

A SHORT HISTORY OF HUMMINGBIRDS

Hummingbirds opened in 1997 in a purpose built but temporary unit. In October 2006 we relocated to a permanent base in the newly refurbished Castle Lane Community Centre. Provided by the parish of SS. Mary & Michael's, it is open to all. The unit is designed specifically as a nursery environment. It has a secure outdoor flagged playing area opening off the main nursery room with a huge sand pit where children love to play. We have a fantastic Playdale climbing/slide system, funded by lottery money, and colourful safe play surface. We also have garden areas and love to grow our own vegetables. Situated down a country lane but close to the town centre, we also have stunning 180 degree views across Garstang and the countryside beyond. For those really rainy days we have access to a large room in the centre, where bikes, scooters etc may be used safely. We are also very fortunate to have access to SS Mary & Michael's school field/conservation area. We access this through the school's playground.

The nursery has proved extremely successful and very popular over the years and is still well supported by the parishioners of SS Mary and Michaels' church.

Children who attend Hummingbirds have gone on to start at many different primary schools in the area.

We are open term-time only and are a sessional nursery (not day care). For a list of openings and closures see our website or our noticeboard.

We are registered to take up to 30 children from the ages 2 to 5 years.

QUOTES FROM MOST HUMMINGBIRDS' MOST RECENT OFSTED INSPECTION OCTOBER 2011...

...“welcoming and inclusive environment”

...“wide range of exciting activities...”

“Staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and are able to successfully meet the individual needs of all of the children...”

“Parents and carers have an excellent relationship...”

The full version is available in nursery and on the Ofsted website, [accessible via our own website](#).

OUR STAFF

We have 5 permanent members of staff, all of whom your child will get to know very well, and vice versa. We are referred to as 'Aunties' as we feel this lends itself to a relaxed, trusting environment where your child can feel safe and thrive. We are extremely fortunate to have a very experienced team of staff. Two of us are trained teachers and all are qualified and highly experienced (a total of well over 60 years between us!) Our cover staff are also qualified and well known to us. All staff have a long standing relationship with Hummingbirds, some having worked here for many years. Manager and early years practitioner Mrs Carole Taylor (*From 1 September 2013 - Mrs Janet Miller, Carole will remain as an early years practitioner)

- Deputy manager and early years practitioner Mrs Shirley Gascoigne
- Early Years Practitioners – both manager and deputy, plus Mrs Bridget Buer, Mrs Julia Horn, Mrs Janet Miller
- SENCO (additional needs coordinator)- Mrs Carole Taylor (Mrs Shirley Gascoigne from Sept. 2013)
- Health and Safety/Fire officer – Shirley Gascoigne, deputy Carole Taylor
- Nominated safeguarding officer – Janet Miller

- Deputy safeguarding officer – Bridget Buer
- Behaviour management Officer – Mrs Bridget Buer
- Parent involvement coordinator PICO - Mrs Julia Horn
- ENCO -equality and inclusion officer - Mrs Janet Miller (*from Sept Mrs Carole Taylor)
- Cover staff - Mrs Jane Goldspink (previously on permanent staff at Hummingbirds until Sept. 2010 when she retired) All other cover staff used are well-known to us, suitably qualified and will have been vetted by DBS check (the disclosure and barring scheme which has replaced CRB checks).

RATIOS OF STAFF TO CHILDREN

Currently we are required to have:

1 staff : 4 children, where there are up to 4 children under 3.

1 staff : 8 children 3 years old and above

Policies and procedure documents are all available in hard copy in the nursery and on our website. All policies and procedures are in line with the Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 and Ofsted requirements. They have been read and accepted by staff, some parents and the management committee of Hummingbirds. We are a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and most of our policies are developed from the models they provide to members. Parents can access their website too.

WELFARE AND SAFEGUARDING

The welfare and safeguarding of your child is of paramount importance to us at Hummingbirds. We have rigorous security, policies and procedures in place in line with the new Early Years Foundation Stage requirements from September 2012 (available on line on our website or in hard copy for your reference in our parents' room) we have a nominated officer and a deputy safeguarding officer. All staff have level 1 safeguarding training, as required by the EYFS standards. At present 4 out of 5 staff have level 2 training. In fact only the 2 officers need this training but we pride ourselves in the knowledge that the majority of staff are trained at this level.

BEFORE your child can start Hummingbirds, we will require you to complete a rigorous registration form listing all addresses and adults who care for your child, who is allowed to pick up your child, emergency contacts, permissions to photograph, administer medicine, change nappies etc.

We also ask you to sign and acknowledge that, if we as staff have ANY concerns about the safety and welfare of your child, we are DUTY BOUND to share the information with other child care agencies. We must inform you if we intend to contact social care UNLESS we consider that in doing so we will put your child at serious risk. We also do not share any information with other agencies without your permission.

EQUALITY AND INCLUSION

We are an inclusive setting and have policies and procedures in line with EYFS requirements (see on line or hard copies in parents' area). We ask on our registration form about individual dietary requirements, physical, emotional, religious and cultural traditions, languages used at home etc in order that we can meet all your needs. We will also ask if you would like any documents, forms, newsletters etc translated. Please do tell us if we can help in any other way to meet your family's needs.

ARRIVING AT HUMMINGBIRDS

In the mornings, you can access the centre via the school playground (cross diagonally to the gate in the corner). This is the safest route and we recommend that you use this entrance in the morning as Castle Lane can get very busy with school traffic.

If arriving after 9.15 am, use the Castle Lane entrance. We have a secure door, so ring our doorbell on the table and we will let you in.

On arrival, you will wait in our parents waiting area until 9 am when staff will welcome you into the main nursery room. In the waiting area you will find a coat peg with your child's name and a box in which to place lunch bags. We will move these into the cool of the kitchen once parents leave. There is also a box where you may leave wellies for wet days (with name in please).

Please sign our arrivals and departures register.

SELF-REGISTRATION

Help your child find their registration name star which they will bring with them into the nursery room at 9am when we welcome you into the main nursery room. The star is stuck on our registration board. We do a formal headcount/register slightly later once children have all arrived.

SNACK TIME

We provide snacks free of charge, although we do have a donation tin which helps towards the cost of fruit. All donations greatly appreciated. We provide a healthy choice of water or milk, toast/cracker/biscuit and a choice of fruit and vegetables. Children are encouraged to help with preparation and serve themselves where possible, though under constant adult supervision. Occasionally, we have a treat in the form of a birthday cake, provided by parents of birthday children!

We currently operate a 'rolling snack' time for the children. The snack table opens at about 10am and children come for snack when they are ready. They wash hands, collect their name card and sit down to have a snack, supervised by a member of staff at all times. Snack table is usually open half an hour or more, until all children have attended. This is a lovely time where children and Aunties chat and socialise.

Allergies – your registration should alert us to any food intolerances or allergies. In severe cases we will avoid having the food in question in nursery and discourage other parents from using it in lunches, to be on the safe side.

PACKED LUNCHES

If your child is going to stay for lunch on any given day, sign in the lunch book in the parents' room and pay £3 to any member of staff. Remember, if your child is staying all day or coming for the afternoon, from 12 noon, then lunch costs are absorbed by session costs. You may also choose to use your funding entitlement to pay for lunch times. We encourage healthy lunches and would discourage the inclusion of sweets. Please chop up food such as grapes and small cherry tomatoes, and any other food likely to cause a choking hazard due to its size and shape. We do appreciate that some parents prefer their child to learn to bite these but, as we are supervising a large group of children, we prefer that you cut them in half. Don't forget to provide a drink for your child to have with their lunch. A reusable bottle is best as children do not always finish drinks and cartons etc have to be thrown, sometimes half full (and we know they can be expensive!). We send home what they did not eat so you can keep tabs on what they are eating! We encourage them to pack away their own lunch bags. To avoid confusion, it is helpful if you can label tubs and bottles that you want returning. Label lunch bags etc where possible. As we do not have sufficient refrigeration space to store all lunches, we would advise that you use a cool pack to help keep your child's lunch cool and fresh.

We provide plates but it is helpful if you include spoons for yoghurts etc

Due to health and safety, we cannot reheat or cook food brought in for packed lunch.

CHANGE OF CLOTHES

We appreciate that you want your children to look smart but please avoid sending them in their best clothes as they *will* get dirty during their day of busy play and exploration. We have aprons but, as children have free choice, they do not always remember to put on aprons! Younger children often refuse to wear aprons. We advise ALL children to bring a bag of spare clothes. All our children love to play with the sand and the water and to get stuck into painting and messy play! It is always handy to have a change of clothes in nursery. We have some spares but sometimes - if these are not returned - we run out. Children are much happier if they can change into their own spare clothes and some are distressed if they have to wear someone else's.

On sunny days (even though there are so few) please apply sun-cream to your child before coming to nursery (we cannot do this) and send them with sun hats/sunglasses (named)

FOOTWEAR

Remember that your child will be playing outside, running, jumping, chasing, riding tricycles and scooters, climbing steps, climbing in and out of the sandpit etc! Please ensure that safe and appropriate footwear is worn. Also, please feel free to send in a pair of wellies for those really wet days or for occasions we go exploring on the school's field.

NAPPY CHANGING AND TOILETING

If your child is wearing nappies, we ask you to read our Changing Policy and sign a consent form on which you will write about their changing routine, when, how often etc you want us to change them. Please include at least 3 nappies per day, plus wipes and nappy sacks for disposal. Also include a change of pants/tights/socks. Please leave changing bags on your child's coat pegs, labelled with your child's name. Please check coat pegs for bags of soiled/wet clothes when you collect your child each day.

When your child is toilet training, let us know and we will do our best to support you. We encourage children to be as independent as they can for their own self-esteem and privacy. Older children should be encouraged to wipe themselves, however we will always be there to offer support and encouragement. (see Nappy Changing Policy)

TOYS FROM HOME

We appreciate that children like to bring toys from home, especially as a comfort while they settle with us. Please remember that we have many of our own and it is very easy to lose toys in a busy nursery! We would hate for your child to go home distressed because we have misplaced a much loved toy.

ABSENCES

If your child is going to be away, for whatever reason, we would appreciate a note or a call to let us know, if possible before 9 am. It helps with staff ratios if we know how many children will be attending on any given day. This is of course planned in advance but there are rarely occasions when we need to get cover staff at the last minute. Knowing that some children will not

be attending helps to make an emergency staffing decision more straight forward. Leave a short message on our answer machine 01995 602012 or text 07796 555 231.

You must pay for absence days and holidays as your child is registered to attend on specific days and is taking up a place which may be being used by another child.

ILLNESS

If your child is sick or has diarrhoea please keep them away from nursery for 48 hours from the time of the last occurrence. This is the official guidance we are given. Illness spreads very quickly to both staff and children and we must do our best to prevent it wherever possible. Please notify us if your child has contagious diseases such as conjunctivitis, measles and chicken pox. If you are unsure whether to keep them away, please ring us for advice we have a list in nursery. Alternatively speak to your doctor. Children do suffer a lot from coughs and colds and we appreciate that keeping them away every time they catch a cold would mean they rarely come to nursery! However if they are tired and weary they will be much happier and better off at home. Please refer to our Administering Medicines policy for more detailed information if required. (All policies available through our website or accessed in folder in parents' area)

Asthma – if your child has an inhaler for asthma we must be informed. You will need to give us the inhaler and complete with us details of when and how it may be administered. We keep all inhalers in a locked cabinet in the office. Please label clearly with your child's name. If we have to administer the inhaler, we do so with another member of staff as a witness and will ask you to sign the record sheet also when you collect your child.

Accidents – if your child has a major accident we would contact you immediately on the contact numbers on your registration sheet so please ensure that you inform us when you change your numbers - it is easy to forget. In the case of minor incidents, we administer first aid and record the details of the incident in our log book. We show you this when you collect your child and ask you to sign it. We are obliged to keep these records for 25 years.

All our permanent staff maintain up to date Paediatric First Aid Training. When you complete your registration form, you will sign as whether or not you give us permission to administer first aid to your child.

We will always ring you if your child is poorly and if we feel your child would be better off at home.

COLLECTING YOUR CHILD

Please try to be prompt when collecting your child. It can be distressing for them when you are not there to collect them when they see others leaving with their parents/carers.

Access the building via Castle Lane at picking up times. We ask you to sign the register on departure too.

Please do ring us if you are unavoidably detained and will be late.

You will have listed on your registration form those adults that you give permission to collect your child. We cannot let your child go with anyone else. Please note that children 16 and under cannot take your child for you. If you need to you can add adults whom you give permission to take your child to your registration details.

NO-SMOKING

We do not permit smoking within our building or the immediate vicinity. Please see our no-smoking policy.

LIBRARY

We have a collection of children's books which you may borrow. Simply date and sign the book when you borrow/return a book.

We also have variety of leaflets and informative booklets for parents which you will find in the parents'/waiting room.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Children learn all the time through their experiences and play. They learn best when they are interested and engaged. In order to maximise the learning experiences, we follow the children's interests, supporting and developing their play ideas, asking open-ended questions, modelling language and problem solving. The process of playing is far more valuable and important than the end-product i.e. the thing they make. Your child may not come out at the end of the day with pictures, paintings things they have made – this doesn't mean that they haven't been busy learning! We have included poems on our website which we feel sum up learning through play up quite nicely.

KEY PERSONS

At Hummingbirds we operate a key person system in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (see Key Persons Policy)

We refer to our staff as 'aunties' as we feel this lends itself to a trusting and friendly setting where your child will feel safe and loved. Your child will be assigned an aunty, or key person, who will have overall responsibility for your child's welfare, the maintenance of your child's learning journey file, any assessments, such as the 2 year progress check. Your child will form a strong bond with them and come to trust them and look to them for help when necessary. You too will come to form a trusting and open relationship with the key persons (and indeed *all* staff, as we are a small setting) which is crucial if your child is thrive and develop. A 'back-up aunty' will also be assigned to your child in case the key person is absent for any period of time, and also as additional support for child, parents and staff.

LEARNING JOURNEY

Your child's key person will assemble and maintain a file for your child as a record of their unique interest, learning and development. This will consist of written observations, photos, examples of drawings, paintings etc. You may borrow or add to the folder at any time. It is kept in nursery and is accessible to children to look at and add to whenever they like. Depending upon your child's unique interests, the file may have lots of creative 'art' work or lots of photos of them playing, building, exploring and creating in others ways. Children love to take their models and pictures home with them and they gain much more from doing this than if we keep it for their folder. When they bring something home, do talk about what they have made, what they have been doing and build on it at home. Their folder will be a unique record of your child, a reflection of them and their learning styles. We like the children to value their folder and we value all your contributions and opinions. The observations made help us to plan new activities and develop new skills and further learning. If you would like to learn more about the Early Years Foundation Stage then we would be glad to help. You will find an information sheet at the back of your child's folder and some useful website addresses on our own website.

COFFEE AFTERNOONS

Each half term we hold a coffee afternoon where parents and children come along to nursery and have a chance to talk to their key person about progress and any concerns. We are very open and friendly so please feel free to come and talk to us anytime you have a query, concern or want to share something with us.

FUNDING (EARLY YEARS ENTITLEMENT)

Children become entitled to government funding for 15 hours per week (for 38 weeks per year) the term AFTER which they turn 3 years old. Unfortunately, if your child's birthday falls around the Easter period, they may be 3 *before or after* Easter break (depending when Easter falls that year) This in turn will affect the date on which they become eligible for funding. We will speak to you about this when the time comes and help you work out sessions. We apply for funding on your behalf. We are now required to see your child's birth certificate as proof of age. You can bring this when you register your child and we will record that we have seen it. Your funding can be divided between settings – please tell us if your child attends other nurseries and/or child-minders. Unfortunately, if you are *moving* settings, the setting you are leaving *is not obliged to transfer any funding to the new setting*. However, they can *choose* to send on funding which has not been used yet. Funding is applied for on a termly basis so once a new term starts, your new setting can claim the funding. At Hummingbirds if your child leaves to go to another setting we do agree to forward any, as yet, unused funds for that term.

In certain circumstances, children may be eligible for funding from 2 years. In order to find out if you are eligible please contact Lancashire County Council or ask us, we will be glad to help.

We have some Lancashire County Council information on our website and also on the notice boards in nursery.

BILLING

If your child is 2, or not yet entitled to funded places, we charge £11 *per session* (prices * from September 2013). A session is 3 hours 9am-12 noon or 12 noon-3pm. Thus if your child stays 9am to 3pm, the cost will be £22.

If your child stays for lunch and leaves at 1pm, we charge £3 to cover staff costs for the lunch hour (12 til 1pm) which you pay as you go – hand payment to a member of staff. If staying, we have a lunch book in the parents' room, by the register, in which you write in your child's name and whether or not you have paid. You may choose to use your funding to cover lunch hours.

We will bill you each half term – we aim to send bills out by the second week of each half term. Bills should be paid within 2 weeks of issue date. Cash accepted and cheques payable to 'Hummingbirds'. If you wish to arrange bank transfer we can organise this too. As we are a voluntary organisation we do appreciate prompt payments. If you would prefer to pay on a weekly basis, this can be arranged. Speak to us in confidence if you have difficulties paying.

We can also accept payment of childcare through your employer. Ask if you wish to do this. (See website for agencies)

You must pay for booked sessions where your child is absent for any reason or away on holiday. You may change or add days/sessions at short notice provided we have places available. We cannot though accommodate frequent changes unless there are extenuating circumstances.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We have great relationships with our parents and greatly value your input as the prime educators of your children. We want you to feel able to chat to us at any time and we aim to be friendly and open in our relationships with our families. Ofsted has judged them to be outstanding.

There are plenty of opportunities for you to become involved in nursery life, if you want to. We hold regular stay and chat coffee mornings in our parents' room, as well as our coffee afternoons where you and your child can come into nursery and chat to your key persons. We have a nominated Parental Involvement Coordinator who tries to attend coffee mornings on a regular basis.

Our parents are very involved and welcome to join our management committee and fundraising group. As a voluntary group, we rely on fundraising to help us buy new resources for the children. We are very fortunate in that our parents work very hard to organise fun fundraisers! On annual basis we hold a Christmas Fair and Easter Fun Day. Parents also organise participation in the annual Garstang Children's Festival on Whit Monday, where children get to dress up and ride on a float. Themes have included The Gruffalo, Mary Poppins, 5 a Day and The Circus. It's a fabulous community event. Parents also arrange the occasional night out and fundraisers just for parents and staff, such as the Valentine's ball and Ceilidhs.

Current and former chairs/secretaries and other committee members are parents. In fact our manager from September 2013 was once secretary and later chairperson! At present, 3 of our staff are parents to children who once attended Hummingbirds! It is such a great place that no-one ever wants to leave!

We also like to invite parents in to talk about their jobs to the children or share their hobbies and skills. In the past parents have used their own skills to help us out and add value to the children's experiences – baking bread, creating a website, mending computers, teaching Spanish, painting our dolls house and creating fabulous book bags – just a few examples. Please tell us if you would like to help.

We will keep you up to date with what is happening with regular newsletters which will be accessed via email. A hard copy will be available on the notice board or in the parent's room should you require a copy.

We also have new 'business card' for all a parents with contact numbers and website address on; handy in emergencies or to give to friends.