

At Little Wombatz we want every child to understand that they are loved and valued and will provide them with a safe environment where they can grow and thrive. We believe that play is fundamental to the way that children learn and we will encourage children to play in a variety of different ways.

Our aims:

- To provide a secure, welcoming and caring environment where all children will feel happy, confident and encouraged to learn and develop.
- To enable the children to form a secure attachment with their key person.
- To help the children understand that they are valued for their own sake.
- To promote the seven areas of Learning and Development (as defined by the Early Years Foundation Stage) through enquiry, problem solving and the use of all available resources both inside and outside.
- To foster and develop each child's social and moral awareness, encouraging tolerance and sensitivity towards other people and the environment.
- To give our children the opportunity not only to be creative and expressive but also to develop an awareness and appreciation of aesthetic qualities.
- To provide opportunities for each child's physical development through a variety of activities and to help the children learn about healthy living.
- To provide equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender, race, belief and ability.
- To promote a partnership amongst the setting, parents, children and the wider community.
- To provide an inclusive environment in which we will identify and cater for individual needs in order to enable and encourage our children to achieve their full potential through an individualised programme for each child.
- To promote confidence, self-discipline and motivation in our children to help them become independent and ready for school.

Parents

Parents are regarded as members of our setting who have full participatory rights. These include a right to be valued and respected, kept informed, consulted, involved and included at all levels. We value the information you share with us about your child and family and will keep it confidential, only sharing it when necessary for the well-being of your child. You are welcome to visit us at any time and if you need to talk to us privately ask your child's key person. If you would like to help at Little Wombatz you are welcome to sign up as a voluntary helper, however we will need to complete a DBS check for you to ensure that our children are kept safe.

Children's development and learning

The provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage (DCSF 2007). From September 2008 the Early Years Foundation Stage became law. This has now been revised and the revised version of the Early Years Foundation Stage came into force in September 2012. The revised Early Years Foundation Stage is underpinned by four themes. These are:

A Unique Child

Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self assured. Practitioners

- understand and observe each child's development and learning, assess progress and plan for next steps
- support babies and children to develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture
- identify any need for additional support
- keep children safe
- value and respect all children and families equally

Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. Positive relationships are

- warm and loving, and foster a sense of belonging
- sensitive and responsive to the child's needs, feelings and interest

- supportive of the child's own efforts and independence
- consistent in setting clear boundaries
- stimulating
- built on key person relationships in early years settings.

Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers. Enabling environments

- value all people
- value learning

They offer

- stimulating resources relevant to all the children's cultures and communities
- rich learning opportunities through play and playful teaching
- support for children to take risks and explore.

Learning and Development

Children develop and learn in different ways. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development. They foster the characteristics of effective early learning

- playing and exploring
- active learning
- creativity and thinking critically

How we provide for development and learning

Children start to learn about the world around them from the moment they are born. The care and education offered by our setting helps children to continue to do this by providing all of the children with interesting activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

The Areas of Development and Learning comprise of:

Three *prime* areas:

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

Four *specific* areas:

- literacy;
- mathematics;
- understanding the world: and
- expressive arts and design.

Prime areas are fundamental, work together, and move through to support development in all other areas. Specific areas include essential skills and knowledge for children to participate successfully in society.

The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the Characteristics of Effective Learning, which move through all areas of learning.

Playing and exploring - *engagement*

- Finding out and exploring
- Playing with what they know
- Being willing to "have a go"

Active learning - *motivation*

- Being involved and concentrating
- Keeping trying
- Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically - *thinking*

- Having their own ideas
- Making links
- Choosing ways to do things

In the accompanying guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage, 'Development Matters', the likely stages of progress a child makes along their learning journey towards the early learning goals are charted. These goals state what it is expected that children will know and be able to do by the end of the reception year of their education.

Our setting has regard to these matters when we assess children and plan for their learning. A parent's version of Development Matters, called "What to expect, when" can be downloaded at http://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2015/09/4Children_ParentsGuide_Sept_2015v4WEB1.pdf, or ask in the setting for a copy.

Our approach to learning and development and assessment

Learning through play

Play helps young children to learn and develop through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. Our setting uses the practice guidance Early Years Foundation Stage to plan and provide a range of play activities which help children to make progress in each of the areas of learning and development. In some of these activities children decide how they will use the activity and, in others, an adult takes the lead in helping the children to take part in the activity. In all activities information from the practice guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Assessment

We assess how young children are learning and developing by observing them frequently. We use information that we gain from observations, as well as from photographs or videos of the children, to document their progress and where this may be leading them. We believe that parents know their children best and we ask them to contribute to assessment by sharing information about what their children like to do at home and how they as parents are supporting development.

We make periodic assessment summaries of children's achievement based on our ongoing development records. These form part of children's records of achievement. We undertake these assessment summaries at regular intervals as well as times of transition, such as when a child moves into a different group or when they go on to school.

There is a statutory assessment of children aged between 2-3 years. We consult with your child's health visitor once they have completed their 2.5 year check and will use information from them in completing this assessment. We then consult with you during a parent's meeting, before producing our final document, which you will then be given to keep.

Learning Journeys

The setting keeps a record of achievement for each child, known as a Learning Journey. Staff and parents working together on their children's records of achievement is one of the ways in which the key person and parents work in partnership. We use an online system called Tapestry to help us collate our Learning Journeys. There is a facility for parents and carers to send us observations

showing us what your child can do at home to add to their Journey. When your child starts at Little Wombatz we will arrange for you to be sent an e-mail detailing how to access their Learning Journey from home.

We will collect information about your child's needs, activities, interests and achievements. This information will enable the key person to identify your child's stage of progress. You and the key person will then decide on how to help your child to move on to the next stage.

Working together for your children

In our setting we maintain the ratio of adults to children in the setting that is set through the Welfare Requirements. We also have volunteer parent helpers and students studying relevant courses from local colleges where possible to complement these ratios. This helps us to:

- give time and attention to each child;
- talk with the children about their interests and activities;
- help children to experience and benefit from the activities we provide; and
- allow the children to explore and be adventurous in safety.

The staff who work at our setting are:

Chris Barton

Chris is the setting's owner and manager. Prior to starting Little Wombatz she worked as a child minder for 5 years and was awarded Outstanding at her last child minding OFSTED inspection. Chris has Early Years Professional Status and is the setting's designated person for Child Protection, Special Educational Needs and Equalities. Chris is passionate about providing a pre-school facility that meets the needs of the children in Soham and helps to support their family life. Chris is mum to two children, Rachel and Isaac. She spends some time in each room, as well as doing all the setting administration, business management and working in a part time role as a consultant for Cambridgeshire County Council's Early Years Service.

Our younger room:

In our younger room there are five staff - Monique Cooper (room leader), Louise Baggaley, Tanya Woodroffe, Andrea Cadmore and Jemma Biggadike. Monique, Louise, Tanya and Jemma all hold Level 3 Certificates in Early Years and have years of experience in childcare settings between them. Andrea is studying towards her level 3 certificate. Monique is also a deputy manager and Child

Protection Designated Person and Tanya is the setting Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator.

Our older room:

Our older children are looked after by Lucy Alda (room leader), Shannon Froggatt and Chloe Peacock. Lucy, Shannon and Chloe work every day. Lucy has a level 3 certificate and has a wide range of childcare experience and Shannon and Chloe have level 2 certificates and are studying towards level 3. Lucy is a deputy manager and Equalities Designated Person.

Key persons and your child

Little Wombatz uses a key person approach. This means that each member of staff has a group of children for whom she/he is particularly responsible. Your child's key person will be the person who works with you to make sure that what we provide is right for your child's particular needs and interests. When your child first starts at the setting, she will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, she will help your child to benefit from the setting's activities.

Learning opportunities for adults

As well as gaining qualifications in early years care and education, the setting staff will take part in further training to help them to keep up-to-date with thinking about early years care and education. From time to time the setting holds learning events for parents. These usually look at how adults can help children to learn and develop in their early years and have included topics such as helping your child get ready for reception and Understanding Speech and Language Development.

The setting's timetable and routines

We believe that care and education are equally important in the experience which we offer children. The routines and activities that make up the day in the setting are provided in ways that:

- help each child to feel that she/he is a valued member of Little Wombatz;
- ensure the safety of each child;
- help children to gain from the social experience of being part of a group; and
- provide children with opportunities to learn and help them to value learning.

The day

Little Wombatz organises the day so that children can take part in a variety of child-chosen and adult-led activities. The day is structured slightly differently depending on the age of your child. These take account of children's changing energy levels throughout the day. The setting caters for children's individual needs for rest and quiet activities during the day. Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them.

Snacks and meals

The setting makes snacks and meals a social time at which children and adults eat together. We plan the menus for snacks so that they provide the children with healthy and nutritious food. If your child finds food particularly difficult feel free to provide a healthy snack (fruit, cheese or savoury biscuits etc) in a named box. Water or milk is provided for the children to drink. Do tell us about your child's dietary needs and we will make sure that these are met. If your child attends for a full day, they will need to bring a packed lunch with them. They will be provided with cups, plates and cutlery as necessary and milk or water to drink. We are unable to heat up food as we do not have appropriate facilities. Please make sure that your child's packed lunch contains a suitable mix of healthy food to help your child maintain their energy levels throughout the day.

Policies

Copies of the setting's policies and procedures are found on our website www.littlewombatz.co.uk or are available for you to see at the setting - please ask your child's key worker to point out where they are kept.

The setting's policies help us to make sure that the service provided by the setting is a high quality one and that being a member of the setting is an enjoyable and beneficial experience for each child and her/his parents.

The staff and parents of the setting work together to adopt the policies and they all have the opportunity to take part in the annual review of the policies. This review helps us to make sure that the policies are enabling the setting to provide a quality service for its members and the local community.

Safeguarding children

Our setting has a duty under the law to help safeguard children against suspected or actual significant harm.

Our employment practices ensure children against the likelihood of abuse in our settings and we have a procedure for managing complaints or allegations against a member of staff.

Our way of working with children and their parents ensures we are aware of any problems that may emerge and can offer support, including referral to appropriate agencies when necessary, to help families in difficulty.

Special needs

As part of the setting's policy to make sure that its provision meets the needs of each individual child, we take account of any special needs a child may have. The setting works to the requirements of the 1993 Education Act and The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 0-25 (2014). Tanya Woodroffe and Chris Barton are our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) and are happy to talk to you about any concerns you may have about your child.

Medicine in the setting

While it is not our policy to care for sick children, who should be at home until they are well enough to return to the setting, we will agree to administer medication as part of maintaining their health and well-being or when they are recovering from an illness. Medication **must** be clearly marked with their name and dosage and handed to your child's key person when they arrive at the setting so it can be securely stored. We will need you to give us some details about the medication and to sign before and after your child has received it.

Fees

The fees are £3.50 per hour payable monthly in advance. Fees must still be paid if children are absent (with or without notice) for a short period of time. If your child has to be absent over a long period of time, please talk to Chris Barton, the setting manager.

For your child to keep her/his place at the setting, you must pay the fees. We are in receipt of nursery education funding for three and four year olds and funded twos; where funding is not received, then fees apply. If you think your child may be eligible for funding please speak to Chris or to the Children's Centre.

Starting at our setting

The first days

We want your child to feel happy and safe with us. To make sure that this is the case, the staff will work with you to decide on how to help your child to settle into the setting. The setting has a policy about helping children to settle into the setting: a copy is available on our website.

Term dates

We are open Monday to Friday 0915 to 1430 and you are able to choose your session length within these times. Please look on our website for term dates.

Clothing

We provide protective clothing for the children when they play with messy activities, however sometimes wearing protective clothing can inhibit your child's movement and interrupt their play, in which case they may get messy.

We encourage children to gain the skills that help them to be independent and look after themselves. These include taking themselves to the toilet and taking off, and putting on, outdoor clothes. Clothing that is easy for them to manage will help them to do this. Please ensure your child has at least one complete change of clothes with them each time they attend just in case! Little Wombatz t-shirts are available for sale at the cost of £4.50 - please do not feel obliged to purchase these, however they are available if you would like one for your child.

We hope that you and your child enjoy being members of our setting and that you both find taking part in our activities interesting and stimulating. The staff are always ready and willing to talk with you about your ideas, views or questions. More information, including a blog of the children's activities is available on our website www.littlewombatz.co.uk.

Little Wombatz Ltd is a registered company in England & Wales, number 08056615.

Registered address for business activities:

Soham Scout & Guide Community Hut

Recreation Ground

Fountain Lane

Soham

CB7 5PL

Registered address for correspondence:

Neuhaus

38A Clay St

Soham

Ely

Cambs

CB7 5HH

Little Wombatz Ltd is supported by the Early Years & Childcare Service through a Sufficiency Grant which enabled us to start up.