



Help your child to learn at home.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Settling Into Nursery

Children cannot learn until they feel safe and happy in a setting. At Hirst Wood Nursery School your child will have a personalised settling-in plan which will gradually increase the time they spend at Nursery until they know the staff and feel settled in the learning environment. We work with parents to ensure that children can grow in confidence during their first few weeks and enjoy the new experiences on offer.

Ways to help settle your child include:

- sharing information about your child at the 'Getting to Know You' session
- providing a family photograph to display in the classroom
- starting with short visits so that your child knows that you are going to return and to enable them to experience success
- being positive about their new experiences and talking about the things they enjoy at nursery
- making goodbyes short and sweet – prolonging the transition often makes children more anxious
- not worrying – if your child doesn't settle we will contact you and adapt the settling-in plan
- communicating any concerns so that we can provide appropriate support

At Nursery we will find out about your child's interests and use them to create positive experiences. This may include spending time using favourite toys or sharing familiar stories. We also have soft toys and class puppets to help your child to settle.

Your child will have a Key Person who will support your child to form positive relationships. However, the whole team work together to help your child to develop a feeling of security and belonging.

Making Relationships

When your child comes to nursery they will already have formed relationships with special people at home.

At nursery there will be new adults and children to form relationships with. Play will be the main way in which new connections are formed.



At first, most children choose toys that interest them and play alongside other children. At this stage friends are often momentary playmates who are conveniently nearby.

Next children start to seek out others who have the same interests then join together to play games. At this stage children still have a very limited ability to see other perspectives and can become upset when a playmate has a different opinion. However, some children will begin to form attachments to 'special friends'.

After that, children identify friends who meet their wants and needs. These early friendships help children to explore how relationships work by testing boundaries through play. At this stage of development, children are just beginning to be able to see things from another's perspective, making their friendships more secure and long lasting.

You can help at home by:

- playing with your child so that they have positive experiences of how to interact with others
- arranging to see other children so that your child has opportunities to form relationships e.g. meet another family at the park, go for a walk in the woods with cousins or invite a friend for tea
- reading and discussing stories about friends e.g. Pip and Posy stories by Axel Scheffler
- talking about feelings and how to solve problems

'Has ___ made some friends yet?' is one of the most commonly asked questions at parent consultations and understandably a common concern. At Hirst Wood Nursery School we support children to develop relationships through play and positive interactions but it is a journey not necessarily a destination. From playing alongside to having a special friend takes time but learning about friendship happens every time they interact with other person.

Self Confidence & Managing Self

Self confidence develops as children experience success, overcome problems and make choices.

You can help at home by:

- offering two choices e.g. "Would you like an apple or a banana?"
- celebrating your child's small successes e.g. putting on their own coat
- allowing time for your child to solve their own problems
- helping your child learn from mistakes e.g. "What could you do next time to...?"
- being encouraging – "You can do it!"

Managing self is when children understand their own wants, needs and opinions. At nursery we encourage children to talk about their interests and recognise their own achievements.

You can help at home by:

- talking about how situations make them feel (both positive and negative emotions)
- looking at facial expressions in magazines or a mirror and discussing the related emotions
- encouraging your child to talk about their interests and achievements

Self-Regulation

We all have needs. When our needs are not met we experience negative emotions. For young children this presents a number of challenges due to their communication skills, lack of experience and limited awareness of the needs of others. At nursery we work with the children to name emotions and overcome problems so that they feel safe, secure and respected.

At Hirst Wood Nursery School we provide support according to the child's needs and understanding. Creating a calm, positive and supportive atmosphere raises self-esteem and helps children to develop self-regulation. Some boundaries are also necessary to enable children to be safe and happy. To find out more you can read the Behaviour Policy on the school's website. If you have any concerns about behaviour please speak to a member of staff. We are keen to help.

You can help at home by:

- thinking about what 'needs' have led your child to exhibit behaviours
- naming emotions to help your child to communicate their needs
- acknowledging your child's feelings e.g. "Your face looks sad. Leaving the park makes me feel sad too but I am looking forward to eating tea when we get home."
- providing warnings when there is going to be a change of activity and letting your child know what is happening next
- using distraction to avoid conflict – you can't make your child eat their peas so instead try "I wonder how many peas you can fit on your fork?"
- being clear and consistent – try not to give in to your child's demands
- having realistic expectations – how many shops can you visit before your child's patience runs out?
- **praising the positives even the small things** e.g. "Thank you for putting the train track in the box that's made me feel happy."

The Early Years Curriculum

Not all children develop at the same rate but by the end of nursery most children will...

- Seek out companionship with adults and other children, sharing experiences and play ideas
- Show increasing consideration of other people's needs and gradually more impulse control, e.g. giving up a toy to another who wants it
- Practice skills of assertion, negotiation and compromise and look to a supportive adult for help in resolving conflict with peers
- Enjoy playing alone, alongside and with others, inviting others to play and attempting to join others' play
- Become more aware of the similarities and differences between themselves and others
- Be sensitive to others' messages of appreciation or criticism
- Enjoy a sense of belonging through being involved in daily tasks
- Show their confidence and self-esteem through being outgoing towards people, taking risks and trying new things or new social situations and being able to express their needs and ask adults for help
- Express a wide range of feelings in their interactions with others and through their behaviour and play, including excitement and anxiety, guilt and self-doubt
- Talk about how others might be feeling and respond according to their understanding of the other person's needs and wants
- Understand that expectations vary depending on different events, social situations and changes in routine, and becomes more able to adapt their behaviour in favourable conditions