Parent Handbook

The Early Years Foundation Stage at:

Englefield Green School

Squirrels Nursery
Welcome from our Headteacher ...

Dear Parents,

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you as your child prepares to join us at Englefield Green Infant School and Nursery. We are delighted that you have chosen to send your child to Squirrels nursery and look forward to working in partnership with you to ensure that your child is safe, happy and receives the very best start to their education.

We have prepared our Parent Handbook to help you gain a greater understanding of our school and to guide you through our daily routines. Please do not hesitate to come in and talk to us if you require any further information or have a specific query you would like to discuss or have answered.

Mrs Janet Pells
Headteacher
Squirrels Team ...

Headteacher:
Mrs Janet Pells

Head of Early Years / Assistant Head of School
Mrs Amanda Harding

Squirrels Nursery Staff / Key Person:

Mrs Sally Wilmshurst – Lead Practitioner
Miss Victoria Upcott
Mrs Sue Bailey

We very much look forward to getting to know you and your child.
Our School Aims

**Safe, happy and healthy**
All children are confident to take risks within a happy, secure, caring and challenging learning environment. We prepare our children for lifelong learning by building self esteem, nurturing emotions and developing empathy for others.

**Make good choices**
All children understand that their actions have consequences for themselves and others. They develop their own values and have respect for each other.

**Independent learners**
We strive to develop a passion for life-long learning for all children, enabling them to be creative, confident and self motivated in order that they may develop their own unique skills along the way.

**Living together**
We ensure that each child develops a positive view of themselves and a respect for others, developing an awareness of other people within their local and global community.

**Enquiring minds**
In all aspects of their life and learning, to be open to curiosity, philosophy and creativity in their thinking, initiative and problem solving.
The Early Years Principles

_unique child_  
At Squirrels Nursery we recognise that every child is a competent learner who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. It is the skill of the practitioner to identify each individual child’s interests and motivations and provide an environment to enable each child to thrive.

_positive relationships_  
Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships. On joining nursery, children are placed with a key person who has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with you as parents / carers.

_enabling environments_  
Squirrels Nursery offers a safe and stimulating environment both indoors and outdoors in which children's experiences are tailored to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between the nursery team and parents and/or carers.

_learning and development_  
'Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates.' Young children learn most effectively through play, exploration and investigation. At Squirrels we provide innovative and stimulating activities alongside those that are more familiar supporting all aspects of their learning and development. Children are encouraged to become independent both in self-care and their choice of activities and staff are skilled at assessing where the children are in their learning and development and in supporting their next steps on their learning journey.
The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on the developmental steps through which a child progresses from birth, through Nursery and Reception until they move into the National Curriculum in Year One. The curriculum is delivered to the children through seven areas of learning and development. All the areas of learning and development are important and interconnected.

The areas of: Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development are crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, building their capacity to learn and form relationships. For our youngest children the focus of learning is in these three ‘prime’ areas as they are the basis for successful learning in all the other areas.
Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The activities and experiences provided enable the children to develop a positive attitude towards their learning and each other. Through play, they build relationships and develop the skills needed to cooperate and work harmoniously. Children are given the time and space to develop their emotional responses to everyday situations within clear and secure boundaries.

Communication and Language

The setting provides a wealth of opportunities to enrich and develop children’s early language. The children learn to express their thoughts, ideas and feelings, building up relationships with adults and each other and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical Development

Physical development involves providing opportunities to be active and interactive. It involves developing skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. It helps children gain confidence in what they can do and enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and
active. Children are provided with a range of tools, objects and mark
makers to develop finer control. The outdoor environment and use of our
school hall, allows the children the space to play and experiment with
larger toys and apparatus. Gross motor skills are enhanced so that children
can develop control over their bodies and the way they move. Children are
encouraged to develop an awareness of healthy practices and become more
independent in their self-care.

**Literacy Development**

Stories and everyday experiences provide rich contexts to encourage conversation and extend their
use of language. Sharing a wealth of stories, songs
and rhymes allows the children to develop their
interest and enthusiasm for reading, build their
awareness of sounds and letters and rhythms in
words and experiment with writing.

**Mathematics**

Mathematical understanding is developed through engaging in a variety of
play experiences such as games, puzzles and construction toys. Alongside
these practical activities, children rehearse their understanding of
counting and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction
problems and to describe shapes, space and measures. Through their
engaging in role play, songs or daily routines in their immediate
environment, children begin to grow in confidence in using their knowledge
to solve simple everyday problems.
Understanding the World

Children's understanding of their world is based upon relevant, first hand experiences. It is through an increased awareness of themselves, their family and their immediate environment that children can begin to make sense of the wider world, its people, places and events. Opportunities are provided to explore, observe, experiment and take safe risks. They gain confidence in solving problems, making decisions and developing their questioning skills. The children will have opportunities to work with a range of toys and equipment including using the computer, to develop their understanding and skills in Information and Communication technology.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creativity is fostered through a variety of different mediums, including art, imaginative role play and small world, music, movement and drama. Children are given the freedom to explore and play with a wide range of materials and express their creative potential whilst being carefully guided in developing the skills needed to respond thoughtfully to their environment. They are encouraged to share their ideas and talk about the choices they have made.
Reading in Squirrels

Through reading together we want to encourage children to enjoy and delight in books and to develop the confidence to interact with their book experiences. Reading with the children provides practice in handling and looking at books, listening and responding to stories, retelling stories heard, and sharing enjoyable book experiences. We invite the children to take a book home each week to share with you. Your child will share their book with their key person, who will establish a written link with you through the 'Reading Diary' in your child’s book-bag. We encourage you to write a short comment in the diary to let us know how your child enjoyed sharing their book with you.
Squirrels Day ...

Squirrels Nursery provides flexible care. Sessions are as follows:

Morning Sessions are from 8.50 am – 11.50 am  
Afternoon Sessions are from 12.00 pm - 3.00 pm  
All day care runs from 9.00 am until 3.00 pm

Lunchtime

Lunchtime forms part of each session. Your child will need to bring a packed lunch and will be supervised by the Squirrels staff and additional lunch-time supervisors. We are a 'Healthy School' and encourage all the children to make healthy choices in what they eat. Sweets, chocolate drinks are not allowed and crisps only in moderation please. Water and milk are provided as a lunch time drink. Water is available to drink throughout the session. Clearly-named packed lunch boxes go onto the trolley in the cloakroom. We have a number of children in school with a severe nut allergy and therefore items containing nuts are not permitted in school. Squirrels staff encourage the children to eat and will monitor closely what the children eat each day. Through our lunch session we support the children to develop an awareness of good eating habits.
What Your Child Will Need ...

**Nursery Uniform**
Our school and nursery uniform is smart, practical and gives our children a common identity. Whilst it is not compulsory it does save on the wear and tear of other clothes. A school sweatshirt and joggers are available for purchase from 'Janet's' in St Jude's Road, Englefield Green.

Please help your child develop their independence by choosing items of clothing that they can manage themselves. Simple fastenings such as Velcro on shoes, really helps. A good quality second-hand uniform shop is run by the PTA, details may be found on our parent notice board or from the school office. Please make sure every item of uniform is clearly and permanently marked with your child's name. This helps staff support your child in managing their belongings.

**Jewellery**
Children are not permitted to wear any jewellery in school. The only exception being that studs may be worn if your child has pierced ears. However all earrings must be removed if we are working on any of our climbing equipment. This is a Surrey Local Authority directive which we have to follow.
**Book Bags**
The children will need a book bag in school every day which they can put safely on their peg when they come into Squirrels. The school book-bags are available to buy from 'Janet’s' in the village. Please check your child’s book-bag every day as you will find important letters as well as lovely work!

**Spare Clothing**
If your child is still in the process of being toilet trained it is helpful to include a spare change of clothes. If they are still using nappies we would ask you to provide a changing bag with spare nappies, wipes and nappy sacks.

Items of spare clothing are kept in school should your child need to change for any reason, however we would appreciate it if you could wash and return items as soon as possible after use. We welcome donations of clothing and uniform items that your child has outgrown.
Keeping You Informed ...

Once your child starts in Squirrels, we aim to keep you as informed as possible about events in school through newsletters, letters and parent notice boards. Other sources of information are:

✔️ Squirrels Nursery Board
Notices are displayed on the board in the cloakroom area. Information regarding our learning as well as special events, activities and ways you can help.

✔️ Online Information
Information regarding school activities and events can be found on our website www.inglefield-green.surrey.sch.uk

✔️ Parent email (EGIS SCOPAY)
As a means of reaching everyone and reducing the paper mountain we use an email system. This enables us to send letters and messages directly to you via email or text message. Further information is included in your pack.

✔️ Whiteboard Communication Point
Reminders or updates are written daily on our white communication board on the main pathway into school.

✔️ Parent Evenings
Parent Consultations are held during the year, providing an opportunity to discuss your child’s progress individually with their Key person.
Inclusion

Children are all different and for that reason they are all special. We aim to meet the needs of all children so that they may fully access the learning regardless of ability, needs, race or gender. This is done through knowing each child as an individual and planning carefully for their next steps. Children identified as having Special Educational Needs are placed on our School Special Needs Register. This is staged according to need and parents are kept fully consulted at each stage. Specialist advice may be sought as a support for both home and school.

Children who have English as additional language are informally assessed and if a need is identified may be supported by Surrey’s Ethnic Language Minority Service as well as our experienced learning support staff to develop their second language.
Parents as Partners

We recognise that children learn best when parents and school work together. The results of which has a positive impact on children's development and learning and we value the important role you play in your child's education. The nursery team are always available to talk to on a daily basis, however please be mindful when they are busy with the children. Each term there is a formal opportunity to meet with your child's key person to discuss their individual learning and development. During the school year we will run parent information meetings to keep you informed as how we develop aspects of the curriculum in nursery and how you as parents can support.

2 Year Development Check

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) we will share a short written summary of your child’s development in the three prime areas of their learning and development: Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Physical Development; and Communication and Language.

Sharing News

We love to hear about what the children have been doing with you at home, so please do encourage them to bring something in from a visit, holiday or trip out and about. It acts as a vital memory jogger.

Reading with Your Child

Each week, following a shared reading experience with your child’s key person in school, your child will bring home their book to share with you in their book bag. We love to know how they are getting on at home.

What will my child be learning?

In Squirrels nursery play and learning opportunities are developed from each child's interests and areas of need. In addition we provide opportunities for children to explore and find out about things in their immediate world.
Our Golden Rules

We teach our children to manage their behaviour in school using a very positive approach. Our 'Golden Rules' provide clear guidelines and expectations for every child:

- We are gentle
- We are kind and helpful
- We listen
- We work hard
- We look after our property
- We are honest

In class, our 'Sunshine and Clouds' system is used as a visual aid for children to monitor their own behaviour. Teachers give clear and instant feedback to children regarding their behaviour.

My name card on the Sunshine = I am making good choices!

My name card on the Dark Cloud = I have not made good choices. I need to try again.

My name card on the Rainbow = I did something extra special today!

Children are given praise and rewards for their good choices. A warning is given before the Dark Cloud to allow them to correct their behaviour. Should their name go onto the Dark Cloud, they will have a short time out to reflect on their choices. Afterwards, they will be encouraged make good choices and earn their name card back onto the 'Sunshine'.

18
Staying Healthy and Safe (Every Child Matters)

Health and Safety
The Governors and Headteacher regularly carry out Health and Safety checks and act on their findings. The security of the school is constantly under review but there are some daily practices that need to be remembered to ensure the safety of the children. Therefore, please:

- always sign in at the school office if you are helping out in school.
- keep us informed of any changes in contact telephone numbers so you may be easily contacted in an emergency.
- do not allow your child to play on or with school equipment either at the start, or at the end of the day when they have been dismissed.
- park considerately in the road outside the school site. Please take care when parking your car as this is a very busy area at the beginning and end of the school day. Please note it is illegal (and dangerous) to double park outside the school.
- ensure you and your child use only the pedestrian gate when entering or leaving the school premises.

Fruit and Group Time
During the session the children will share fruit and water within their key person group. The school is registered as part of the Government Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which provides the children with a piece of fruit or vegetable each day. We encourage the children to try the different fruits and vegetables. We ask that all children provide a pack of wet-wipes every half term to help in the hand wiping.

Cool Milk
In our school, milk is supplied by Cool Milk and for children under five there is no charge. If your child cannot drink milk or you do not wish for them to have milk in nursery, please let us know.
Drinks
All children have access to water when they feel thirsty. A variety of cups and beakers are available to support children in managing their drinks successfully.

Accidents in School
If your child has an accident in school we will contact you if we have any concerns. Please make sure your contact details are correct and up to date. On collection of your child you will be asked to sign the accident book and be informed about the nature of the accident and any subsequent treatment.

Illness
If your child is unwell please notify the school office on the day of absence by telephone or in person as we do have to keep a legal record of attendance.
Should your child become ill while attending the Nursery you will be contacted. If you require any information regarding guidance on infections in school please contact the school office.

Medication
Prescribed medication can only be administered in school with parents’ permission. A form must be completed before any medication can be administered. Medication will be kept in the nursery building. Two adults within the nursery will record the time and dosage administered. All medication MUST be clearly named. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure all medication is in date.

- Children taking antibiotics should be kept off school until the last two days of the course.
- Children who suffer from asthma should ensure that they have an up-to-date inhaler in school.
**Care Plan**
Children with allergies, long-term health concerns or injuries which need specific treatment or care should meet with a member of the leadership team to draw up a care plan. It is important to inform us of all allergies or intolerances. This may be recorded on your child’s personal details form.

**Absence**
If you do not let us know why your child is not in school, the absence is marked as unauthorised on your child’s attendance record. If you need to take your child out of school for any reason, permission needs to be sought from the Headteacher a minimum of two weeks prior to the absence date. Absence request forms may be obtained from the school office.

**Head Lice**
This is a recurring problem in schools. The most current information is available from your pharmacist or Health Visitor. An advice leaflet can be obtained from the school office for your information.

**Contact Names and Addresses**
It is very important that you provide the school with an up to date contact name, telephone number and address. Please inform us of any changes to this or any home circumstances that might affect your child in school.

**Weather**
In the nursery, the children have access to the outdoors every day, regardless of the weather. It is important that your child is dressed appropriately according to the time of year. Sun safety is of paramount importance. Please ensure that your child has sun screen applied before they come to nursery for the start of their session. If your child is attending for the full day, your child’s key person will apply sun screen midday. Sun hats are recommended and available as part of our uniform. Named wellington boots are required throughout the year and may be stored in the nursery.
Arrival and Collection
It is very important that the children are brought to school and collected from school by a responsible person. If you are unable to collect your child yourself, please inform one of the Squirrels staff who will be collecting your child and enter the information in our 'Collection Book.' If an unforeseen circumstance arises, and you are unable to collect your child, the person you nominate to collect on your behalf will need a password which you will have chosen. This password will be kept securely with your child’s details in school.
As a school we take our duty of care very seriously and we are concerned if a child under 16 is asked to collect from our school. We have been advised by our Area Education Officer that if there is an occasion where a child under the age of 16 is sent to collect their sibling, we will need your signed permission and will not release your child without this.

Money in School / Payments
From time to time you may need to send money into school to pay for trips or visits. Our preferred method of payment is on-line for all school activities. Log-in details will be given to you once your child starts in nursery. Alternatively you can pay by cheque and hand your payment directly to the school office. If you need to send in cash please ensure it is in a sealed envelope, which is clearly named.
Our School Governors

The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the school and delegates the day to day management of the school to the Headteacher. The Governors meet twice every term, once as a full governing body and then as committees who work with us to oversee Learning and Resources; this includes Personnel, Finance, Buildings, Health and Safety and Welfare. The Governors' term of office is for four years; Parent Governors are elected by the parents of the school. Parent Governors are a valuable, known contact for all our parents and their names and photographs are on the school notice board situated outside the school office.

Governor's Policy on charging for School Activities

The Governors accept Surrey's Policy for charging for School Activities. They agree that it will be necessary to ask for voluntary contributions for the following activities:

♂ School Outings - to cover the cost of transport and entrance fees.
♂ Visiting groups to our school - to cover the cost of fees.

Complaints Procedures

All comments are taken seriously and valued. They will be investigated as soon as is practically possible and feedback will always be given to the person raising a concern. This may be given verbally or in writing. All complaints are recorded and filed. Concerns are treated as confidential, and shared only on a 'need to know' basis. Complaints procedures policy is available on the school web site.
**Parental Help in School**

We welcome any help and support you are able to give in nursery once your child has settled into their routines. If you are able to help on a regular basis you may need to agree to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. There are many ways parents may help in school including:

- sharing books
- playing games
- helping on 'working party' days such as gardening and tidying in our school grounds
- accompanying trips and visits
- sharing personal expertise: gardening, sewing, cooking, music and culture etc
- supporting our wonderful P.T.A.

**The Parent Teachers Association (P.T.A.)**

All parents become members of the association as their child starts our school. You are welcomed and encouraged to attend meetings and get involved even if you are not on the committee.

Please come in and talk to a member of staff if you would like more information.
Charities
During each academic year we endeavour to support a number of national and local charities. These have included: Seeds for Africa, Save the Children, World Wildlife Fund, Sports for School, and the British Heart Foundation. We like to take part in National initiatives such as Red Nose Day, Sports Relief and Children in Need and we have, through our work on sustainability, adopted endangered animals.

and finally .......
If you need any further information about any aspect of your child’s start in nursery please do not hesitate to come in and talk to us. This is the start of a partnership and we look forward to working with you and your child to make it a successful time for all.