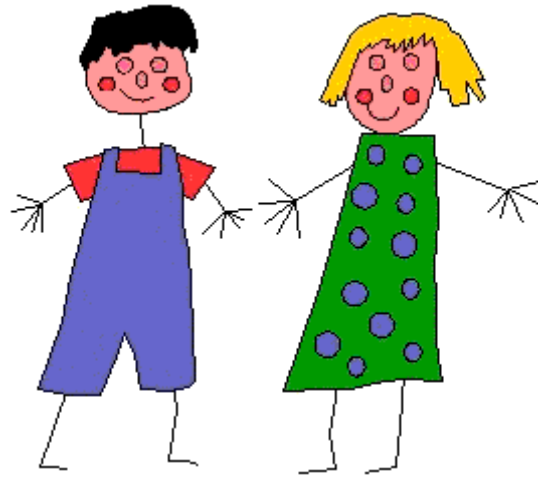


# Big Ted's

# Parents Handbook



Updated June 2015

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Big Ted's room. We have put together this handbook, which will explain a little about the room and our policies and procedures. Our staff are always available, if you would like to have a chat about anything at all.

## **STAFF**

**Lucja Krajewska, Room Supervisor** – Lucja has been with Childsplay nursery since 2004. Lucja joined us from Poland where she trained and qualified as a teacher. Lucja has two sons who attend Boroughmuir High School. Lucja works full time.

**Olivia Duthie, Nursery Nurse** – Olivia has been with Childsplay Nursery since 2000. Whilst at Childsplay, Olivia undertook her training and is now a fully qualified nursery nurse. Prior to that Olivia was a childminder for over 15 years. Olivia is Mum to 2 sons and Granny to 2 grandchildren. Olivia works full time

**Sarah Darling, Nursery Nurse** – Sarah joined Childsplay Nursery in 2014. Sarah is a qualified nursery nurse and has previously worked as a live-in nanny in London, Switzerland and in New Zealand. For the past 27 years Sarah has worked at the Northumberland Estate. Sarah works full time.

**Katy Stalker, Nursery Nurse** – Katy has been with Childsplay since 2001 when she left school and studied for her HNC in Childcare whilst at the nursery and is now a fully qualified nursery nurse. Katy has spent time working in all the nursery rooms. Following the birth of her son in 2013 Katy returned to work in 2014 part time.

**Karen Taylor, Nursery Assistant** – Karen joined Childsplay in 2014 as a nursery assistant. Karen is currently studying to become a fully qualified nursery nurse. Karen enjoys art and crafts and has lead craft workshops for children in the past and is also a Girl Guide leader. Karen works full time.

Sometimes there is the need for other staff to work in the Big Ted's room to cover for holidays and sickness but this tends to be staff deployed from other rooms. All our staff are aware of all the room routines, are first aid qualified, have a food and hygiene certificate and are trained in child protection. Occasionally we have agency staff, but we use a reputable agency and all staff are on the register for the protection of vulnerable groups (previously police disclosure checked).

There may also on occasion be an unfamiliar face as we help local school pupils with their work experience week and provide placements for nursery nurse college students. When there is a visitor working in the room a note will be put on the 'Today We Have a Visitor in Nursery' notice in the entrance hallway next to the staff photos.

## CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

A play-based curriculum is now widely considered to be the most appropriate approach for the development of young children's learning. Young children learn and develop friendships very naturally through play.

Play brings about a wealth of opportunities for children to develop their language, creativity and co-ordination skills. These all contribute to healthy growth and development, knowledge and understanding and capacity to learn.

In the Big Ted's room the way we operate, the activities and learning experiences are all based around the Curriculum for Excellence.

The Curriculum for Excellence will have four purposes (or four capacities) in which the planning and the way we deal with the children should help enable all young people to become:-

- Successful learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens
- Effective Contributors

Planning for rooms and individual children are then based on 8 curricular areas:-

- Expressive Arts
- Health and Well-being
- Language and Literacy
- Numeracy
- Religious and moral Education
- Sciences
- Social Studies
- Technologies

At Childsplay we specifically focus on literacy, numeracy and health and well-being. Each curricular area has a set of learning outcomes that we ensure every child has the chance of experiencing, at least once, before they leave for school.

When children first join the Big Ted's many of the learning outcomes are achieved through play. The first year is spent settling in, learning new routines, skills and developing current knowledge. As the child moves towards their final year (pre-school year) then we start to deliver more focussed learning. The children are put into learning groups and spend time with their key worker to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge to give them a good base for when they leave us to join school.

As staff form a relationship with your child by getting to know their strengths and preferences, they will consult regularly with you to create a joint record of your child's progress. This is recorded in our electronic learning journals (see more information below). We also have a learning scrapbook which is a folder kept in the room and which will include:-

- Notes about how happy and settled they are
- Information gained by asking questions and listening carefully to their responses
- Examples of drawings, writing and artwork
- Photos of the child at nursery or something they've made or produced

We also regularly monitor practices and activities in the play room so we are able to evaluate the learning experiences of the children and nursery practice to ensure that we deliver best practice.

More information on Curriculum for Excellence can be found outside the room on the notice board or on the website [www.ltscotland.org.uk](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk) or you can discuss with any member of staff.

## GIRFEC. and SHANARRI

GIRFEC stands for Getting It Right for Every Child and is an initiative for every person who works with children and young people. The approach helps us to focus on what makes a positive difference to children and how we can act to deliver these improvements.

The wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of *Getting it right for every child*. The approach uses eight areas of wellbeing in which children and young people need to progress in order to do well now and in the future. These are **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included**.

They are commonly referred to as the SHANAARI indicators.

We use them in the nursery to ensure every child has the basic requirements to grow and develop and that we provide an enriched environment to help them reach their full potential.

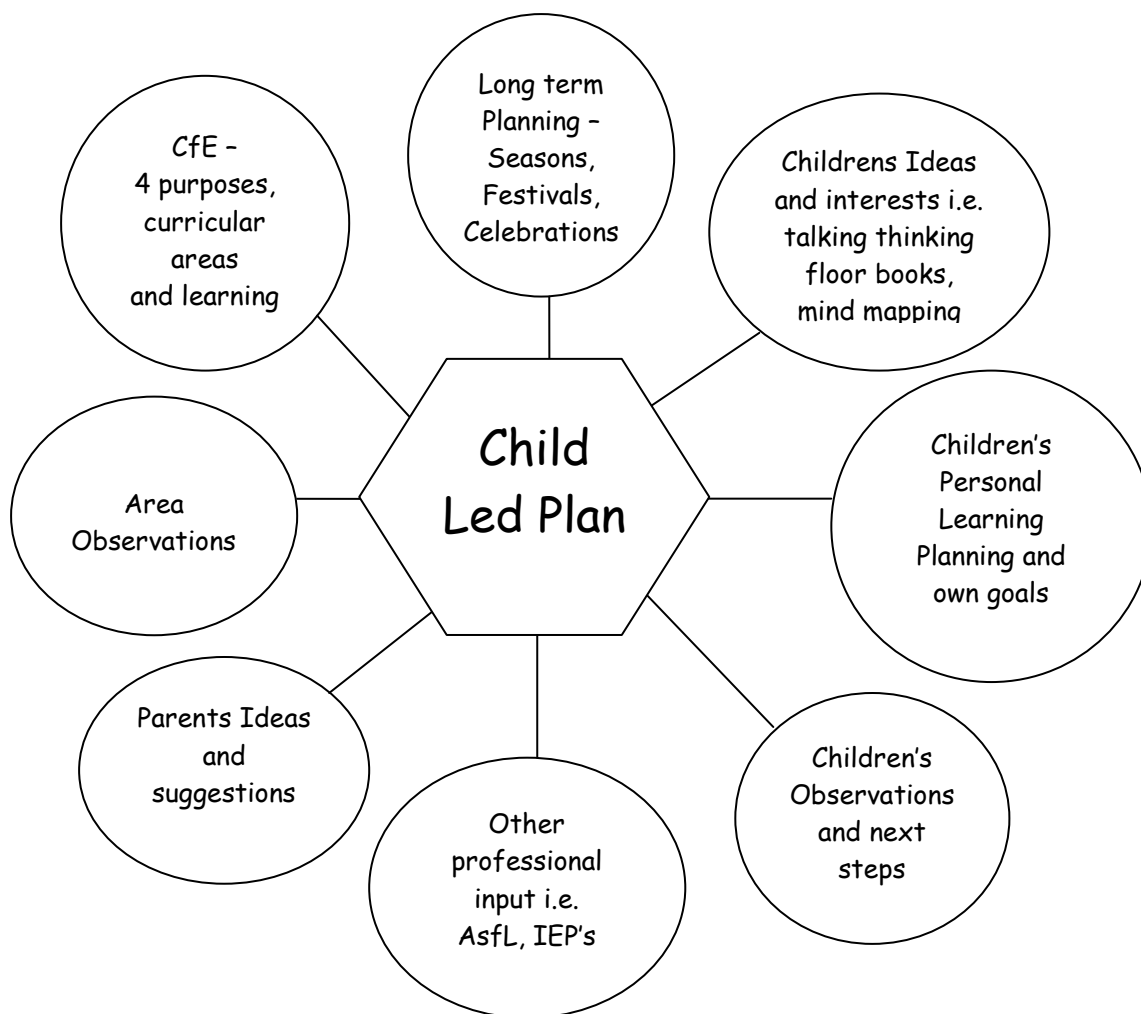
For more information please refer to: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>.



Promoting the well-being of children throughout childhood relates to the aspirations for the future that all children should grow to be: **confident individuals, effective contributors, successful learners and responsible citizens**.

## CURRICULUM PLANNING - HOW WE PLAN

The staff hold monthly planning meetings in order to ensure that curriculum plans are up to date, fresh, relevant and led by the children. When holding the meeting the staff look at topics/events on the long term planning. They then consider many other areas that feed into the final short term (monthly plan). Please see below a diagram showing what the staff take into consideration when putting together



## **CHILD-LED PLANNING - TALKING THINKING FLOORBOOKS**

In order to ensure that children participate in the planning process, share knowledge and communicate their ideas we use talking thinking floorbooks as part of our planning process.

We sit on the floor with children and encourage thinking skills through talking together in a group about a particular topic, the children's thoughts and ideas are then recorded through a thought web or mind map without interpretation so that they are a genuine record of their thinking. This enables staff to collate child centred ideas that are taken forward as an integral part of planning and to analyse the starting points for learning that children are suggesting, rather than staff thinking up random "activities" for children to "do". This means we can put responsive planning at the root of learning and children.

The books are then available for children at all times so that they can revisit their thinking whenever they wish. Once a topic has changed the books are then made available for parents so that they can look through them and discuss the learning with their children.

## **PERSONAL LEARNING PLANNING**

We observe each child in the room using our electronic learning journals. Using this system means we are able to track your child's learning especially in the curriculum areas of literacy, numeracy and health and well-being. This in turns helps inform planning so we can ensure that the child remains stimulated and their learning is moving forward. It also helps encourage the children to develop a responsibility for their own learning experiences. To aid this we help the children set personal learning goals through personal learning planning.

What is Personal Learning Planning?

- It is a profile of your child's learning and achievements at home and at nursery.
- It brings parents and nursery together to support your child's development and progress
- It provides an opportunity to celebrate and record your child's achievements in all areas of their life
- It supports your child's transition from stage to stage

Achievements are celebrated and acknowledged on our achievements board. Children are then helped to set their next step learning goal. What you can do to help?

- Value and praise your child's achievements
- Take time to share the learning journal with your child
- Provide family photographs
- Complete the 'at home' sheets

## **ELECTRONIC LEARNING JOURNALS AND OBSERVATIONS**

At Childsplay we use electronic learning journals. This system enables staff to make observations, track progress and plan next steps and then upload these onto your child's electronic profile. You will be able to access your child's profile anytime you want, as long as you have internet connection, and be able to post comments/ideas/suggestions on your child's profile which will be used by the keyworker to help plan next steps in your child's development. Observations are usually only recorded when they provide evidence of a child's level of achievement, their interests, learning styles or a significant event that will help staff when formulating next learning steps or planning learning experiences which reflect each child's needs. On average, we record one observation every couple of weeks, but also record achievements and completion of next steps. Using electronic learning journals will enable parents to participate in the planning process for their child and will also enable them to let staff know of things achieved at home or if a child has shown an interest in something. We also keep a folder for each child as a learning scrapbook, with evidence of your child's work during their nursery time.

The system is very secure. The connection is made using a secure server holding a SSL certificate. (Meaning the address starts with https and carries the padlock symbol.) You will be the only one outside of the nursery that can view your child's profile and you will access it with a unique username as well as a password and PIN that you create. When your child leaves the nursery we are able to transfer your child's learning journal to whatever school they will be joining, if they use the electronic learning journal system, or we can download your child's information onto a PDF file and email it to you. Then we will delete all of your child's records from the system.

## **PRE-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP GRANT**

The government is committed to providing a 'free' nursery place for all 3 and 4 year olds. However, local authorities do not have the number of places required and are therefore commissioning places in private nurseries to meet their targets. There is also recognition that many parents require longer childcare hours than the state sector can provide and that private nurseries can satisfy these requirements.

Childsplay Nursery is a partnership nursery with Edinburgh City Council. This means that we can access funds on your behalf to go towards the cost of pre-school provision for all children, the first term after their third birthday.

The local authority will therefore contribute towards the cost of a place at Childsplay based on what it considers to be the financial equivalent of up to 600 hours of pre-school education over 38 weeks of the year.

Each session a child attends nursery (am/pm) will count as 1 session, therefore children attending for a full day will qualify for 2 sessions that day, up to a maximum of 5 sessions per week.

Parents do not need to apply for this funding as we will give you the necessary paperwork when the time comes. Pre-school funding is distributed 3 times per year, 1 payment per term. This is refunded to you from us by BACS payment as soon as we receive the grant money from the local authority.

The funding rate for 2014/15 is £3.50 per hour which equates to £11.05 per session. The amount due is calculated on a daily basis and will be determined by the number of days in each term. For this period Term 1 (Aug-Dec) 86 Days, Term 2 (Jan-Mar) 58 Days and Term 3 (Apr-June) 46 Days.

## **PARENTS EVENINGS**

We hold parents evenings twice a year in April and October, when we ask you to come along for a chat with your child's key worker. Although you can speak to staff in the room on a daily basis, this is an ideal opportunity to have longer discussions with your child's key worker. You will be provided with a written report on your child's progress a few weeks before each of these evenings.

## **THOUGHTS/SUGGESTIONS/IDEAS/COMPLAINTS**

At Childsplay we operate an open door policy, if you ever want to discuss anything or if you have any thoughts, ideas, suggestions or complaints then please speak to a member of staff or the Manager at any time. If you would like a bit more time with a member of staff then you are welcome to make an appointment for a time that is more convenient to you. Outside each room we also have a "You Said, We Did" sheet for you to put your comments on. Also in the entrance hall there is a suggestion box with forms for you to complete.

## **ROOM ROUTINES**

Breakfast time is between 8.00 & 8.30am. Some Big Ted's bring in their own box of cereal, which we keep in the nursery for them. Some parents do not have time to give their children breakfast before they leave the house in the morning, if this is the case with your child, please feel free to do the same.

Morning snack is at 9.15am and generally consists of toast and milk/water, the children are encouraged to spread their own butter/jam and pour their own milk/water.

Lunch is served at 12.00 noon and the children will be offered that day's lunch. If they genuinely do not like what is on offer they will be offered an alternative of fruit and/or crudities with crackers and cheese. This is following guidance within the **Setting the table - Nutritional guidance and food standards for early years childcare providers in Scotland** document.

Afternoon snack is at 2.30pm where the children are offered a selection of fruit and/or vegetables and a drink of water.

It is felt that children in the Big Ted's room are old enough to wait until the end of their nursery day to have tea at home with their parents. However, if you feel that you would like to give your child something to eat due to the journey time home, late pick up etc, then we would be very grateful if you could make it a cold snack i.e. a sandwich that can be returned home if uneaten.

## **MORNING ARRIVAL**

As part of our policy to develop the children's literacy skills we encourage the children to sign themselves in using the board outside the nursery. Parents are asked to help children identify their name and then move their label from the "not in nursery" board to the "in nursery" board. Within a few weeks of doing this children quickly learn to recognise their own name. Could children then take off and hang up their coats and change into their indoor shoes before entering the room. A member of staff will then meet you in the room on arrival and will sign your child into the Big Ted's Room, at this point if you could let the staff know if there are any special arrangements for your child's care that day i.e. someone else picking up, if they have been feeling slightly off colour or had a bad night etc.

## **INFORMATION POCKETS**

There are pockets placed outside the Big Ted's room on the wall and these can be used for members of staff to pass on individual information such as newsletters etc. Parents can also use these to communicate with each other i.e. birthday invitations.

## **INFORMATION BOARDS**

The dry wipe board outside the Big Ted's room is there to provide daily information i.e. recording snack/lunch info, daily activities and the weeks planned learning experiences.

The "work to go home" box is in the front hall. Every child has a file in which all your child's artwork will be stored. It is cleaned out every Friday evening. Therefore if you would like to keep your child's wonderful works of art, please check this box.

## **MEDICINE**

If a child has medicine which must be given during the nursery session then the parents must fill in the medicine form alongside a member of staff giving all the relevant information. If it is the child's first time with the medicine then we ask if the parents try it with them first to ensure that they are not allergic to it (This would not include emergency medication such as an adrenalin pen). In nursery we are unable to provide or store medicine for children just in case a child displays symptoms of a minor ailment or allergy. Such medicines include paracetamol, ibuprofen and chlorphenamine. If a child becomes unwell



at nursery the parents will be informed and they can either bring the medication into nursery, sign the medication form for staff to administer the medication or take the child home.

## **BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

Our nursery believes that children flourish best when they know how they are expected to behave. Children gain respect through interaction with caring adults who show them respect and value their individual personalities. Positive, caring and polite behaviour will be encouraged and praised at all times in an environment where children learn to respect themselves, other people and their surroundings.

Children need to have set boundaries of behaviour for their own safety and the safety of their peers. Within the nursery we aim to set these boundaries in a way which helps the child to develop a sense of the significance of their own behaviour, both on their own environment and those around them. Restrictions on the child's natural desire to explore and develop their own ideas and concepts are kept to a minimum.

We aim to:

- Recognise the individuality of all our children
- Encourage self-discipline, consideration for each other, our surroundings and property
- Encourage children to participate in a wide range of group activities to enable them to develop their social skills
- Work in partnership with parents by communicating openly
- Praise children and acknowledge their positive actions and attitudes, therefore ensuring that children see that we value and respect them
- Encourage all staff working with children to accept their responsibility for implementing the goals in this policy
- Promote non-violence and encourage children to deal with conflict peacefully
- Provide a key worker system enabling staff to build a strong and positive relationship with children and their families
- We successfully use a Happy/Sad cloud in the pre-school room which focuses on praising positive behaviour. The sad cloud is only used when a child has repeatedly been told not to do something. Children understand that their name can come off the sad cloud at any point throughout the day when their behaviour has improved.
- Have a set of golden rules for the pre-school room that are formulated by the children themselves.

## **TOYS**

The Big Ted's Room has a rule that we do not bring any personal toys into the nursery unless it is a special occasion such as a birthday or if it is a theme related toy which they would like to show and discuss at registration with their friends.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

We celebrate every child's birthday and mark the special occasion by having a party. We play a few party games, dance, dress up etc. Parents usually supply a cake and we sing happy birthday and blow out the candles.

If the child is not in on his/her birthday then we will have a party before or after the special day, whatever the parents wish.

## **SPIKEY MIKEY**

Spikey Mikey the Hedgehog is our friend who stays in the nursery and goes home with a different child each weekend (Spring and Summer only). He has been to many different places and has lots and lots of stories to tell. Spikey Mikey's folder is kept in the front hall where you can have a look at all the stories and photographs the parents have written with their children. (Just in case you were panicking, Spikey Mikey is a puppet not a real hedgehog).

## **PARENT HELPERS**

If you have a special talent or would just like to help out then the Big Ted's room welcomes all parents and carers to spend some time in the nursery. Face painting, storytelling, playing a musical instrument etc. or even just lending a helping hand, staff would be extremely grateful for the help and support.

## **SUPPLIES**

Each child has a peg outside the playroom, which is for daily coats, hats, scarves, bags etc. We have additional pegs for each child, which is in the Big Ted's toilets. We ask that you always have at least 1 change of clothes for your child on this peg. Could you please provide sun hats and sun cream in the summer and warmer clothes in the winter i.e. wellington boots, hats, gloves and scarfs.

## **COULD YOU PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU LABEL ALL YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS**

## **KEYWORKER**

We use the key worker system in the Big Ted's room. To ensure continuity of care all staff members work together caring for the children, sharing relevant information and liaising with parents, but each member of staff have their group of key worker children for developmental milestones, personal learning planning and parent evenings. A list of key workers can be found on the notice board outside the Big Ted's room.

## **FOREST SCHOOLS**

A Forest School is an innovative educational approach to outdoor play and learning. The philosophy of Forest Schools is to encourage and inspire the children through positive outdoor experiences. By participating in engaging, motivating and achievable tasks and activities in a woodland environment, the children have an opportunity to develop intrinsic motivation, emotional and social skills, as well as having the freedom to learn how to manage their own risk and increasing the amount of time spent in an outdoor environment.

Forest Schools has shown to achieve monumental success when the children visit the same local woodlands on a regular basis, where, through play, they have the opportunity to learn about the natural environment, how to handle risks and most importantly to use their own initiative to solve problems and co-operate with others.

This innovative and alternative pathway to learning is currently being encouraged by Education Scotland and promoted by The City of Edinburgh Council. Last year staff attended an introduction to Forest Schools training course and subsequently wished to bring it to Childsplay Nursery and develop it.

Forest schools is very much become part of our long term plans. We use a local forest on The Astley Ainslie Hospital site we have permission from the landowner for the children to visit it. We undertake full risk assessments and the staff are trained in facilitating this initiative. On our forest adventures to date (1-2 trips per week) we have carried out many exciting activities and learning opportunities including mini beast hunts, identifying the age of a tree, making journey sticks and identifying and studying local wildlife and their habitats with many more activities planned for the near future.

The local walk to the forest site alone creates much enthusiasm from the children and we are convinced that the children involved in this initiative to date, that their immediate learning has benefitted greatly from being given the opportunity to sample this outdoor learning approach.

All children are asked to provide the nursery with a waterproof all in one, wellington boots, thick wellington socks, hat, scarf and gloves (not mittens) for your child (please ensure that all items are labelled and placed in a named bag).

If you would like more information, please feel free to speak to Laura at any time.