

# Prospectus



2015 – 2016

Journey together ★ guided by God ★ to do the best we can

# Welcome to Little Fishes Nursery



It is our pleasure to welcome you to Little Fishes, the nursery of St Nicolas and St Mary C.E Primary School. We hope that this prospectus goes some way towards answering your questions about our nursery.

Little Fishes Nursery successfully opened in September 2009 and is an integral part of our Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) alongside the Reception Classes. We have a strong staff team, including qualified Teachers and experienced and qualified Early Years Teaching Assistants who are supported by the governors of the school.

The school and the nursery were inspected by Ofsted in July 2010 and June 2013. In 2010 they graded the school “outstanding” overall and all aspects of our Early Years Foundation Stage as “outstanding” and in 2013 they graded the school “good” and commented that the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a good start to their education through good quality provision.

Children quickly settle into Little Fishes Nursery and play very happily in a calm but purposeful environment. There are excellent relationships between the children and staff with very positive interactions that help children feel safe to explore. The children have access to a superb outdoor learning environment and have a wide selection of equipment both inside and out, as well as other school facilities and activities.

Our strong Christian ethos and values underpin all activities in our nursery and in our school. We seek to encourage children’s spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. Pupils are positively encouraged to value themselves, respect each other and so contribute towards our Christian ethos. We offer a positive learning environment which supports each individual within a sound structure of expectation.

Everyone who works at the school is valued and has a contribution to make to the life of the school. The partnership that we foster between parents, Governors, the Church, the local authority and the wider community is key. Everybody has their part to play in the nurture and education of our children.

We provide a broad and balanced curriculum keeping the children at the heart of all we do. Opportunities are provided to enrich and extend the children’s learning experiences, as we aim not just for excellence, but also for creativity and enjoyment.

The nursery currently caters for children from age 3 until they are old enough to start school in Reception\*. Sessions are every weekday morning and afternoon, with a supervised lunchtime period.

Our Little Fishes Nursery parent handbook gives parents and carers additional practical information about our nursery, including our induction arrangements, what to wear, medical issues and the nursery day. There is also information about our staff, Governors and the PTA.

May we conclude by saying that this prospectus should not be seen as a substitute for personal contact. You are welcome to come and visit us, meet our staff, view our premises and see our “Little Fishes” playing and learning in our nursery. Details of regular tours can be found on the school website or by phoning the school office.

We look forward to meeting you in the near future.

**David Etherton**  
Head teacher

**Andrew Lincoln**  
Deputy Headteacher

**Hannah Wing**  
Assistant Headteacher

*\*Please note that admission to the nursery **does not** guarantee admission to the Reception Class for which there is a separate admissions policy and process. Please ask for details.*

# Little Fishes Nursery

## Vision and Aims

### Nursery Vision

In our nursery we seek to create a secure and stimulating environment, where the uniqueness of each child is respected, celebrated and nurtured within a Christian ethos. We seek to provide a creative, imaginative and adventurous child-centred curriculum where children learn through play. We aim to enable a smooth and happy transition between home and school, working in close partnership with parents and carers.

### School Mission Statement

Journey together ★ guided by God ★ to do the best we can

### Aims of the Nursery

The aims of our nursery are linked to the school's Mission Statement, and they are to:

#### Journey together

1. Work closely with parents and carers to create a smooth transition from home to Little Fishes Nursery and the school.
2. Liaise with other professionals and the wider community for the benefit of the children.
3. Encourage children to share, play and work with friends and adults within the nursery and the school.



*The three fish on our Nursery Logo echo the three fish depicted on our school logo.*

#### Guided by God

1. Through a caring Christian ethos, modelled by adults, develop love, care and respect for each other and the world around us.
2. Encourage personal, emotional, social and moral development, where children value the talents and diversity of others.
3. Develop a sense of awe and wonder of the world around us.

#### To do the best we can

1. Provide an excellent Foundation Stage curriculum where each child is challenged in all areas of learning, according to their needs.
2. To develop self esteem and confidence and independence.
3. Ensure that each child's time at Little Fishes Nursery is safe and happy, and provides a good foundation for life.

The School, including Little Fishes Nursery was inspected by Ofsted in July 2013. Ofsted reported that:

“Teachers’ good understanding of children’s needs and the exceptional care they provide in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure they make good progress. Children are encouraged to be independent, and inside and outside resources are well used to extend their learning and development. Every opportunity is taken to develop their speaking and listening skills.”



“Children make good progress because activities are planned carefully, teaching is vibrant and encouraging, and they are encouraged to think for themselves”

“The excellent pastoral system and effective partnerships with parents and carers and external agencies ensure that pupils are well cared for.”

#### Parents comments:-

“We have been delighted with the variety of activities, nurturing staff and quality of experience for our child. THANK YOU ALL!”

“Thank you for all the support and care you have given our child. He loves coming to nursery and has grown in confidence over the last 2 terms.”

“Mrs B seems to really know and understand our little boy and has been so supportive this year. Thank you.”

“The staff are always friendly and supportive.”

“I was able to make it to the Easter get together and thought it was wonderful. It was a lovely way to share what the children have been learning and give them a chance to perform in a relaxed environment.”



## Facilities



Little Fishes Nursery is based in a bright, airy room with toys and equipment for playing and learning. It has its own interactive whiteboard, iPads and computers allowing children to benefit from the use of up to date technology. At certain times they also enjoy access to the Reception classrooms where they can try other activities and work and play with older children if they choose. There is a well equipped outdoor area where the children have freedom and space to extend their learning in a way that is uniquely different to indoor learning. These areas are shared with the Reception classes and enrich the learning of all areas of the curriculum. The teachers plan together on a weekly basis to ensure provision is the very best that it can be for all children.

The children of Little Fishes Nursery also have the opportunity to use the facilities of St Nicolas and St Mary Primary School. These include large playing fields, climbing apparatus, an environmental area including a pond and marsh, a large hall, music room, library and further ICT equipment, along with other resources to support all areas of the curriculum. The children frequently have the opportunity to become involved in enrichment activities e.g. a Chinese day, a visiting nurse and policeman, sports day and meeting Billy the clown.

## Opening Times and Free Nursery Entitlement

All pre-school children are entitled to 15 hours free nursery entitlement per week, from the term after their third birthday. Additional sessions currently cost £13.00 per 3 hour session. If children are collected late we may apply an additional charge.



Children can attend for up to five mornings and five afternoons per week. All children must attend a minimum of three sessions per week. The nursery is open term-time only in line with the school. Morning sessions are from 8.50am until 11.50am and afternoon sessions runs from 11.50am until 3 pm. If children are staying all day, they need to bring their own packed lunch and drink. During morning sessions the children have access to fruit and vegetables provided through a government scheme, and can also apply to have free milk.

## Admissions

Little Fishes Nursery is open to pre-school children who are 3 or 4 years old. Places are limited so that the school can ensure a suitable adult : child ratio is maintained, taking into account the size of accommodation, government regulations and best practice.

The Governing Body, as the admissions authority, is responsible for all admissions to the nursery. The nursery is very popular and we recommend you read the Little Fishes Nursery admissions policy, including oversubscription criteria, which is available on the website.

[www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk](http://www.stnicolasmary.w-sussex.sch.uk)

## Accessibility

The nursery is accessible to pupils with physical disabilities. There is an adapted disabled toilet within the school and there are ramps at many doorways.

## Staffing



Each nursery session is staffed by a fully qualified teacher who has experience and expertise in teaching children in the Foundation Stage. The teacher is supported by assistants who are suitably qualified in early year's childcare and education and are experienced in working with children of pre-school age. The staff of Little Fishes Nursery are part of our Early Years Foundation Stage team and are supported by office and caretaking staff and the Senior Leadership Team. Throughout the year we also have students on work experience, childcare and teaching courses.

## Partnerships with Parents and Carers



Starting nursery is a great step in your child's life and we will do all we can to help them feel welcome. As parents or carers you have been your child's first educators since they were born. We greatly value "parental" input to maximise your child's learning and development and we look forward to working in partnership with you.

Parental help in the nursery is much appreciated. Once your child is settled in we would welcome help, should you wish to volunteer. This could be on a regular basis or on special occasions only. Please let us know if you have any skills or interests that you might like to share with the children, or use to support their learning. These could be related to your work or cooking, music, dance, making dressing up clothes and so on. Occasionally young children become unsettled if a parent or carer helps at their nursery. If this is the case please do not be offended if we suggest you delay assisting us for a while. There is no obligation to help, but please do let us know if you want to be involved with the nursery in any way.

One of St Nicolas & St Mary's strengths is its excellent Parent Teacher Association which organizes a number of social and fundraising events throughout the year. Over the last few years the PTA has donated tens of thousands to projects and the school owes a lot to their enthusiasm and dedication. All parents and carers of nursery children are automatically members of the PTA.

## Starting at Little Fishes Nursery



Prior to starting at the nursery, the nursery teacher will arrange to visit you and your child at your home. This normally takes place shortly before your child starts at the nursery. This gives you an opportunity to ask any questions and for your child to meet their teacher in a familiar setting, in which they feel completely secure. We also offer a settling-in session which you and your child can attend.

It is very helpful prior to starting nursery if you can prepare your child e.g. by encouraging independence in the toilet, when washing hands or trying to put on their coat. We work hard to support the children's early independence but if they have already made some progress before they start then this will give them confidence and aid a smooth transition.

If your child starts nursery in September, which is when most children join, you will find that only a few children will start on the same day. By admitting the children a few at a time they are able to settle more quickly and easily into the nursery routine, making the transition from home to nursery as smooth as possible for both children and parents. It is important to remember that young children vary tremendously in the way in which they react to new experiences, so do allow your child plenty of time to get used to nursery. Some children may take longer to settle than others. The parent handbook contains further information about our induction arrangements. Recent induction events have included, story times and play afternoons. Nursery also offer a transition booklet for parents to read with their child to help them familiarise themselves with the nursery team and routines.



## Attending more than one nursery

Parents and carers are entitled to split their free entitlement between Little Fishes Nursery and other settings. This means that a child could attend more than one pre-school setting.

Where possible, we highly recommend that children attend one setting. There are a number of advantages:

- **Better care:** Staff get to know children better if they go to just one nursery. They can provide greater care as they get to know the needs of children more fully.
- **Better provision:** It is easier for staff to develop children's interests the more the children are around. For example if a child visits a farm at the weekend, staff can plan related activities over the week. Or if a child is interested in puppets, staff can ensure that the child has the opportunity to make puppets, go in our puppet theatre etc over the week. The nursery may have a theme for the week such as bears – and children may miss out on helping Goldilocks taste porridge or going on a bear hunt.
- **Better use of facilities:** The nursery children have access to the school hall and other facilities on certain days of the week.
- **More accurate assessment:** Staff spend a huge amount of time observing children and assessing their needs. When children attend more than one setting, staff may not be able to capture all that a child is able to do or needs help in developing.



- **Date clashes are avoided:** Children who attend more than one setting may miss out on special occasions/events e.g. Harvest thanksgiving, Christmas Party, Nativity, School Photographs etc.
- **Easier communication:** It is easier for both parents and staff to communicate and share information with one another rather than between two settings and parents. In reality it is not possible to have daily or even weekly contact between settings to share information.

Sometimes parents cite “settling in” reasons for splitting sessions between different providers. However, we have found that children have settled very quickly into the nursery.

Ultimately, it is the choice of parents and carers where they choose to send their child. The school will always provide the very best we can for children who attend more than one setting, but also have a duty to explain the advantages of attending just one setting. If children do attend two settings we can share information with the other provider to ensure best practice.



# The Principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS principles are grouped into four distinct, but complementary themes, and these, along with our Christian ethos, underpin all aspects of practice within Little Fishes Nursery:

**A Unique Child** recognises that every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. The commitments are focused around development, inclusion, safety and health and well-being.

**Positive Relationships** describes how children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person. The commitments are focused around respect, partnership with parents, supporting learning, and the role of the key person.

**Enabling Environments** explains that the environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning. The commitments are focused around observation, assessment and planning; support for every child; the learning environment; and the wider context – transitions, continuity, and multi-agency working.

**Learning and Development** recognises that children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all areas of learning and development are equally important and inter-connected.

## The Nursery Curriculum

The Little Fishes Nursery curriculum is based on the provision of a full range of planned and spontaneous experiences, in both the indoor and outdoor classroom. There are seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS; they are all important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three prime areas are:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development

There are also four specific areas, which are:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design



In the nursery we seek to ensure that children can focus on:

- playing and exploring – children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning – children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically – children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

These seven areas of learning and development are explained in more detail on the next page.



## Seven areas of learning and development

### 1. Communication and Language

In the nursery, we plan activities and resources which will develop the children's speaking and listening skills. Speech remains both children's and adults' most important form of communication, so it is important that children develop speaking and listening skills for everyday living, as well as at school. Children also use speech to help them remember and understand what they have learned. Talking with peers and adults along with role-play, stories, rhymes and poems are all used to encourage a growing vocabulary.

### 2. Physical Development

We plan varied activities, both indoors and outdoors, which help children to develop physical control, fitness, awareness of space and manipulative skills. The children also begin to learn about the benefits of being physically fit and the need for sleep, a good diet and personal hygiene.



### 3. Personal, Social and Emotional Development



Children need to have self-esteem, confidence, and motivation to be successful learners. They need to develop concentration and learn how to cooperate and form effective relationships with both peers and adults. We encourage these skills and promote respect for others. Children learn to care for the environment and respect both their own culture and those of other people. They develop independence and the ability to take turns and to share through many different nursery activities. They also learn to follow rules and carry out instructions.

### 4. Literacy

We seek to encourage children to develop early reading and writing skills, when they are developmentally ready. We use a wide range of quality books to foster a life long interest and love of reading, whilst a number of nursery activities help with the recognition of familiar words and the sounds, names and shapes of letters. Children experiment with mark making and early writing skills, as well as learning through songs and rhymes.



### 5. Mathematics



We use practical activities to develop mathematical skills and language. The children gain experience in counting, matching, sorting, ordering and comparing. They learn about shape and pattern and about ways of measuring time, length, mass and capacity. We play games, which involve number, and plan activities, which enable children to explore shapes and measures. In all these activities children discuss what they are doing so that they begin to understand and develop an appropriate mathematical vocabulary.

### 6. Understanding the World

Children are encouraged to find out about other people, their local area and the wider world around them. Work in this area of learning provides the foundation for later study of subjects such as science, history, technology and geography. We plan activities which enable the children to explore a range of materials and living things, encouraging the children to question and investigate. For example, the children plant and water seeds and we observe and discuss how these grow. The children cook and make models and, under supervision, are given



opportunities to use a range of tools including scissors, staplers and blunt knives. They learn how things change over time and develop an understanding of different places through, for example, visits in the local environment and designing and making different landscapes on a range of scales. They learn about Christianity and local and world wide cultures and communities through planned activities such as stories, role play, visits and meeting a wide range of people. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of awe and wonder for our wonderful world and begin to learn how to care for it for themselves and others to enjoy.

## **7. Expressive arts and design**



Children develop their creative skills through art, music, dance and drama. They will sing and use simple musical instruments to explore rhythm. By using a wide variety of art materials, they can explore colour and texture and practise the skills needed to express themselves creatively. This may be through painting and drawing or modelling with clay, dough and other materials. Children have the opportunity to engage in role-play and use their imagination to act out first hand-experiences and familiar stories.

## **Cross Curricular Learning**

Although there are seven areas of learning most of the children's experiences are planned so that the children are learning about many areas of the curriculum at once. For example, through water play the children may be learning about floating and sinking, measuring, manipulative skills, speaking and listening, negotiation with peers and turn taking to name just a few!

## **Knowing what your child is learning and how they are progressing**



We understand how important it is for you to know what your child is learning about and how they are progressing and each term you will have a meeting with your child's key person. Throughout their time in the Foundation Stage, all children have their progress observed, assessed and recorded. This information is used to build up a profile, which is completed at the end of the reception year. This profile is used to carefully plan your child's next steps in learning and remains with the child throughout the Foundation Stage, regardless of which school they attend.

Staff at Little Fishes Nursery are always available for a quick chat. If you feel you need a longer meeting, you are welcome to make an appointment. We want you to feel welcome at the nursery and will always have time for you. Details of regular tours can be found on the school website or by phoning the school office.

**You are very welcome to come and visit us  
and see the nursery in action.**



**We hope to see you soon!**