

Kids
Love
Nature



Kids Love Nature

Parent Handbook

Contents

Welcome to Kids Love Nature Kindergarten	3
Our Approach	3
Your Child's First Weeks at Kindergarten – What to Expect	10
The Key Person Approach	11
Information Sharing With Other Professionals	11
Parent - Kindergarten Communication.....	11
Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities	13
Safeguarding Children & Child Protection.....	13
Promoting Positive Behaviour	14
Kit List: Supplies for Kindergarten.....	15
Important Illness Guidance.....	16
Food Allergies and Intolerances.....	17
Kindergarten Policies.....	17
Arrival & Collection	17
Accidents and Incidents.....	17
Birthdays.....	18
Registration Fee & Deposit.....	18
Sessions and Notice Periods.....	19
Questions, Concerns and Compliments.....	19
Useful Contacts.....	19

Welcome to Kids Love Nature Kindergarten

We all want our children to be confident, have great language and communication skills, be emotionally secure, sociable, happy, resilient, be willing to try new things and take risks, be caring and develop a love for learning and the natural world. By focusing on these key attributes, Kids Love Nature Kindergarten sets children on a journey for life. We do this through being completely child centred in everything we do.

Our beautiful kindergarten spaces are designed and organised so children can be independent and lead their own learning, making choices about the resources they want to use, whether to be inside or outside and when to stop for a snack.

Through observation, considered and sensitive adults decide when it is best to support children, when to teach them a new skill or when it is best to stand back. No adult ever dominates the learning environment and as a result, children are continuously engaged and following their interests.

We allow children the time and space to become absorbed into their learning. Time and space to think, to be and to grow.

We are delighted that you have chosen Kids Love Nature Kindergarten for your child, and look forward to getting to know your family over the coming months and years. The aim of this handbook is to provide you with some useful information to help you and your child as you start at kindergarten. If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

We look forward to welcoming your child to Kids Love Nature Kindergarten!

Our Approach

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten provides each child with a unique learning experience by enhancing their learning through a connection with nature and its resources. Each of our kindergartens are located in areas of outstanding natural beauty and they follow our own pedagogy to early childhood education, The Kids Love Nature Approach. This provides children with an environment that creates synergy between indoor spaces, the near, the far and the great outdoors. We integrate creativity and creative thinking, enquiry-based learning and the promotion of well-being and involvement into beautiful indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

By recognising the importance of children experiencing the richness of the natural outdoor environment, an experience that for many children is becoming too rare, we connect children to nature whilst providing the security of an outstanding kindergarten. The outdoor learning at Kids Love Nature Kindergarten is complemented with a high quality indoor kindergarten environment that enables all aspects of early childhood to flourish in the modern world. Our approach draws on the best aspects of early years practice.

We want children to have real experiences that have a purpose and an outcome that provides them a sense of accomplishment. Independence is nurtured, creativity allowed to flourish and children's natural inquisitiveness embraced. We recognise that each child is an individual with their own ideas and interests, and this is always the starting point for the experiences and activities we plan for them.



The Approach in Practice

Our aim is to support every child in developing skills that will enrich their development now, over the coming years, and for the rest of their lives. Emotional resilience is the biggest factor in enabling children to develop into successful adults, and through the Kids Love Nature Approach we focus on experiences that provide opportunities for developing self-esteem, the ability to solve problems, emotional intelligence, a healthy attitude to risk and independence.

"It is ultimately the most rewarding feedback, when your child truly loves her school! ...that is what Kids Love Nature Kindergarten gives; a safe and nurturing environment for children to blossom and learn. Their approach to cultivate independent and emotionally intelligent children is invaluable not just for right now but their future". Nicolette



In practice, this means you will see the following taking place at Kids Love Nature Kindergarten:

- Adults who demonstrate activities, and then stand back and watch carefully to see where the child needs further help
- Children engaging in activities which encourage problem-solving, for example cooperatively building a den with friends, working out how to climb a tree, persevering as they build a tower of cubes
- Children dressing themselves with support from an adult who encourages, but doesn't complete the task for the child
- Children serving their own snacks and taking part in the preparation of meals.
- Relaxation and mindfulness sessions specially designed to support children develop techniques for managing their emotions effectively
- Role-play sessions in which children 'practice' manners, communication skills and assertiveness

A typical day at Kids Love Nature Kindergarten

While one child finds great pleasure in constructing a huge tower in the outdoor area another explores the sounds made from instruments from around the world.

In the creative room a large collaborative piece of art is being created with the children discussing the different shapes their paint brushes make and the dimension obtained by adding textured materials.

Another group is searching for insects in the deadwood pile and after collecting them into the bug pots, are then helped by an adult to identify them on picture cards.

Meanwhile, a group of children are putting the finishing touches to the fruit scones they have been baking in the kitchen, with another group washing the carrots they have just harvested from the vegetable patch.

A little later a group returns from their 'Nature School' session in the woods. They excitedly show the other children the hair moss, cushion moss and feather moss they have found under the large oak tree. They also count out the pine cones they have collected to see who found the most!

Each and every day at Kids Love Nature Kindergarten is filled with experiences that nurture the development of key attributes and skills of early learners setting them on a journey that will last them a lifetime.

We offer children a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning experiences, so that they can enjoy the benefits of adults sensitively supporting their learning as well as the opportunities offered when children are able to follow their own interests and pursue their own ways of learning.

Throughout the day, small group activities take place in which children might take part in baking, creativity, discussions and role play activities as well as singing, music and stories. Children can be seen playing independently, with other children and engaged in activities with adults.

Snack is served on a 'rolling' basis so that children can take a break with their friends at the time that is right for them. An independently accessed snack table means children are learning table manners and independence as they serve themselves and their friends, and take part in preparing the food.

There are plenty of opportunities for children to spend time getting involved in their activities, and there are also times at which everyone comes together for singing, stories and meal times. Meals are sociable times where the table is laid collaboratively, food is served by the children, and adults and children are able to chat together.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The government recognises that the developmental stage from birth to five years is crucial for success throughout life: *"Providing children with good quality education and care in their earliest years can help them succeed at school and later in life, contributing to a society where opportunities are equal regardless of background."*

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets out the standards that all providers of Early Years Education need to meet to ensure that:

- Children learn and develop well
- Children are safe and healthy
- Children develop the skills they need for when they start school

The EYFS covers seven areas of learning and development:

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



Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language and Physical Development are known as the 'prime areas' because they are recognised as laying the foundation for all future learning and development. It is these areas that we will particularly focus on when your child starts at Kids Love Nature Kindergarten, and indeed throughout their time with us. The 'specific areas' are integrated into each child's daily experiences at kindergarten as they explore the great outdoors, spend time in the didactic classroom and work and play in the beautiful garden area.

Children aged birth to five years learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through opportunities for creative thinking both indoors and outdoors. A key section of the EYFS is the area called 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'. This identifies the ways of thinking and learning that will be most beneficial for your child throughout life. When we are working with your children, it is these characteristics we are looking to observe in them, and support them in developing:

Playing and exploring – engagement

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to ‘have a go’

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

Active learning – motivation

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

The Kids Love Nature ‘Principles of Learning’

At Kids Love Nature, we have reflected on the educational approaches that have influenced us, and on our observations of children in our kindergartens. This has helped us to define the principles of learning that we use as starting points when planning our environments. They are principles that enable us to choose appropriate spaces and resources, and offer teachers the support and training they will need to provide inspiring, stimulating and innovative early years environments. The Principles of Learning within the Kids Love Nature Approach are as follows:

1. Freedom: Move, Explore, Be Curious, Think Creatively, Take Time

Children are natural explorers. They explore physically, socially, intellectually, emotionally and culturally. They are innovators, scientists and researchers who document their life experiences through play, art, music and language. Children possess remarkable skills of critical thinking and their imaginations know no bounds. Our aim is to embrace these qualities and enable children to have the time to explore, investigate, ask questions, and come up with their own ideas and inventions.

2. Beautiful and Purposeful Environments

Our environment affects the way we feel, the way we behave and the way we live. Giving children access to beautiful, purposeful spaces helps them to engage in a meaningful way with the environment. Environments are designed with the developmental needs of the child in mind. This means plenty of space, and areas that can be used for different purposes.

3. The Natural World: Synergy Between Indoor and Outdoor Environments

Learning is messy, exciting and challenging. Sometimes children need to be outside in all weathers, and at other times they may choose to be inside. When a child makes a fascinating discovery about building in the classroom, she may want to go outside and test his theory on a larger scale. It is impossible to say that learning outdoors or indoors is more important; both environments bring different qualities to the child’s experiences.

4. Environmental Sustainability in Education

If children are going to be caretakers of the planet now and in the future, they need to come to know and love the natural world. If they feel connected to nature, they will want to protect it.. From environmentally sustainable building features to composting and recycling; from learning about endangered species to cleaning out chickens and collecting eggs for food, children have the opportunity to learn about the interconnectedness of all living things,



5. Enquiry-Based Learning within an Emergent Curriculum

An emergent curriculum develops out of the child's own areas of interests. Learning is co-constructed as child and adult work together collaboratively, exploring and developing knowledge. The child may bring an idea, a question, a comment or an observation, and where this will lead is unknown at the beginning of the journey. The adult facilitates the child's learning, providing resources and stimulating learning with open-ended questions.

6. A Growth Mindset Environment

The child's first learning experience should be in an environment that supports the idea of possibility, and embraces human beings of any age learning and evolving in a spirit of cooperation. In a Kids Love Nature kindergarten adults celebrate with children as they master challenging tasks. They discuss with children which strategies have been effective in their efforts, and ensure the whole environment supports innovation, problem-solving and the inspiration that arises from learning.



7. Resources: Open-Ended, Educational and Sensorial

Open-ended resources enable children to invent and be creative. We don't want to put a limit on a child's imagination or explorations, so we ensure resources can be used in a multitude of ways to support learning and play. Children have access to beautiful building materials, natural art resources, role-play activities, and they can explore technology and science in small groups.

8. Environments and Activities that Promote Well-being and Involvement

When teachers prepare resources, activities and experiences, and then observe and reflect on these, they are encouraged to reflect on the nature of the learning that took place. Did the child become engaged in the process? Was the learning meaningful? Did the child experience a high level of well-being during the activity? How involved was the child during the experience?

9. Evolving Education: Research and Development

At the heart of the Kids Love Nature ethos is the desire to continue to keep learning and evolving. How we understand and view the concept of early childhood has developed enormously in the last century through research based in both the social sciences and neuroscience. Kids Love Nature seeks to continue to learn and develop new ideas through observation, research, collaboration.

What does my child do at a Kids Love Nature Kindergarten and how does this support learning?

A trip to the great outdoors

As children explore and navigate the woodland, country park or allotment, they build confidence and independence. Attention to detail and concentration are developed as they examine the fascinating patterns and objects of interest around them. As the children learn about animal behaviours, habitats and needs, they develop an understanding of the importance of caring responsibly for animals large and small. The movement involved in exploring support physical development, including the large arm movements vital for writing as children carry logs and build dens. Opportunities for learning are fun, stimulating and based in the wonders of the natural.



The Classroom

The beautiful resources in the classroom support children in learning about the qualities in the world around them...they can explore size, colour, texture and shape through building, sequencing and matching. They also offer early preparation for maths as children explore through hands-on learning experiences. Other materials support reading and writing as children learn sounds and letters through phonics, using 'Sandpaper Letters' to learn how to form letters. There are beautiful maps to develop a love of geography, and an area dedicated to science, with lots of fun and fascinating experiments!

Cooking and Baking

Working in small groups brings opportunity for developing language, communication and social skills. As they weigh ingredients, children learn about maths in a real-life context. As children experiment with flavours, they refine their senses. Independence and self-esteem are supported as the children produce meals for their friends. A real understanding of 'seed to plate' develops as children plant, harvest and cook with food grown at the kindergarten.

Daily Living Activities

Children love these activities because they often involve water and cleaning! As they collect water to fill a bowl before scrubbing a table clean, they learn about volume and estimation...taking responsibility for cleaning their environment develops a sense of responsibility and care for the world around them. Other Daily Living Activities include sweeping, learning how to dress, and learning how to wipe your nose!



The Garden

As children connect with nature, caring for animals and tending to vegetables, they develop a love of the natural world and of learning. There is a sense of peace that comes from spending this time in nature, and children's emotional development benefits enormously as a result. They experience the importance of caring for living things, and understand that they have a role to play in this.

Emotional Well-Being

'Happy brains work better'! Kids Love Nature kindergartens spend a considerable amount of time ensuring children are supported in developing emotional well-being. This might be through specific activities connected to emotions, as well as through conversations that arise spontaneously. We connect children to their emotions through naming feelings, and encouraging children to talk through how they are feeling. During relaxation times children are able to take time to connect with their thoughts and feelings, and to take time to be 'still'. There is significant research finding that mindfulness and relaxation are hugely valuable in education; resulting in improved academic performance, better peer relationships, and children with higher levels of self-control.

Learning Indoors and Outdoors

Children have plenty of opportunities at Kids Love Nature to learn and develop in all aspects of the Early Years Foundation Stage, whether they are indoors or outdoors. Practitioners skilfully integrate learning in all areas into children's interests, and ensure that whether a child is indoors or outdoors, there are opportunities for learning and development in communication, language, literacy, maths, understanding the world, creativity, social and emotional well-being and physical skills.

Assessment

Every child is required to have a 'Progress Check' carried out between their second and third birthday. Your child's key person will carry out this development check, the aim of which is to ensure that any areas of concern are highlighted, and areas of achievement are celebrated. This will be shared with you during your parent meeting with your child's key person, and we will ask for your input and feedback.

Each child has a learning and development assessment carried out twice per year and this is usually around the time that parent meetings are carried out. The assessment will be carried out by your child's key person and enables us to ensure we are supporting each child in all areas of their development. This information will be shared with you and you will be able to contribute to it.



Getting Ready for School

What knowledge and skills will my child need when starting school? At Kids Love Nature Kindergarten we believe that the early years are a crucial stage of development. We understand that parents want to know that their child's development is being nurtured in a way that will not only support them in the here and now, but also enable them to start school with the skills they will need.

After many years of working with children, families and schools, we are confident that the experiences offered at a Kids Love Nature kindergarten nurture those fundamental skills of confidence, independence, control of movement, communication and emotional resilience that will enable your child to start school with a love of learning and a solid foundation in terms of their unique development.

"The warmest and most caring kindergarten you could possibly hope to find for your young children. The staff are devoted to the school, the children and their development as individual little people. Both my girls have been lucky enough to benefit from this wonderfully natural setting over a period of over 6 years. It is a unique kindergarten in so many ways and can only be highly recommended." Anna

It is often thought that children need to have developed specific academic skills in order to start school, for example that they need to be able to write their name or recognise certain numbers. We do everything possible to support a child who shows an interest in both literacy and maths, and we also want to be sure we are supporting them to develop the skills that matter most when it comes to starting school. For children to succeed when they start at school, it is most important that they have great communication skills, an ability to manage their feelings, and that they have self-care and physical skills. All of the activities and experiences that we offer support the development of these skills, and it is here that we place our focus to ensure children have a positive start to school.

"By four we would expect children to be ready to be separated from their parent or carer, to be able to demonstrate listening skills in being able to show interest and pay attention to a subject or stimulus. To have enough language to be able to express themselves if they need something and be able to communicate something about what makes them who they are, such as name, age and something about family or relevant factors in their life. To be able to interact with an adult and/or a peer. For example, during play to be able to take turns and take some responsibility for their actions. We think that children should be able to focus on, and show interest in, their work and the world around them. To make observations, notice things and ask questions. To be able to hold a book, understand some aspects of narrative and respond to some boundary setting."

Ofsted: 'Are you Ready? Good Practice in School Readiness'

Further information on the EYFS for parents can be found here: <http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/2015/03/what-to-expect-when-a-parents-guide/>

Your Child's First Weeks at Kindergarten – What to Expect

Starting at kindergarten is an exciting but tiring time for children. They are busy forming new relationships with both adults and children, and they are learning new ways of doing things. Sending your child to kindergarten for the first time can also be hard for parents! We have compiled a few suggestions to help you through the first weeks...

Top Tips for Helping Your Child to Settle at Kindergarten

- Remember that your child will be more tired than normal. It can be helpful to ease back on busy evenings and weekends for the first few weeks so that your child can 'recharge' their physical and emotional batteries!
- If you notice your child is a bit more clingy than usual, this is a normal reaction and it may be that they are using their relationship with you to 'top up' their emotional resilience during this time of transition.
- Talk positively to your child about kindergarten, while also recognising their feelings. Validating children's feelings is a powerful way of helping them to process their experiences. If your child says "I don't want to go to kindergarten" it can be helpful simply to acknowledge this by saying "I understand you don't want to go to kindergarten today". Try to avoid adding "But you'll have such a lovely time when you get there", as in that moment your child can't see that far ahead and simply needs reassurance that his or her feelings are understood.
- At the kindergarten door, give your child a big hug and reassurance that you will be back soon and then let your child's key person support them. Try to avoid putting pressure on your child not to cry as this can actually make things worse!
- If you can, planning your child's start date in a way that means he or she is able to do shorter days for a while can be very beneficial during the settling in period.
- If your child struggles with separating from you, remember this is completely normal, especially if it is their first time away from you. This almost always reflects a natural reaction to uncertainty and inexperience about how to react to the new challenge.
- Bear in mind that your child may not want to talk about the way they spend their day; many parents express frustration that their child responds with 'nothing' when asked about their day! If you would like to know more about the activities that your child is currently enjoying, please do speak to your child's key person.

We will always contact you if your child is distressed and will do our best to let you know as soon as possible that they have settled in if they are upset at drop-off time.

A final note...independence!

Many parents over the years have noticed that when their child starts at a Kids Love Nature kindergarten they see an increase in their independence and clear signs that the child wants to do more for themselves! If you do see this in your child please be reassured it is a positive step in their development. You may want to chat to your child's key person to see how you can further support this at home. We also offer termly parent talks that provide answers on this and many more areas!



The Key Person Approach

The Key Person Approach is based in the knowledge that young children need to form secure attachments to a small number of familiar and constant people in all places in which they are cared for during their formative years. Secure attachment in the early years is linked to the child's development in the following ways:

- Ability to cope with conflicts
- The capacity to make loving relationships later in life
- Friendly and communicative relationships
- A well-functioning immune system
- A sense of family and cultural identity
- Access to learning experiences
- Language acquisition
- Memory
- Ability to trust and cope with change



The Role of the Key Person

Your key person is someone with whom your child has formed a particularly close bond. This may be the person who changes your child's nappy, helps them to go to sleep, and might be the person your child will go to for comfort if distressed. Your key person will be present at parent meetings, and will prepare your child's learning journal.

We follow the child's preference when it comes to assigning a key person, so you may find that your key person changes during your child's time at kindergarten.

If you have any questions about your child's development or time at kindergarten, your child's key person is your first port of call. If further advice is needed, they will be able to arrange a meeting with the kindergarten manager or Special Educational Needs Coordinator.

Information Sharing With Other Professionals

It is essential that all of those involved in the life of the child communicate effectively so that we share relevant information. Please keep us informed of all of those who are working with your child, including child-minders, speech and language therapists and health visitors. We will only ever share information with your consent; the exception to this is in matters of safeguarding – in cases where we believe a child to be at risk, we are required to report this immediately to the appropriate authority.

There is a consent for information sharing form that we will ask you to complete and at the settle-in visit before your child starts at kindergarten.

Parent - Kindergarten Communication

We are committed to a high level of parent-kindergarten communication, and there are various ways in which we work in partnership with you to fully support your child's development and ensure they get the most out of their time with us.

Tapestry

Tapestry is our online learning journal through which we will upload photos and observations which you will be able to login and access at any time. The observations are linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage as well as the Leuven Scale of Wellbeing and Involvement. You are able to comment on your child's observations, and to offer your own thoughts on their development – we encourage you to use this facility as it helps us to support your child more fully.

Arrival and Collection Times

If you need to pass information to us, the easiest way to do so is to email kindergarten or, if your child comes into kindergarten confidently and you can be at the door for a few moments and this doesn't upset him or her, you can of course let the member of staff at the door know anything important. If you have anything you would like to discuss in detail please do email or call the kindergarten to arrange an appointment as we are always more than happy to have a chat on the phone or in person at a time when we can spend a little longer with you and without the children present.

Noticeboards

The kindergarten noticeboard contains lots of useful information so please do check this regularly.

Facebook

Our kindergarten Facebook page has regular updates with photos and observations of the children at work and play. You will also find lots of ideas for activities you can carry out at home that are fun while supporting your child's learning and development. The Facebook page also contains notifications of all forthcoming kindergarten events.



Emails and Newsletters

You will receive regular newsletters via email containing information about the kindergarten, future events and current news. Please do make sure we have your up-to-date email address so that we can keep you fully informed.

Parent Meetings

You will be asked to attend two parent meetings per year in October/November and May/June. This is a chance for you to meet with your child's key person and talk about your child's development and time at kindergarten. If you would like to speak to your child's key person, or the kindergarten manager on an ad hoc basis, please do ask for an appointment.

Parenting Talks and Workshops

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten holds regular talks for parents on the Kids Love Nature Approach as well as Question and Answer sessions for parents to come and discuss any aspect of child development and parenting. These are a great opportunity to learn more about what we do and how we support your child.

Home Learning Packs

We have a variety of packs containing ideas for activities that you can carry out with your child at home, reinforcing the learning that is taking place at kindergarten, and supporting their learning and development in a fun way. Please ask your child's key person if you would like to borrow one of the packs.

Contact Details and Sharing of Information

Please ensure we always have your most up-to-date contact details so that we can contact you in case of emergency. Finally, we also ask that you keep us informed of any important events such as moving house, a new baby or a family bereavement. Even when we think they are not that aware of what is happening, events such as this can have quite an impact on children, and often show themselves in the child's behaviour. It is important that we are aware of possible causes of upset or frustration so that we can support them fully at these times.

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

As part of our policy to make sure that we meet the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs or disabilities a child may have. Kids Love Nature Kindergarten works to the requirements of The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (2014).

For national guidance for parents and carers relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities please see:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417435/Special_educational_needs_and_disabilites_guide_for_parents_and_carers.pdf

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten has submitted a 'local offer' as part of the SEND Code of Practice (2014). This provides details on how we support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Please see 'Useful Contacts' at the end of this Parent Handbook for more information.

Details of the Kids Love Nature Kindergarten Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) can be found on the kindergarten noticeboard. If you have any concerns about your child's development we would strongly encourage you to talk to your child's key person and the kindergarten SENCo who will be able to provide you with information about your child's stage of development, and also offer information on ways of seeking further support and guidance.

Safeguarding Children & Child Protection

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten has a duty under the law to safeguard children against suspected or actual 'significant harm', including suspected abuse. Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our setting and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

If any adult has a suspicion that a child is being abused OR if a child makes a statement about an issue concerning their safety, there is a duty to refer this to children's services (see 'useful contacts' at the end of the handbook). We take this duty very seriously. In the event of a referral, we will usually speak to you first, but there may be situations in which we are asked not to discuss the referral with you.

'Injury on Arrival'

If your child comes to school with an injury (as so many do through accidental bumps and scrapes!), please inform us at drop-off. We will ask you to sign a form detailing the injury – how, when and where it occurred. *Please always inform us of any injury, even if it seems minor because any statement by a child as to how an injury occurred has to be taken seriously.*



How we Protect Children

- All staff and volunteers are DBS checked and references are obtained.
- All members of staff receive training in child protection and children are not questioned upon making a disclosure.
- We support children in understanding that they can be resilient, strong and listened to.
- Parents are informed of a referral where possible, except when advice from the safeguarding board prevents this.
- In the event of a referral, the child will continue to be welcome at the setting and we will continue to support the family.
- Child protection procedures are followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff.



Promoting Positive Behaviour

At Kids Love Nature Kindergarten we know that children thrive when they are happy, secure and loved and have clear, consistent boundaries. Our approach to supporting children's behaviour is to recognise that negative behaviour is the child's way of communicating, and expressing their feelings, albeit in an inappropriate way. Our task therefore is to support them with their communication skills and their expression of 'big feelings'.

Clear Boundaries

The first step in supporting children's behaviour is to ensure that the environment contains clear boundaries that are expressed positively and reinforced in a calm manner. Kids Love Nature Kindergartens have clear rules that focus on 'keeping yourself and others safe' and 'respecting the environment'.



Behaviour as Communication

- Behaviour is communication: we need to find out what the child is trying to tell us.
- Young children are unable to express their emotions easily, and need our help to learn how to do this.

'Hug First'

- When children are upset or angry, the key thing is to help them to feel calm and safe - trying to reason with or talk to a child who is in the midst of a heightened emotional state is a waste of time.
- The quickest way to calm a child down is to reassure them and offer a hug. Although this can seem to be 'rewarding' the negative behaviour, what it is actually doing is calming the child's brain down so he or she is in the right frame of mind to have a conversation about what has happened.

Avoid Rewards and Punishments

- Punishments and rewards make the child focus on keeping out of trouble, rather than actually changing their behaviour. The child asks: 'What do I need to do to be ok?' (*do the wrong thing but avoid getting caught*) instead of: "What do I need to do to make sure everyone else is ok?" (*act with kindness*).
- Rewards can work against learning because the child starts thinking about how to finish as quickly as possible so as to get the reward – rather than doing it for enjoyment and as well as possible.
- Children who receive rewards are less likely to take risks as the focus is on praise and 'failure' means losing a reward.

Listen, Acknowledge, Empower

- When a child is frustrated, upset or angry, the first step is simply to listen.
- Then, validate what they are communicating: "I can see you are really cross!"
- Finally, empower them to problem-solve: "How are we going to solve this?"

Kit List: Supplies for Kindergarten

We are 100% behind the saying that 'there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing'! It is vital the children are able to connect to nature whatever the weather, so it is essential that they have the necessary clothing to keep them dry, warm or cool.

Here is the list of the kit your child will need. Please provide more layers than you think are necessary as we can always take them off if they are too hot!

- Water proof jacket and trousers/dungarees
- Wellington boots
- Closed toe shoes/boots
- Warm hat and gloves
- Thick socks
- Warm jumpers/ fleeces (layers of clothing are best)
- Two complete changes of clothing (including socks and underwear)
- A hat for summer
- Nappies and wipes (if needed)
- Please apply sun lotion before your child comes to school and we will re-apply it at lunchtime. If your child has an allergy and needs their own sun lotion please label it with their name and hand it to a member of staff



A Few Pointers...

- Please do bear in mind that we are a kindergarten that encourages children to get messy, play in mud and fully engage in childhood experiences! For this reason we ask you not to send your child in expensive or treasured clothing.

- We aim to encourage the child's independence as much as possible so please try to make sure that shoes are easy to put on and fasten – Velcro fastenings are ideal. *Please do not have shoes with laces as kindergarten shoes.*
- Vests with poppers are difficult for young children who are toilet training and heading to the potty or toilet frequently.
- Clothing with buttons or fastenings at the back makes it difficult for the child to learn to dress independently.
- A simple pair of trousers and a top is ideal!
- We do provide aprons for activities such as gardening, painting and cooking, but inevitably mud or paint will get somewhere! Please do make sure that clothing is appropriate for a day at school.
- *Please label everything!* We have a considerable number of children at kindergarten at any moment in time, and things do occasionally go home with the wrong child or get mislaid. If there is a name label on the item of clothing or pair of shoes, they are far more likely to be returned, so please do ensure everything is named.



Important Illness Guidance

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten is a Nut Free Zone

Please do not under any circumstances send food containing nuts to kindergarten in your child's bag or send your child into kindergarten still eating breakfast. If you send a cake to school for your child's birthday, please provide all of the ingredients, or provide original packaging.

Illness & Exclusion Periods

As a kindergarten, we are not equipped to take care of unwell children and we have a duty of care to prevent the spread of infection. We ask all parents to help us in this by adhering to the following:

- *If a child is unwell, he or she needs to remain at home until fully recovered.* Please note that being 'fit for kindergarten' means being fully well – if a child is fighting an infection or recovering from an illness, they may seem much better in themselves but being at kindergarten is a long and tiring day if you are not 100% well. Although we have excellent staff ratios, we cannot offer one-to-one care for a whole session when a child is unwell.
- Exclusion periods vary according to the illness. These are provided on the kindergarten noticeboard – if your child is absent from kindergarten and you need to check an exclusion period please feel free to contact us for the information you need. Please note that for upset stomachs, exclusion is for 48 hours from the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea.
- *We cannot administer non-prescription medication such as calpol* (unless this is part of a long-term treatment programme). If your child needs calpol, he or she needs to remain at home until fully recovered.
- We can administer prescribed medication such as antibiotics and will ask you to complete a medication form in these circumstances. *We ask that if a child is taking antibiotics they remain at home for 24 hours after the first dose* so that they can have time to recover and the antibiotics can start to take effect. *Medication MUST be given to a member of staff and not just put in your child's bag.*
- We reserve the right to ask a parent to keep their child at home or to come and collect them if the child does not seem well enough to be at kindergarten.

Food Allergies and Intolerances

Please inform us in writing if your child has an allergy or intolerance and we will do everything possible to accommodate this. We may ask you to complete an Allergy Protocol form so that we have the information that we need, particularly in the event of your child having an allergy that causes anaphylaxis.

At Kids Love Nature Kindergarten our menus are vegetarian but include fish and we avoid refined sugar wherever possible. We are able to accommodate dietary needs and preferences for example by providing soya milk, dairy free spread, and gluten free products. We can provide information on the 14 allergens. Please speak to the kindergarten manager for further information.

Kindergarten Policies

We have a full set of policies and procedures to ensure that we provide the highest quality care and education for your child. Details of our complaints procedure is on the kindergarten noticeboard. A full copy of our Policies and Procedures is available in the office – please feel free to ask if you would like to see this at any time. There is also a list of all policies on the kindergarten noticeboard.



Arrival & Collection

At our Lymington and Avon Heath kindergartens, our day runs from 8am to 5pm. At our Marwell Zoo and Lytchett kindergartens, our day runs from 7.45am until 5pm, with an additional commuter hour until 6pm. We offer flexible drop off until 9am and collection between 3pm and 5pm. Please note that we are unable to refund for hours not used.

Please ensure that your child is collected on time as late collections have a knock on impact for the teachers who need to have meetings and prepare the environment for the next day.

We ask that you introduce anyone who is on the list of people authorised to collect your child to a member of staff so that we can recognise them.

If you need to ask someone to collect your child who is not known to us, please give them a password and provide us with the password, the person's name and a description of them. The person concerned should bring ID to the kindergarten when collecting your child. If you need to make these arrangements on the day and cannot let us know when dropping off, please telephone the kindergarten with this information.

We will not release a child to someone who is not known to us or who does not have a password.



Accidents and Incidents

We take every precaution to prevent accident or injury; however, these things do of course happen from time to time. If your child has an accident or is involved in an incident at school (such as hurting, or being hurt by, another child) we will record the details of the accident or incident and the action taken by the teachers. We will then discuss this with you and ask you to sign the form to confirm that we have spoken with you. Please note that we are a kindergarten with a strong outdoor focus and as such bumps and grazes are par for the course – we will not fill out an accident form for a grazed knee but in the event of a more serious injury we will always let you know.

In the unlikely event that your child has a serious accident we will telephone you straight away (after 999). If it is not serious enough for 999 but we are concerned, we will also always contact you and may request that you collect your child to get them checked out. We usually call parents in the event of any head injury, just to be on the safe side.

Birthdays

When it is your child's birthday, please do feel free to bring in a cake or other treat. Please ensure it is nut-free and label the food with ingredients as we have children in the kindergarten with allergies and intolerances.

If you would like to hold a party for your child we are happy to pop invitations into other children's bags, but please note we are not able to pass contact details on without parent permission.

Registration Fee & Deposit

A Registration fee of £50 is payable, unless you are claiming 2 year old funding. A £200 deposit is required to secure your child's place. It is payable at the point at which your child has been offered a place and a start date confirmed. Your child's place is not secured until the deposit, collected via direct debit, has been received. This deposit is held for the duration of your child's stay at the kindergarten and will be used to offset your final months invoice. Any remaining deposit (having settled all invoices) will be returned to you when your child leaves the kindergarten via a bank transfer. If you cancel your place before starting with us, this deposit will be nonrefundable.

Payment of Fees

Fees are payable monthly in advance. They are collected via Direct Debit on the 1st of each month. We accept Childcare Voucher Schemes for salary sacrifice and Tax Free Childcare scheme payments; please contact your Kindergarten office with details of the scheme your employer operates and how much you wish to pay via voucher each month. Payments received via vouchers or tax free childcare by the 19th of the month will be used against the following months fees.

Early Years Education Funding

Your child will be eligible for the Early Years Education funding scheme (Universal funding) from the term after their third birthday until the term after their fifth birthday. If you are eligible to claim 'Extended funding' or '2 year old funding' you will need to provide your kindergarten with the validation number provided by your local borough.

We stretch funding across 51 weeks of the year. If you receive 'Universal funding' or '2 year old funding' we require your child to attend kindergarten for a minimum of 2 full days or 3 half days per week. If you receive 'Extended funding' we require your child to attend kindergarten for a minimum of 3 full days or 5 half days per week, unless you are splitting the funding with another setting. This enables sustainability for our kindergartens and provides you with the highest financial gain from your funding.

Currently we offer limited sessions with free entitlement between 1pm and 5pm Monday to Friday for children who only attend in the afternoons (i.e. your child must take up their free hours between the hours of 1pm to 5pm).



Sessions and Notice Periods

If you need to reduce your child's sessions, please be aware that we do ask for one month's notice to do so. If you need additional sessions on a permanent or an ad hoc basis, we will try to accommodate this where possible, but of course we cannot guarantee that we will have space.

As per our terms and conditions, a month's notice is required to withdraw your child from kindergarten. Please note that refunds cannot be given for holidays taken or sickness when a child is registered to attend the kindergarten.

All kindergarten fees are reviewed annually and are subject to change.

Questions, Concerns and Compliments

We are always very happy to receive feedback from parents, and welcome this.

If you have a concern, we would first ask you to raise this with the kindergarten manager who will be pleased to meet with you in person to discuss your concern and answer any questions. We hope that the majority of matters can be resolved in this way but if you still have a concern following this, we will ask you to put this into writing and we will follow this up as soon as possible, but always within 28 days. Our complaints procedure is available for you to see, please just ask the kindergarten manager.

If you have any questions about your child's time at kindergarten, please do talk to your key person. You are always welcome to make an appointment at a mutually convenient time if you need a slightly longer conversation than is possible at arrival and collection times.

We are always delighted to hear what you think we are doing well as this helps us in our processes of reflection and self-evaluation. Similarly, if you have any ideas for how we can develop the kindergarten further, please do let us know!

Useful Contacts

Kids Love Nature Contact Details

w: www.kidslovenature.co.uk

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten at Lytchett

e: lytchett@kidslovenature.co.uk

t: 01202 622337

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten at Marwell Zoo

e: marwellzoo@kidslovenature.co.uk

t: 01962 777403

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten at Lymington

e: lymington@kidslovenature.co.uk

t: 01590 626607

Kids Love Nature Kindergarten at Avon Heath

e: avonheath@kidslovenature.co.uk

t: 01425 483889

Other Useful Contacts:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD
0300 123 1231

enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Safeguarding Contact Dorset (Lytchett and Avon Heath)

Pan-Dorset Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
(MASH)

Email: MASH@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Tel: 01202 228866

Safeguarding Contact Hampshire (Marwell Zoo and Lymington)

Hampshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs
(MASH)

Email: childrens.services@hants.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 555 1373 (office hours) or
0300 555 1373 (our of hours)