



## Ladybird Forest Pre-School

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## Ladybird Forest Pre-School

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Ladybird Forest Pre-School is a small friendly pre-school currently offering up to 41 places at each session. The aims of the pre-school are to provide a happy and stimulating environment for your child. We believe that each child should have equal opportunity and access to as many resources as we can provide.

**Ladybird Forest Pre-School Ampthill** (registered name) became a limited company in October 2012 whilst still retaining charitable status. The charity is governed by a group of Directors - volunteers made up of parents/carers. Ladybird Forest Pre-school also has a Fundraising Committee that parents can get involved in, which runs termly fundraising activities to buy resources for the pre-school. Ladybird is Ofsted registered and is usually inspected every 3-4 years. Please refer to the Ofsted website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)) to view Ladybird's latest excellent Ofsted report (March 2019), where the setting received an 'outstanding' grading. The pre-school also operates the Nursery Education Funding, NEF Scheme for 2, 3- and 4-year olds, is a member of the Early Years Alliance (formerly the PSLA) as well as being registered with the Charities Commission and at Companies House.

Ladybird Forest Pre-School operates out of a purpose-built portacabin in the grounds of Russell Lower School. In addition to our own facilities, we are very fortunate to be able to take advantage of the extensive facilities and infrastructure of Russell Lower School, i.e. the outdoor playground, playing field, large hall, etc.

Due to our success, popularity and demand for pre-school places and always looking to improve on the services we offer to our parents/carers we have introduced a Breakfast Club from the Autumn Term 2017 to complement our After Pre-School Club, which has been running since the Autumn Term 2015 Term - open to Pre-School aged children only.

Ladybird Forest Pre-School runs as a fully independent pre-school and children attending Ladybird will continue to feed into **both** Russell Lower and the Firs Lower schools in Ampthill, as well as Maulden Lower and other local Lower schools in the area.

### 2. THE AIMS OF LADYBIRD FOREST PRE-SCHOOL

Ladybird Forest Pre-School aims to prepare your child for school and for life in general, in a happy and friendly environment. We encourage your child's personal and social development and aim to increase his/her confidence through a variety of activities. We hope to see a happy sociable child who is friendly, willing to share with others and prepared to co-operate with other children and adults.

Ladybird Forest Pre-School encourages children to develop good learning skills and to concentrate on set tasks. We also encourage the children to question, to talk and to listen. Your child will experiment with all sorts of materials: they will construct, cook, paint, sing, play musical instruments, read books and listen to stories. The children have access to books, paper, stencils, scissors, glue, pencils, paints, a computer, role-playing toys, outside play area & playing field and large hall.

Ladybird Forest Pre-School operates a 'free flow system' using four rooms and the outside play area. This enables the children to control their own learning agendas and they can meet their personal needs with greater independence. Offering 'free flow' means the children can choose from a wide range of activities throughout the day. The children mix with their entire peer group during each session.

### 3. OFSTED

Ladybird Forest Pre-School follows the Early Years and Childcare Registration handbook guidance issued by Ofsted (published December 2015), The guidance sets out Ofsted's policy on registering Early Years and Childcare provisions in England. The handbook does not include guidance on registering with a childminder agency. If you would like to read through the Early Years and Childcare Registration handbook, please follow this link: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework).

### 4. SAFEGUARDING & RELAY

Safeguarding children is fundamental in providing a safe and secure environment. Ladybirds fulfills all safeguarding duties through vigorous recruitment policies, training and development. All staff within Ladybird's

Setting are fully DBS checked and undergo safeguarding training both externally and in-house on a regular basis. We have a 'Password Pick-Up Policy' in place and ensure that allocated members of the team carry out extensive risk assessments each session. The managers at Ladybird's regularly review any safeguarding issues and will address queries every morning at our 'Staff Feedback Meetings'. At Ladybirds, we all know that it is our duty to protect and safeguard our children and we will continue to do so to ensure we provide the very best outcomes for the children and their families.

- **RELAY:** Pre-Schools, schools and education provisions are responsible for the safety and welfare for all their pupils. In conjunction with our setting's safeguarding policy we are also an education setting within Central Bedfordshire that is signed up to a safeguarding protocol called Relay.

The Relay Support function works in conjunction with Bedfordshire Police and Pre-Schools / Schools / education settings to assist with essential safeguarding information relating to children. Following a domestic incident being reported to the Police – this Crime Report will be sent to the Relay team to review and provide support the following morning.

It is a very difficult time when families are experiencing domestic abuse, and this has an impact not only on the parents, but on the children. Relay works to confidentially share the information with the Safeguarding Lead (Key Adult) in the child's setting so that the right support can be offered to the child when they arrive. This can be "silent" support simply keeping an extra eye on the child or immediate intervention for children – offering nurture work, pastoral care or a safe person to share the child's fears and worries. This work is dependent on each case and the needs and wishes of the child and in some cases parents.

Part of the safeguarding work that takes place following a Domestic Abuse incident; the Police will make a referral into Social Services' Access and Referral Hub. The purpose of this is to review the incident to see if there is a role for children's services but in the majority of cases, unless there is significant risk of harm, the support is offered in the form of Early Help which primarily is led by the setting. Therefore, with the Pre-School being aware of the situation prevents the need to keep telling people what has been happening can avoid unnecessary distress. The Pre-School can therefore provide the key link for accessing much needed help and support at this difficult time for both parents and children.

We operate an "open door policy" and are always approachable should any parent or child be concerned that someone may be suffering from domestic abuse and it is not uncommon that many incidents are unreported to the Police. We are here to support children and families with unreported domestic abuse and Relay can support with this as appropriate.

We believe by agencies working together to share Domestic Abuse information allows everyone to be supported and breaks through a barrier of Domestic Abuse remaining behind closed doors.

## 5. CCTV AT THE SETTING

There are several CCTV cameras installed throughout the setting, both indoors and outdoors. The decision to install internal and external cameras was taken after due consideration and is the result of vandalism in the Forest School area in the past as well as to maintain high standards of Safeguarding within the setting for our children and staff alike.

The Pre-School currently holds all data in accordance with current legislation – the addition of the CCTV camera system is simply one more piece of data. It is a piece of sensitive data and the data will be kept in accordance with all GDPR principles. Both our Data Protection Policy and CCTV Policy are available on request.

## 6. 'COMMUNICATION FRIENDLY AWARD'

The Communication Friendly Award is an award of excellence for those settings who have shown understanding and implementation of a range of methods to support the communication skills of all children in their care. Settings show how they reflect on their provision and the children who use it, to maintain their high standards of support.

The Communication Friendly Award is awarded to Early Years settings that show excellent and consistent practice in supporting children's communication and language. We ensure that these skills are imbedded within

our daily practice and learning environment. The whole setting shows commitment to supporting and developing children's communication and language skills.

Communication friendly environments allow all children to become competent, confident and capable communicators in readiness for school. They remove barriers to communication for those children with Speech, Language and Communication needs and allow them to reach their potential within a supportive environment.

“Communication is an essential life skill. It is the basis on which all children learn, achieve and make friends. It is vital to the development of children's social and emotional wellbeing” Bercow Review 2008.

Communication is embedded in all aspects of education and it is widely understood that communication is a key life skill which underpins all other learning. Enabling children to have good early language skills is critical in ensuring their chances of succeeding in school and later life are greatly improved.

## **7. 'MILLIE'S MARK'**

We have successfully been awarded 'Millie's' Mark', a quality mark for pre-schools, where all employees working directly with children are trained in Paediatric First Aid. The award has been given by the National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA) in association with the Department for Education and Millie's Trust.

However, we will not rest on our laurels and our hard work in continuously developing our quality in care and education will not stop. It is crucial that we maintain the criteria over its three years' lifespan before being re-assessed again.

## **8. 'HEALTHY SMILES' AWARD**

The 'Healthy Smiles' Award is a public health program, which supports services working with young children to adopt tooth-friendly practices.

By implementing the five 'Healthy Smiles' standards, we aim to:

- increase the dentist attendance of children in our care;
- promote positive oral health messages to the children, employees and parents;
- reduce the frequency of sugary food and drinks given to the children.

Staff training is provided by the Oral Health Promotion Team to support the employee teams taking part in the award.

As a 'Healthy Smiles' settings we are set up so all children in our care have the opportunity to take part in our supervised teeth-brushing program on site. The 'Healthy Smiles' team provides guidelines and training to support us with this.

## **9. EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM**

When your child first joins, you will be given a questionnaire to return describing your child's interests and likes and any particular friends etc., to help the staff to get to know your child. Ladybird Forest Pre-School monitors the development of all using the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is based on the following Prime Areas of development:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development

In addition to these Prime Areas, there are also 4 areas of Specific learning:

1. Literacy
2. Understanding of the World
3. Mathematics
4. Expressive Arts and Design

## **10. KEY PERSON / HOME VISITS**

Please be advised that your child will be allocated a Key Person from the day s/he joins Ladybird Forest Pre-School. You and your child will be offered a home visit alongside a visit to view a session at the setting. This

will give you the opportunity to meet your child's Key Person and for them to get to know your child. Neither of these visits are mandatory and it is totally your decision whether you wish to take up either of these opportunities.

Your child's Key Person is your main contact during your child's stay at Ladybirds and they look after both the emotional and developmental aspects of your child. Although all members of the team will make observations regarding your child's progress throughout his/her time with us, it is the Key Person who is responsible for your child's personal 'folder'. Please feel free to approach your child's Key Person if you have any questions, queries or comment regarding your child's development at Ladybird Forest Pre-School, and arrange an appointment to speak to them during a **Parents/Carers Consultation Evening**.

Due to the number of children per session, who are being picked up all at the same time, it is impractical for members of the team to give each parent/carer feed-back about their child's progress during any given session or day at the pre-school. However, if you have any specific concerns or issues please talk to your child's Key Person or the pre-school session leaders.

## 11. THEMES & ACTIVITIES

The observed activities provided by Ladybird Forest Pre-School on a day-to-day basis are based upon the current 'theme'. Each half term will contain several 'themes'. Parents/carers will be informed of the activities at the start of term and after half-term via an 'Activity Sheet'. This will also inform parents/carers of anything the children need to bring in or of any special requirements or outings. Please remember that not all children are keen to participate in every activity (it is purely their choice) and so s/he may not bring anything home to show you on a particular day. However, this does not mean that the staff members are not aware of what your child is doing, and they will be monitoring his/her progress using a variety of other methods.

## 12. TAPESTRY

We use an easy-to-use online learning journal, called 'Tapestry'. Tapestry helps educators and parents/carers to record, track and celebrate children's progress in Early Years Education.

Ladybirds is fun-packed and busy. From messy play, Forest School session, Small Group Extended Learning/Lift Off to Language sessions, age-appropriate group play and first steps to learning phonics letters and new games, there's so much for children to do, learn and take in.

Tapestry enhances this special time, helping practitioners to capture your child's experiences as well as monitor his/her development and learning. This unique journal is shared on-line with parents/carers, where you are able to see special moments and view your child's progress. Text, images and videos can be easily uploaded via PC, tablet or our mobile app - anywhere where there is an on-line connection. Every entry is another piece of the 'puzzle' and helps to create a complete story of a child's time at our setting.

Tapestry covers the Early Years Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 groups and is designed to simplify and improve recording within these curriculums. Information can be filtered and displayed in different ways, and assessments and statements can be made for each entry.

This means there is no need for using ring binders or scrapbooks as learning records, or time-consuming written notes and glued-in photos. When children leave the setting, we provide parents with a permanent record of their child's journal as a keepsake.

Used by hundreds of Nurseries, Pre-Schools and Schools all over the country, each setting receives a complete, secure application with its own web address, as well as full viewing and editing controls.

## 13. OBSERVATIONS

During the duration of your child's time at Ladybird Forest Pre-School, staff will monitor his/her development against the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This is carried out by doing 'observations' on your child, either on a pre-defined activity or by 'tracking' your child at a series of activities. The observations are used to highlight those areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum that your child has achieved. The setting uses Tapestry, as detailed above, to record all observations.

## 14. YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESS

The observations performed on all the children at Ladybirds are used to 'map' the developmental progress of each individual child. If your child's Key Person has any concerns about your child's development with regards



to any of the six areas of learning, then in the first instance they will speak to the parent/carer. Ladybird has an appointed SEND member of staff (Special Educational Needs & Disability), who receives up-to-date training. Should your child need some extra help with any particular area, it may be necessary to implement an internal Individual Education Plan (IEP). This does not mean that your child has problems, merely that s/he needs to have some extra time allocated to that area of learning with a member of staff. This ensures that your child's individual needs are being met. Conversely, it may be that your child excels in a certain area, in which case an IEP may be implemented to stretch him/her.

If, following the implementation of an IEP, your child needs further support - and with parental consent - we can call on the support of other professionals to assist, such as speech therapists, health visitors or Early Years' Inclusion Officers.

## 15. SMALL GROUPS / PHONICS SESSIONS

Each child is allocated one 'Small Group/Phonics' session per week, lasting for approximately ½ hour. These sessions are held in small groups of up to 5 children. The setting has a named staff member who delivers both sessions. The sessions have proven to enhance children's communication, language and social skills and School readiness.

'Small Group' sessions help to support the development of children's communication and language skills within the Early Years environment and aims to have a long-term impact. The small group sessions help supports the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) themes and principles. "Communication is an essential life skill. It is the basis on which all children learn, achieve and make friends. It is vital to the development of children's social and emotional wellbeing". (Bercow Report, 2008).

The Phonics sessions help children with writing and recognizing their names in preparation for School readiness. The Pre-School has regularly network meetings with the local lower Schools to maintain the guidance given from the Reception Class teachers.

## 16. EXTENDED LEARNING AT HOME

Early Literacy Begins with You, we send all children home with a weekly book and a book log to help get your child ready to read. All Children are encouraged to choose their own books to help promote their independence. We encourage parents to extend their child's learning by discussing which book they have chosen and why.

Help your child get ready to read with simple activities every day.

**Reading is essential to school success** - Learning to read begins before children start school. From the time, they are infants, children learn language and other important skills that will help them learn to read. Developing early literacy skills makes it easier for children to read once they begin school.

**You can help your child get ready to read** - It's never too early or too late to help your child develop language and other early literacy skills. Here are five of the best ways for children to get ready to read.

**Talking** - Talking with children helps them learn oral language, one of the most critical early literacy skills. The experience of self-expression also stimulates brain development, which underlies all learning.

- Make sure your child has lots of opportunities to talk with you, not just listen to you talk.
- Stretch your child's vocabulary. Repeat what your child says and use new words. "You would like a banana? That's a healthy choice."

**Singing** - Singing, which also includes rhyming, increases children's awareness of sensitivity to the sounds in words. This helps prepare children to decode print (written language).

- Sing the alphabet song to learn about letters.
- Clap along to the rhythms in songs so children hear the syllables in words.

**Reading** - Reading together, or shared reading, remains the single most effective way to help children become proficient readers.

- Read every day.
- Use books to help teach new words. Books can teach less common words, words that children may not hear in everyday conversation. As you read, talk about what these words mean.

**Writing** - Writing and reading go together. Writing helps children learn that letters and words stand for sounds and that print has meaning.

- Writing begins with scribbles and other marks. Encourage this by providing many opportunities to draw and write.
- Talk with your child about what they draw and write captions or stories together. This helps make a connection between spoken and printed language.

**Playing** - Play is one of the primary ways young children learn about the world. General knowledge is an important literacy skill that helps children understand books and stories once they begin to read.

- Give your child plenty of playtime. Some of the best kinds of play are unstructured, when children can use their imagination and create stories about what they are doing.
- Encourage dramatic play. When children make up stories using puppets or stuffed animals, they develop important narrative skills. This helps children understand that stories and books have a beginning, middle and end.

### **Why is it important for children to get ready to read before they start school?**

Children who enter school with pre-reading skills have an advantage. They can focus on learning to read instead of first learning essential pre-reading skills. Children who start reception ready to read have greater success throughout their school years.

### **Why are parents/carers so important in helping children get ready to read?**

You have been your child's teacher from the day he or she was born. You know more about your child than anyone else. You are in the best position to help your child get ready to read because:

- Young children have short attention spans. You can do activities for short bits of time throughout the day or over the weekend.
- You know your child best and you can help him/her learn in ways and at times that are easiest for them.
- Parents/carers are tremendous role models – if your child sees that you think reading is important and enjoy it, they will follow your lead.
- Children learn best by doing – and they love doing things with YOU.

### **Source: Public Library Association, Every Child Ready to Read**

The Library is an excellent resource to support you as your child's first and most important teacher. You can find picture stories, educational resources, story times, and the expertise of your local children's librarian. The library can serve as your child's first classroom. At Ladybird Forest Pre-school, we support the importance in helping children get ready to read by sending all children home with a book on a weekly basis. All we ask you to do, is support your child and read with them, questioning them throughout the book.

Your child's 'change of book day' will be written on the front of their book bag, please support us by completing the book log, which can be found within your child's bag.

## **17. MINDFULNESS / WELLBEING SESSIONS**

At Ladybirds each child takes part in a 15-minute Mindfulness/Wellbeing session. We believe that children should experience the benefits of meditation and mindfulness to help them understand their feelings and the importance of meditation from an early age.

### **Benefits of Meditation and Mindfulness for Children**

The benefits to children who experience mindfulness and meditation are many, including the following:

- **improves focus and attention** – regular meditation strengthens the prefrontal cortex – the reflective part of the brain and encourages a state of relaxed, wakeful attention. Meditation also promotes a better quality of sleep, which also boosts focus.
- **has a positive impact on the physical body** – regular meditation and mindfulness tools help to boost relaxation and thus alleviates physical symptoms of stress e.g. tummy upsets, so less time off pre-school/school.
- **promotes self-regulation of behaviour** – a strengthened prefrontal cortex allows children to be aware of that split second of time between stimulus and reaction thus permitting a considered response to stress e.g. being able to overcome the urge to react aggressively to another child who is goading them.





- **manages impulsivity** – as children strengthen their prefrontal cortex, they are more aware of their choice of how to react to stimuli e.g. the teacher asking the class a question and the child being aware that they have a choice not to shout out the answer.
- **encourages positivity** – teaching children how to process negative emotions and let go of negative thoughts and so that they can face regular aspects of life more easily, without being overwhelmed by fear and anxiety.
- **builds self-esteem** – children know that whatever is going on around them they can choose how they react on the inside. They are more aware of those choices and responses and with this comes empowerment. They can be more confident about their ability to respond positively to situations they find stressful and modify their behaviour accordingly.
- **builds resilience** – children have more of an ‘I can’ approach to difficulties because they have more confidence to deal with frustration in a positive way

**Mindfulness and Meditation are beneficial for the following:**

- |                |                                     |                 |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| * ADHD         | * behavioural problems              | * self-harming  |
| * anger issues | * difficulties in maintaining focus | * stomach pains |
| * anxiety      | * difficulties sleeping             | * stress        |
| * ASD          | * headaches                         |                 |

**What is Mindfulness?**

Mindfulness simply means being present in the ‘here and now’ in our thoughts; with practice we can improve our ability to focus on the current moment without interference from overwhelming fears about the future and memories of negative events in our lives.

Mindful activities do not act as a magic wand that removes difficulties from our lives but help us to deal with negative emotions such as anger, fear, resentment and jealousy without repressing or denying them. It is the fighting and repressing of such uncomfortable feelings that causes problems such as destructive and attention seeking behaviour, self-harm and eating disorders which are prevalent amongst our children.

**What are Mindful activities?**

Mindful activities include breathing techniques, basic yoga, mindfulness meditation to aid relaxation, visualisation, mindful colouring and mindful listening.

**18. PARENTS’ CONSULTATION EVENINGS**

Twice a year, Ladybird Forest Pre-School holds Parents/Carers Consultation Evenings, usually in October for our New Starters only and in March for all children attending the setting. This is a social event where you will have the opportunity to see how you child is progressing. You will be able to see the observation sheets that have been completed for your child. You may discuss any areas you have concerns about with your child’s Key Person. Your child’s Key Person will also have a report stating how your child is developing in each of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum learning areas.

**19. PARENT EVENTS**

We very much encourage parents/carers to come along and support their child(ren) in several events during the school year and to be involved in the Fundraising Committee which meets on a regular basis to arrange events such as the Christmas Bazaar, the Easter Egg Hunt and the Ampthill Summer Gala Parade.

At the end of the Autumn Term we hold our annual Children's Christmas Songs & Rhymes Concert, to which parents/ carers are invited. Every child, whether s/he has just started or is due to leave the following summer, is involved. Our annual Sports Day takes place towards the end of the Summer Term on the playing field of Russell Lower School. Parents/carers are invited to come along and cheer their child(ren) on, and even take part in the ‘adult’ races! The staff members ensure that all children can take part in a range of races appropriate to their age.

**20. LEAVER’S REPORT**

When your child leaves our setting to go to ‘big’ school, we provide parents/carers with a folder containing his/her observation sheets (to be passed on to the school), some photographs of your child during his/her time at Ladybird Forest Pre-School and an End of Year Report. The report will give you details of how your child has progressed in each of the Foundation Stage educational areas. A report on your child’s development will also be passed onto the school they will be moving on to.



Transition to school - All children leaving to go to school will be given the opportunity to have a 'transition day' to the local school with their Key Person and their parents/carers. Ladybird Forest Pre-School works closely with the local schools to make your child's transition to school as smoothly as possible.

## 21. FOREST SCHOOL

Our Forest School offers the children the opportunity to extend and support their learning through interacting with the outside environment. Forest School sessions support the main curriculum and have a strong emphasis on raising all children's self-esteem and independence. An integral part of the Forest School experience is that children experience the outdoors in all weathers. Except for very high winds and thunderstorms, children taking part in Forest School will be provided with waterproof jacket and waterproof trousers. Parents are asked to supply wellington or walking boots and, on sunny days, a sun hat and sun cream; on colder days, warm clothing.

Forest School activities teach the children about caring for, managing and understanding the woodland environment. To do this, children have opportunities to use hand tools such as bow saws, potato peeler and bill hooks, as well as learning about different fires and their uses. Please be reassured that Forest Schools nationally have an excellent safety record thanks to the robust procedures the Forest School Leaders are required to have in place before we can offer those sessions.

Forest School sessions can only be run by a qualified Forest School Leader. A ratio of 2 adults to 11 children or less is always maintained so that children taking part in more potentially hazardous activities are adequately supervised. Should you wish to read through our Forest School Policy, please ask any member of the Ladybird team. We have a large risk assessment and policy file, which contains all relevant procedures and risk assessments for every activity at Forest School and ensures that all risks have been reduced to an acceptable level. By raising your child's independence and self-esteem, they should be able to use the Forest School to enhance their learning in other areas of the curriculum whilst developing a love and understanding of the natural environment.

When your child first joins Ladybirds, you will be asked to sign a consent form so that your child will be able to participate once a week in a Forest School session. Please note that, unfortunately, we can only offer the Forest School session to children who attend Ladybird for more than one session per week as your child would not spend enough time with his/her key person each week otherwise.

**Please also note that we ask for a £5.00 donation per term for Forest School. This donation is entirely voluntary, but monies received go towards resourcing different activities for your child/ren to use whilst at Forest School.**

## 22. PLAYGROUND

We managed to secure £10,000.00 from the Big Lottery Fund to create an enchanting play area for our children. The project was completed during the summer 2015 and now consists of blue wet pour area with a curved edge to symbolise the sea at the top of the playground, meeting a yellow wet pour area symbolising the sand. This allows for imaginative play for children, especially those, who may have never experienced going to the sea-side.

The rest of the surface is green with a designated 'road' pathway and added zebra crossing encouraging children to learn about road safety. This will, hopefully mean that our children will be well-educated and will understand the dangers of roads and vehicles.

The EYFS (2008) highlights the fundamental importance that educators should provide children with challenging and adventurous outdoor play opportunities, in order to assist in extending children's development and allowing them to really appreciate their environment. The EYFS (2008) goes on to identify that children in the Early Years should be allowed to take risks and to learn from their mistakes, whilst also identifying that practitioners must ensure safety without excluding reasonable risk-taking. It has been proven that children who have been kept away from taking risks altogether do not know how to handle it, and could, therefore, look for more dangerous places, maybe out of the view of adults (in the home environment) to seek this skill.

## 23. ADMISSIONS POLICY

Ladybird Forest Pre-School operates an 'Equal Opportunity' Admissions Policy. Children are admitted from the age of 2 years upwards – the term AFTER their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday.



Our waiting list is arranged according to your child's date of birth, and children are admitted according to their ages irrespective of how long they have been on the waiting list and then adhered to the criteria set out as follows:

1. Three and four-year-old funded children in order to receive their full entitlement of 15 or 30 funded hours of care and education each week;
2. Two-year-old funded children in order to receive their full entitlement of 15 or 30 hours of care and education each week;
3. All other children in birth order.

We welcome mothers, fathers and other carers such as childminders, grandparents, step-parents and other relations.

We will meet the needs of the children attending our setting having regard to their gender, special educational needs, disabilities, social background, religion, ethnicity or those with English as a second language. We employ a full-time SEND member of staff.

We encourage and enable all children and families to take part in the setting consulting with families regularly to ensure we accommodate a broad range of family needs.

We are flexible with attendance patterns to accommodate the needs of individual children and their families, providing these do not disrupt the continuity in the setting, which provides stability for all children and provided this not contravene the funding agreement with Central Beds.

## 24. SESSIONS

Our sessions run as follows from Monday to Friday:

- 'Breakfast Club' – 7.45am to 8.50am**
- Morning Session – 8.50am to 11.50am**
- 'Lunch Club' – 11.50am to 12.20pm**
- Afternoon Session – 12.20pm to 3.20pm**
- 'After Pre-School Club' – 3.20pm to 6.00pm**

Please make sure that you collect your child on time. Children can find it very distressing when parents / carers are late, and we are only insured for the opening times of the sessions.

We provide, where possible, up to 10 sessions - which can be funded by the government the term *after* their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, depending on whether you are eligible to access the extended entitlement of 30 hours. Children who are eligible for government funding get priority for spaces. Children get offered spaces based on age order (the eldest receiving their sessions first). We are also registered with Central Bedfordshire Council to accept 2-year old funding. Please contact the Administration Manager for a Self-Referral Form.

We will require your child to attend Ladybirds for a **minimum of 2 sessions per week** (provided we have the places of course and which might not necessarily be possible once we are nearly full and the session availability has become very limited). Feedback from the Ladybird team has suggested that children attending any less than that do not settle in as quickly and the Key Person is not able to get to know their key child as well as they would like to. If your child is attending one of the Forest School sessions, they won't be spending all of their time within the setting anyway, which also cuts down on the time your child's Key Person is spending with them.

## 25. ATTENDANCE, FEES & FUNDING

### Fees

For children who are not eligible for funding or who exceed their allocated funding hours, **the fees are £13.20 per morning or afternoon session, £3.20 per 'Lunch Club', £4.40 for the Breakfast Club and for the fee**

**structure for the After Pre-School Club please see below.** Please be advised that fees are subject to **annual reviews**. A fee invoice will be issued at the beginning of each half term, based on the number of sessions, Lunch Clubs, Breakfast Clubs or After Pre-School Clubs your child attends per week. The fee invoice will be issued straight after the funding forms have been processed at the beginning of each new term.

Fees must be paid to the Administration Manager within two weeks of receipt of notification each half term or as per the deadline given at the bottom of the invoice. **We accept payments in cash or via BACS transfers.** Due to bank charges, we are, unfortunately, no longer able to accept cheques. We are also registered with several **childcare voucher schemes** – please ask the Administration Manager for further details.

If no payment has been received by the end of the two weeks/deadline given, a written reminder will be sent to parents/carers requesting payment within 5 working days of the date of the letter. If no payment is received within that 5-day period, the Chair of Directors will write to the parent/carer to advise them that if payment is not made immediately, pre-school sessions will be suspended and may be offered to another child.

If you are experiencing genuine difficulty in paying your fees, please let the Administration Manager or a member of staff know as soon as possible, so that other arrangements can be made. Failure to pay could mean that you forfeit your place.

Please note that the fees for the number of Pre-School sessions, Lunch Clubs, Breakfast Clubs and After Pre-School Clubs are invoiced each half term. Unfortunately, we *cannot* give any refunds for any sessions your child might miss due to holiday or sickness *within that half term*.

If you prefer to spread the cost of the fees you are paying at Ladybird Forest Pre-School we are happy to accept *two* payments *per* fee invoice (i.e. per half-term) **provided that you let the Administration Manager know in advance.**

### **Funding**

At present, all three and four year olds are entitled to up to 15 hours of free childcare a week for up to 38 weeks a year – 570 hours per year. The funding automatically 'kicks in' the term **following** your child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and equates to 5 sessions @ 3 hours per week. The funded hours can also be allocated to any Lunch Club, Breakfast Club and After Pre-School Club hours. The Administration Manager will provide you with the 'Parent Declaration Form' that needs to be completed and signed by yourself at the **beginning of each new term**. This then enables Ladybird Forest Pre-school to claim on your behalf for the 'funded' sessions that your child attends. We require a copy of your child's birth certificate/passport once you register your child with Ladybird Forest Pre-school in order to satisfy the requirements of Central Bedfordshire Council, who issue the funding.

From September 2017, children of **working parents** nationwide will be entitled to an additional **570 hours** per year, meaning that many families will be able to claim **1,140 hours of free childcare** per year or **30 hours** per term-time week for each of their 3 or 4-year-olds. At present, it looks like parents/carers will be responsible for checking if they are eligible for the extended entitlement and you will be issued with a code by HMRC to take to the setting's Administration Manager. There will be an on-line facility and telephone support from HMRC. Further details are in our '**Information on the 30 Hours Entitlement**' handout, which is emailed out by the Administration Manager. If you don't receive a copy, please ask for one.

**In accordance with CBC, you are entitled to claim funding across two settings per day.** If there are any funded hours left over i.e. your child is not attending a pre-school setting for the full 15/30 hours per week, then these hours are allocated *towards* the Lunch Clubs, Breakfast Clubs and After Pre-School Clubs. Please note that this does not necessarily mean that *all* of your Lunch Club, Breakfast Club or After Pre-School Club fees are funded. If your child's funding is claimed across two settings, you will need to let the Administration Manager know how many hours you are claiming via the second setting for **the whole term**, so that we can ensure that you are claiming your full entitlement.

You can also put some of your 'left over' NEF funded hours towards paying for the Holiday Club sessions. Any funded hours used, cannot be carried over to pay for sessions at the next Holiday Club in case of cancellations, **unless both Holiday Clubs fall under the same funding period.** Funded hours must be used up during the duration of each funding period.

Please be advised that we are also registered to admit children who have been registered with Central Bedfordshire Council **for the 2-year old funding**. The onus is on the parents/carers to become registered.

Please take a look at the following link - [www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/free-childcare](http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/free-childcare) - to find out what the criteria is for receiving the 2-year old funding, and if you meet the criteria how to apply for this funding. Once your child starts at Ladybirds can you please supply the Administration Manager with a copy of the 'Eligibility Letter' issued to you by Central Bedfordshire. Please feel free to ask the Administration Manager for further details.

As a setting we have signed a '**Local Agreement**' with Central Bedfordshire Council regarding our funding agreement. You will be asked to complete an online Funding agreement form at the beginning of each new term.

If your child is booked to attend but is unexpectedly absent for a single period or short term period CBC will not penalize the setting by reclaiming the funding. If your child's absence is recurring or for extended periods of time, we are obliged to contact CBC who will look at each individual case and will use their discretion regarding whether or not to reclaim the funding.

**Should CBC decide to reclaim any of the funding under the above circumstances, Ladybird Forest Pre-School will look to recoup the reclaimed funding from the parents at the 'regular' session rates.**

**If you wish to terminate your child's place you must give two weeks' notice.**

**If you wish to change the Pre-School, Lunch Club, Breakfast Club or After Pre-School Club sessions that your child attends, please contact the Administration Manager. Please also inform her/him if you move or change your contact details whilst your child is attending Ladybird Forest Pre-school.**

If you would like to contact our Administration Manager about fees or funding, please contact send an email to [admin@ladybirdpre-school.org.uk](mailto:admin@ladybirdpre-school.org.uk).

**If your child is unable to attend his/her regular session (due to holidays, illness, etc.), please either phone the setting to advise a member of staff of your child's absence or send an email to [enquiries@ladybirdpre-school.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ladybirdpre-school.org.uk).**

## **26. LUNCH CLUB**

We have been running our Lunch Club for several years now and it has proved to be very popular and successful, run by our 'regular' Ladybird team. The cost per Lunch Club is £3.10 per child per day.

Your child will be able to attend the Lunch Club by either staying for lunch after the morning session, attending the Lunch Club followed by the afternoon session, or by staying at pre-school all day. Please provide your child with a **NAMED** packed lunch (names must be visible on the outside of the lunch box please). We would advise you include an ice pack in the summer or during the hot months. Unfortunately, we are not able to heat up any child's food for Health & Safety reasons.

**We advise that if you wish your child to attend a Lunch Club followed by an afternoon session, you do not start your child at the Lunch Club session until they are well settled into the Ladybird routine – on average two weeks after they have started attending the afternoon session. Also, the option of doing a full day and/or Lunch Club is open to children aged 2 years 6 months upwards.**

Please talk to the Administration Manager to book your place(s) for the Lunch Club. If in due course you would like to make any changes to the number of Lunch Club sessions your child attends, please talk to the Administration Manager regarding availability.

## **27. AFTER PRE-SCHOOL CLUB**

Our 'After Pre-School Club' at Ladybirds has been running since September 2015. The club is open to pre-school aged children. A hot tea will be served around 4.15pm at an additional charge of £1.25.

You can put your NEF hours (free funded hours) towards the 'After Pre-School Club', provided you don't go over the maximum of 15/30 hours/week. You can also pay for the 'After Pre-School Club' with childcare vouchers.

The pricing for the After Pre-School Club sessions are as follows:

<b>Times and fees</b>
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<b>3.20pm - 4.00pm pick up £2.95</b>
<b>3.20pm - 4.30pm pick up £5.05</b>
<b>3.20pm - 5.00pm pick up £7.25</b>
<b>3.20pm - 5.15pm pick up £8.20</b>
<b>3.20pm - 5.30pm pick up £9.25</b>
<b>3.20pm - 6.00pm pick up £11.35</b>

Please note that places are limited to a maximum of 12 children per day for the 'After Pre-School Club'.

## 28. BREAKFAST CLUB

We are delighted to be introducing a Breakfast Club from September 2017 onwards. The Breakfast Club runs from 7.45am to the start of the morning session at 8.50am. Children are provided with cereals, toast and jam and a drink. The cost of the Breakfast Club is a flat rate of £4.40 for the duration. Again, any hours spent at the Breakfast Club can be included in your child's funded hours. No breakfast will be served after 8.15am.

## 29. PROCEDURES FOR DROPPING OFF / PICKING UP

**Password** - when a child commences at Ladybird's, the parent/carer are asked to supply a unique password for their child. If we do NOT know the person collecting your child, s/he will need to inform us of this password when picking your child up.

We regularly review our risk assessment measures within our setting. You are asked to provide us with your chosen password in the Permission Form you are given to sign, which is sent out in your child's Information Pack before s/he joins Ladybirds.

**Drop Off** - When your child joins Ladybirds s/he will be allocated to either the Butterfly, Ladybird, Caterpillar or Bumblebee rooms. We would ask you to bring your child to the appropriate entrance door. Please can you say your 'goodbyes' at the bottom of the stairs and encourage him/her to go into the Pre-School with the member of the Ladybird team at the entrance door. Your child has been allocated his/her own peg to hang their coat on and there is a large box for them to place their lunch boxes in if they are staying for lunch.

If you are dropping your child off at the setting for the Lunch Club before s/he attends the afternoon, can you please bring them to the door by the 'Ladybird' Room, where they will go straight to the table to eat their lunch.

The team will take a register of all the children attending each of the sessions.

*Please can you not bring any prams or pushchairs within the pre-school setting due to congestion - many thanks for your co-operation. You can leave your pram/pushchair in the covered parent's shelter along the walkway.*

If you have made arrangements for someone else to collect your child, please can you ensure that the staff are aware of that person's name and contact details at drop-off time. **Also, if your contact details should be different to the ones we have on file for you for a particular session, again can you please let the member of staff know, in case we need to contact you whilst your child is with us.**

If the children are not playing outside, the main doors are kept locked for safety and security reasons. There is a doorbell outside the Ladybird Room should you need to return before the end of the session.

**Changes to Pick-Up** - if a parent/carer collecting a child from Ladybird's is delayed or if you have made last-minute arrangements for another person to collect your child can you please contact the setting to let the team know that you have either been delayed or to inform us who the person is collecting your child. Please ensure that you have given the relevant person your unique password.

### Pick Up

If you are picking up **after the morning session** - please come to the 'Bumblebee' Room where the member of the team on the door will call your child's name for them to come out.

If you are picking up **after Lunch Club or at the end of the day** – please can you come to whichever room your child has been allocated to i.e. 'Bumblebee' Room, 'Ladybird' Room and the 'Butterfly' Room.



If you are picking up from the 'After Pre-School Club' – please can you come to the 'Ladybird' Room to collect your child OR after 5.15pm from the 'Butterfly' Room.

Any arts, crafts or cookery items, which are not being used for display, will be placed in your child's tray. **The staff encourage the children to empty their trays before they are being picked up.**

**Please can you ensure that you go through the contents of your child's tray as it may also contain fee invoices, notices, letters, etc. from the Pre-School.**

You are very welcome to come into the setting *at any time during drop-off or pick-up* to talk to a member of the team / your child's Key Person. By dropping your child off by the doors, we are trying to promote their independence and we have found that children settle down very quickly as they look for their pegs, drop off their lunch boxes (if appropriate) and find a place to sit down ready for the 'welcome' session. The staff will discuss the settling in requirements during the home visits and will be reviewed on a regular basis until the child has settled. We encourage parents to allow their child to be independent and support their child by working with the Key Person to help make the transition to the setting run smoothly. We encourage all parents to stay with their child for the first hour of them starting at Ladybirds, decreasing the time over the settling-in period. Due to Health & Safety we cannot, unfortunately, allow parents/carers to stay longer than the specified settling-in period.

Once inside the setting, your child is not confined to the room they have been allocated to. If a child, who has come in via the 'Bumblebee' Room would like to find a friend in the 'Ladybird' Room or 'Butterfly' Room (or vice versa) they are very welcome to go across once they have hung their coats up on their 'allocated' pegs.

### **30. LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

If your child is picked up late from Ladybirds at the end of their session, please be advised that we will charge you £5.00 for every 10 minutes that you are late on each occasion after 3 late pick-ups. A late pick-up means that a member of the team has had to be allocated to stay with your child. If the pick-up is at the end of the day, this is not fair on parents/carers who are paying to have their child attend the 'After Pre-School Club'.

### **31. ILLNESS**

Please do not send an unwell child to Ladybird Forest Pre-School. If your child has sickness or diarrhea, please keep him/her away from pre-school for at least 48 hours after the illness subsides. In the event of your child becoming unwell during a session, the staff will endeavor to contact you by telephone. Should there be an emergency involving your child whilst s/he is at pre-school, s/he will be taken to the surgery you are registered with in Oliver Street, Amphill. If necessary, we will contact the emergency services prior to contacting you.

### **32. OPEN DOOR POLICY – STAY & PLAY**

Ladybird Forest Pre-School operates an 'open door' policy. Even though we do not require our parents/carers to undertake 'parent duties', we welcome parents/carers to assist in the running of any session for one hour, as we believe that it gives an invaluable insight for you to observe how your child is progressing at pre-school. Please talk to a member of the team to make arrangements for a 'Stay & Play' session if you would like to attend any of our sessions. Unfortunately, siblings are not able to attend with you.

### **33. TELEPHONE NUMBER**

The telephone number of the Ladybird Pre-School - during session times only - is 01525 – 406 703. If the answer machine is on, please leave a message and a member of staff will call you back asap.

### **34. CHILDREN IN NAPPIES / POTTY TRAINING**

At Ladybirds, we welcome children who are in nappies or pull-ups, are undergoing potty training or are fully potty trained. If your child is wearing nappies/pull-ups, please bring in a bag with nappies/pull-ups and some spare clothes for your child when you drop him/her off at pre-school.

We are very happy to work alongside parents/carers who are in the throes of potty training their children. If your child is used to using a potty, you are welcome to bring it in for him/her to use at Pre-School. Our toilets are low-level child-sized ones, so children have no problems in using them with or without assistance. Please remember to dress your child in clothes that he/she is able to open easily when using the toilets.

### **35. CLOTHING & SAFETY**

Jewellery should not be worn in case it gets lost or broken. Stud earrings may only be worn if your child's ears are pierced. We provide aprons for messy play and cooking. In addition, 'Ladybird Pre-School' sweatshirts and T-shirts are available to purchase. Please ask a member of staff.

Where possible, the children will have the opportunity to play outside, go for walks, etc. Please ensure that they have appropriate clothing with them to cover this. During the summer months, please ensure that your child has sun cream applied before the start of a session, and they have a hat available.

Refreshments are provided, and we therefore request that you do not give your child a drink or snack to eat during the Pre-School sessions. Please advise the Pre-School Manager if your child has any food allergies or intolerances.

### **36. UNIFORM / BOOK BAGS**

We offer a partial uniform for all children attending Ladybird Forest Pre-School. The uniform offer consists of T-shirts (£5.75 each) and sweatshirts (£8.75 each) printed with the Ladybird logo and the Ladybird name.

In addition, we are also offering Ladybird book bags (£4.50 each) with the Ladybird logo. These book bags are designed to take home your child's artworks, any newsletters or correspondence from the Pre-School without getting them damaged, creased or indeed wet.

We also offer 'gym bags' (4.50 each) with the Ladybird logo. These gym bags are ideal for bringing wellies into the setting on the day your child has his/her Forest School session. PLEASE note all children need a bag for their wellies – and please no plastic carrier bags.

If you would like to order T-shirts, sweatshirts, book bags or gym bags, please ask a member of staff or the Pre-School Administrator for a Uniform Order Form.

### **37. TOYS, SHOW & TELL AND 'WOW' MOMENTS**

Children are encouraged to bring in a toy, book, picture or any other item for the 'Small Groups' or 'Phonics' sessions, as we believe this builds on the child's confidence and social skills. S/he may bring a comforter if appropriate. Every child will have a weekly 'Small Groups' or 'Phonics' session, so your child will never be disappointed if they do bring something in.

If your child does anything exciting during the weekend or holidays or has achieved a particular milestone, we would like to know so that we can talk about such an event with them. We will be sending "WOW" moment forms home at the end of each term. Please ask a member of staff if you require more. The "WOW" moment forms will be discussed during circle time and will be added to your child's learning journal.

### **38. DISABLED PARKING**

Ladybird has one disabled car parking space in the school car park, off Saunders Piece. If you would like to use the disabled car parking space, please can you contact the setting beforehand so that we can advise you of how best to access the Pre-School from the car park. Our main entrance is via Queens Road.

### **39. FUNDRAISING**

Ladybird Forest Pre-School could not continue to offer such a wide range of activities for your child without raising additional funds during the year. We ask each parent/carer to help with this essential work by supporting & helping with at least one of our fundraising activities during the year.

For each of the planned activities held each year, a small sub-committee is organized by the Chair of the larger Fundraising Committee to organize and plan the individual event. The sub-committee lasts for only a few weeks, and you can choose your role, and the event!

### **40. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

Ladybird is managed by a board of directors, without which Ladybird Forest Pre-School cannot continue.

The new directors are co-opted onto the board by the time the annual AGM takes place in order to be 'up and running' by the start of the new academic year in September. The directors are a group of volunteers with a variety of roles that hold varying degrees of responsibilities. The directors always value new parents who are willing to support and help Ladybirds.





In addition, we also have a Fundraising Committee that reports into the Manager. The role of the Fundraising Committee is *essential* for the continued success of the pre-school! The Committee is simply made up of parents/carers whose children attend the pre-school, so this is a dynamic committee and will change every year. There are many exciting roles available for the start of each new academic year in September, which really aren't all time consuming! It is a great way to get involved in the pre-school, meet friends and enjoy those early fun years.

#### 41. WORRIES, CONCERNS & PROBLEMS

Should you or your child have any concerns regarding your child or the running of Ladybird Forest Pre-School, please do not hesitate to speak in the first instance to a member of staff. Alternatively, please speak to the Pre-School Manager. We will be happy to arrange a mutually convenient time to talk about any concerns. A copy of the Ladybird Forest Pre-School Operational Policies is always available, should you wish to see them. Please ask a member of staff.

We have also got a 'complaints book' at the setting and would very much encourage parents/carers to write in the book if you have any issues. If we know what your concerns/issues are we can try to do something about it!

#### 42. HOLIDAY CLUB

Always keen to provide our parents/carers with a full and all-encompassing service we are delighted to offer to you our 'Ladybird Holiday Club'. The 'Holiday Club' is run by Ladybird staff and is open from 9am through to 4pm during the October half-term, the first week of the Easter holidays and the first three weeks of the summer holidays. The 'Holiday Club' is open to all children (*not just those attending Ladybird Pre-school*) from the age of 3 years through to 7 years.

The Lunch Club is running from 12pm – 1pm, which means that children can attend the Holiday Club all day; all s/he needs to do is to bring his/her own lunch. As we are catering for a diverse age group, the staff ensure that activities are age-appropriate and put together a fun-filled programme for all.

We obviously continue to enjoy the extensive outdoor play areas of not only Ladybird Forest Pre-School but also of Russell Lower School.

The costs for the Holiday Club are as follows:

- 9 am – 12pm = £13.20 (AM session)
- 9 am – 1pm = £17.60 (AM Session & Lunch Club)
- 12pm – 4pm = £17.60 (Lunch Club & PM Session)
- 1pm – 4pm = £13.20 (PM Session)
- 9am – 4pm = £30.80

**DISCOUNTS:** If you book in more than one sibling the price per day is £28.00 /child – saving of £2.80 on the day rate  
 If you book the full week the price per day is £26.40/child – saving of £4.40 on the day rate, which means you don't pay for the Lunch Clubs

With the introduction of the extended 30 hours NEF funding, you are now able to put any 'left over' funded hours towards the Holiday Clubs, provided your child is at the setting. Any funded hours used, cannot be carried over to pay for sessions at the next Holiday Club in case of cancellations, **unless both Holiday Clubs fall under the same funding period**. No refunds or credits are given for sessions paid via NEF funded hours. Funded hours must be used up during the duration of each funding period. The following funding periods apply to the different Holiday Clubs:



Period 1	Autumn Term	October Holiday Club
Period 2	Spring Term	February Holiday Club
Period 3	Summer Term	Easter Holiday Club Summer Holiday Club

We run a themed party, during the Holiday Club – on the Thursday of the Holiday Club week, and in the third/last week of the Summer Holiday Club. In October half-term we hold a 'Halloween Party', in February we hold a 'Winter Party', in April an 'Easter Party' and in the summer holidays a 'Summer Party'. The parties are from 4.15pm to 5.45pm. However, children attending the Thursday afternoon session can bridge the gap between the end of the session and the start of the party and pay £5.50. Children attending the party only pay £5.00. A cold tea is included.

We hope your child enjoys his/her stay at Ladybird Forest Pre-School and we will do everything in our powers to make it a happy and enjoyable experience for child and parents/carers alike.

LADYBIRD FOREST PRE-SCHOOL AMPHILL  
September 2021