulphites)

If you have any queries regarding this information or would like to discuss your child's dietary requirements further, please speak to a member of staff. We cannot guarantee the total absence of an allergen due to cross contamination whilst preparing food.

All our allergy information for the children is kept on their medical notes on Family please ensure you keep these up to date on Family please ask a staff member for help if you are unsure how to amend these.

Nut Free Zone

Due to varying allergies to ensure we safeguard all children and staff Elmore Nursery is a nut free zone we appreciate your support with this. Although we strive to ensure we are nut free, and communicate this to all staff and visitors, we cannot however guarantee the total absence of nuts on our premises.

Birthday Cake

At Elmore Kindergarten we can now offer you a choice of four delicious birthday cakes for your child to share with their friends in nursery on their special day. Just £8 each and 2 weeks' notice required, please message the nursery to order. Very Berry, Carrot, Chocolate or Victoria Sponge Dairy and Gluten Free options also available

Early Years Foundation Stage

The nurseries offer a stimulating and enriching environment for all age groups giving children the best learning opportunities and experience to help each child reach their full potential.

Planning, observing, and recording for the children are based on the EYFS framework to support children in their earliest years. The EYFS works towards the 'Areas of Learning and Development' ensuring a smooth transition from nursery to school while building an effective partnership with parents.

The 'Areas of Learning and Development' below are introduced throughout the child's day with a play-based theme in mind:

- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Expressive Arts and Design
- Understanding the World

Characteristics of Effective Learning

The characteristics of effective teaching and learning are statutory and are referenced in the EYFS (2023). We incorporate these within our planning at Elmore Kindergarten

"In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners must reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately".

The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

Playing and exploring- children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'.

Active learning- children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.

Creating and thinking critically- children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things'.

Room Transitions

At Elmore Kindergarten we have age-based rooms at each nursery- Cheshire Cats and Eager Beavers - 3 months to 2 years, Busy Bees - 2 to 3 years and Wise Owls - 3 years and above. This is except for Ecclesfield nursery who has an additional room Curious Owls which is a transition room from Busy Bees to Wise Owls this is due to the size of the nursery.

Each child will transition to their new room the 1st of the month following their age-appropriate birthday.

You will be informed of your child's upcoming transition the month prior when transition visits to their new room will also take place. Please be aware this is based on the needs of the individual child and if the nursery feels that the transition process for your child will differ to support their development they will speak directly with parents and ensure that your views are also considered.

Assessments

Throughout your child's time at Elmore Kindergarten, age and development appropriate assessments will take place and be shared with you via Family.

All children when starting in one of our nurseries will have a baseline assessment completed to allow the nursery to be aware of their starting point in their learning development. Then termly assessments will be completed moving forward.

Larger assessments will be completed prior to room transitions such as 2-year checks, 3-year checks, 4-year checks and a school transition assessment. All assessment information will be shared with parents.

Staffing

The staff have a range of qualifications and experience, including Early Childhood Studies Degrees, the Early Years Professional (EYP) Status,

Early Years Foundation Degree's, NNEB, BTEC, NVQ's in Childcare.

Staff are appointed based on their all-round knowledge, qualities, and experience. The staffing ratio in the nursery is as below with the nursery manager as supernumerary:

- 3 month - 2years: 1 staff per 3 children
- 2 - 3 years: 1 staff per 5 children
- 3 - 5 years: 1 staff per 8 children

For further information on ratios please reference the EYFS.

First Aid Qualifications

The EYFS asks that all newly qualified staff members with a Childcare Level 3 qualifications complete paediatric first aid training within the first three months of working in a nursery to enable them to be included in ratio. At Elmore, all qualified staff receive first aid training and there is always a qualified first aider present in each child's room. A list of first aiders can be found displayed throughout each nursery.

Meet the Team

We hold a strong emphasis on collaborate working with parents and we feel it is important that parents can know the names and faces of the staff working within their child's nursery/room. On our website we now have a Meet the Team section where you can learn a little more about the staff working at your nursery. Please take some time to read and familiarise yourselves prior to your child starting nursery and throughout your child's journey at Elmore.

Celebrations & Festivals

The EYFS values the role that festivals and celebrations play in supporting children's learning and development in every area of learning, and through them parents and practitioners can support children in beginning to understand the commonalities of human values that are shared by all cultures and religions. At Elmore Kindergarten we celebrate a variety of celebrations and festivals. Our yearly planner can be found for you to access on our website.

Topic Planning

At Elmore we base our curriculum planning around the individual child's interests and needs. We also complete 'Monthly Topic Planning' incorporating a variety of topics which will aid children's learning

and development. The yearly topic plan can be found on our website for you to access.

50 Adventures at Elmore

We understand the importance of parent feedback and participation. We always welcome pictures of observations of what your child is doing at home and love to hear about your home life experiences. There is an option to complete parent/carer observations on the Family App and to send in photographs to the nursery. We appreciate parent involvement, and it allows us to get a whole view of the child's development and needs.

We have also created our own '50 Adventures at Elmore' to give parents some exciting ideas of activities they can complete at home with your child. These can be accessed via the Parent Hub on our website, and we would love to hear and see families completing these activities!

Bernie Bear

Every nursery has their own handmade crocheted bears which we have named Bernie Bear. Each week a child from each room gets chosen to take Bernie Bear home to spend time with the child and their family over the weekend and participate in you family activities.

We hope you have fun with Bernie Bear and we would also love to see pictures of your adventures if you get chance to take some. All our Bernie Bears are especially handmade so please take good care of him. Please return Bernie on your child's next nursery day.

Sheffield Children's Hospital

Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust is one of only three dedicated children's hospital trusts in the UK and provides integrated healthcare for children and young people, including community and mental health care as well as acute and specialist services. Due to Elmore Kindergartens original nursery being located close to Sheffield Children's Hospital we continue to show our support by offering a discount of 5% to NHS staff. At times Elmore Kindergarten will have fundraising events at the nurseries all proceeds earned are given to Sheffield Children's Hospital to continue to support the hard work and dedicate care they provide.

Monthly 'Parent News'

Each month every nursery posts a 'Parents News' letting you know about WOW moments that have taken place in the nursery, key dates for your diary, the topic for the month ahead and celebration days

the nursery will be building activities around. The 'Parent News' will also introduce you to new staff, inform you of staff movements across rooms in the nursery, and let you know about any upcoming outings/trips. This allows parents to keep up to date with the news and exciting events/activities which

will be taking place at your child's nursery, these are available on the Elmore website under the News section but are also posted on Family for you to access. They are definitely worth a read!

Thank you...

Thank you, for taking the time to read the Elmore Kindergarten Parent Handbook. For any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the nurseries directly.