

Welcome to the Babies

Play is a child's work

A guide to The Baby Room



Welcome

Welcome to Sandcastles Day Nursery and in particular to our baby room. Our baby room is specifically designed with babies in mind offering a separate play and sleep room. Our team are qualified and passionate about working with babies and are all deeply committed to developing the social, physical, intellectual, cultural and emotional needs of every baby in their care. We recognise that every child is unique and treat every child in our care with equal respect and love.

This booklet answers many of the questions about starting a baby in our room and has been designed to offer you, the parent peace of mind. However, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask any member of our team who will be happy to answer any queries or contact us on 028 27666066.

We look forward to working with your family soon

Staff

Every member of staff have been carefully selected to ensure their suitability with working with babies. The ratio in the baby room is 1:3. This means one qualified member of staff to three babies. This low ratio ensures that a strong bond between the staff and babies is formed. Furthermore the baby room staff are permanent giving the babies further sense of security about their surroundings.

Settling In

At Sandcastles we recognise that leaving your child in child care for the first time can be a stressful experience for both the child and the parents. Therefore we offer a settling in period before your start date to ease the transition into nursery life.

These sessions usually last between 1 to 2 hours, two or three times before your start date. These sessions are beneficial for all involved. Not only do they allow staff to get to know your child but they also give you the parent peace of mind that your child will be well cared for in your absence.

Most importantly, however your child will benefit from these sessions as they will be able to get to know their new environment, the staff and the other children. Further information on settling in can be found in our A guide to settling in leaflet available in your starting pack.

On your first day you need to bring:

- ☺ A pack of nappies - We will store these in our changing room, where each child has their own named shelf space. We will let you know when we need more.
- ☺ Creams - such as sudocream or whatever your child uses. Again we will name these and store them in our changing room.
- ☺ A dummy (if applicable) - which can remain in nursery and will be stored in a sterilizer.
- ☺ A change of clothes - Well babies do like making a mess! This can be stored at nursery on their peg or brought each day.

Each day you need to bring:

- ☺ Bottles for the day - Send in a sterilised bottle with the correct amount of cool, boiled water in it for each feed. Staff will label the bottles and once used will rinse out and **put back in your child's bag. A box of milk formula can be left in the baby room and when running low staff will inform you so that you can bring in more.**
- ☺ A comforter (if applicable) - a teddy or blanket. This often makes the child feel more relaxed and offers reassurance.
- ☺ Little nursery book - During your settling in sessions, staff will give you a small **notebook. We would appreciate it if you could write your baby's routine on the front page. This will help staff know your child's feeding and sleep patterns. Each time your child attends nursery, the staff will write down what your child does. For example feeding and sleep times and activities carried out. It would also benefit the staff if parents could write in the time of the last feed before coming to nursery**



Why is play important?

Babies are constantly developing with every touch, movement, and sound. At Sandcastles we have 5 areas of development which we promote.

- Social
- Physical
- Intellectual
- Creative
- Emotional

Focusing on these five areas and with babies in mind we have devised a long term development plan entitled:

'Play is a child's work'

Watch your child at play and you will see the kind of concentration, passion and creative excitement that artists and scientists bring to their projects Murphy et Small 1989

'A child is a fire to be lit, not a vase to be filled'

French Proverb

Watch your child at play and you will see the kind of concentration, passion and creative excitement that artists and scientists bring to their projects Murphy et Small 1989

Play is to a child work, thought, art and relaxation and cannot be pressed into any single formula. It expresses a child's relation to himself and his environment and without adequate opportunity for play, normal and satisfactory emotional development is not possible. Lowenfield, 1935

Every baby is an individual person, and grows and develops in her own way, at her own pace. Johnston et al 2000

Oh boy, when I get this off, I can chew on it and play with my toes!



What does baby learn?

- The feat of finding his feet! This takes coordination of the eyes and hands and problem solving.
- A baby's mouth is a "touch centre" that has lots of nerve endings. Mouthing tells a baby a lot about what he puts in his mouth

How am I gonna get all these toys in the bucket?

If I turn it over, can I dump them all out?



What is he learning?

- Eye-hand coordination
- Thinking skills as he solves new problems
- That his actions cause things to happen

If I pull my blanket over me, I bet somebody will play peek a boo with me!



What does baby learn?

- To start up games with others
- That she can socialise with others
- That she can take turns with family members playing "peek," smiling and laughing.
- Conversations are a game of taking turns too, so she is learning to take part in conversations.
- That people are there even when she can't see them.

Wow, I leaned over and picked this toy up. When I shake it, it makes sounds! I can do it again!



What is he learning?

- Large muscle skills
- Balance
- That his actions cause things to happen

The importance of Routine

We believe that routines play a very important part in a child's life. While we work with your routine as much as possible you will notice that over the course of their time in the baby room your child's routine will change due to factors such as them getting older.

Routines are important for a variety of reasons as indicated below.

Routines as Emotional Regulators

Consistent routines provide comfort for a young child. Whether it is time for a snack, a nap, play, or a loved one to return, knowing what will happen next gives babies and toddlers physiological and emotional stability. This stability and consistency allows them to feel safe and secure--trusting a caring adult to provide what they need. When they feel this sense of trust and safety, they are free to do their "work," which is to play, explore, and learn.

Routines Guide Positive Behaviour & Safety

Routines are like instructions--they guide steps toward a specific goal. This might be seen in how clean-up after play is done, or how lining up to go outside is done. Particularly in group settings, children are motivated to fit in and to imitate. This is also a helpful and important factor when it comes to safety.

Routines are a Basis for Learning

Daily child care routines are rich opportunities to support development and learning while having fun. Routines offer the chance to build self-confidence, curiosity, social skills, self-control, communication skills, and more.

Routines provide key ingredients for learning: relationships and repetition. So enjoy these ordinary moments with your child and look at them through her eyes. If she's having fun with you, she's learning, too!

Routines Ease Transitions for Children

Depending on your child's temperament, transitions may not be easy for your little one. Going from play to lunch, lunch to the store, the store to home...and especially transitioning to bed time, can be challenging. Even babies can need help transitioning--from sleep to wake or the other way around. Routines can provide a bridge to make transitions easier.

Taken from Zero to Three

Frequently Asked Questions

What happens if my child is crying when I leave?

Staff will reassure and comfort your child with hugs and soothing words, while reassuring that you will return soon.

Do you cater for special dietary needs?

All meals made at our nursery are freshly prepared daily. A weekly menu is available on our parent's notice board. We are only willing to discuss what foods your child requires and are committed to meeting their needs.

Can staff administer medicines?

If your child requires medicine at nursery you will be asked to sign a medicine form which states what type of medicine it is, how much is to be given, who administers the medicine and the date and time it is given. All Supervisors are permitted to give medicine.

What happens if my child is ill?

Within your introduction pack you will have received our sickness policy. As regulated by Social Services exclusion periods for illnesses must be adhered to. A copy of the exclusion periods is available on our policy notice board. This ensures that illnesses are contained and do not spread. If your child becomes ill while at nursery we will contact you immediately.

My child will not sleep in a cot?

A separate sleep room is available to all babies, where it is dark and lullaby music is played for sleep times. However, if your child is not comfortable sleeping in a cot, bouncers and a swing are available.

My child is allergic to baby wipes. What will you use?

Nappies are changed every three hours. Of course nappies requiring changed outside these times will be done. We use cotton wool and baby lotion or water (which is supplied by nursery) to clean your child which is provided by the nursery to minimise allergic reactions.

What happens if my child bites?

Babies learn through touch and taste. Placing items in their mouth is how babies discover new textures, shapes and taste. Occasionally, a child might bite another child. This is not out of spite but out of curiosity. If this happens, the parents of child who bites will be told their child has bitten. Likewise, the parents of the child who was bitten will be informed. However, no names will be given to either parent.

My child has had an accident what happens?

An accident report will be written, giving an account of what happened. You the parent will be informed when you come to pick up your child and will be asked to sign the form acknowledging what happened.

Goodbye through your baby's eyes:

Some days, I cry when you leave. I might also cry or ignore you when you come back. That doesn't mean I've been miserable the whole time you were away. It just means that when I see you, it reminds me that you've been gone, and I need and love you so much that I get overwhelmed and have to cry. I know I'm safe to share my deepest feelings with you, and that's why I can show you when I'm sad.

When you need to leave me, it helps if you spend some time with me and my caregiver. When you smile and talk with her, I feel safe because I'm staying with someone you like. And please, don't ever just sneak out on me, even if it seems like it will be easier. It only makes me fearful that at any moment you might disappear without warning. Saying good-bye to me makes me trust you more. Over time, I will learn that whenever you leave, you come back.

Lerner et al 2000

Feeding through your 5 month old eyes:

When I let you know I'm hungry and you come with food, that tells me that you understand my needs and will respond to them. I'm still not too good at waiting so I'll probably fuss. I love being cuddled while I eat. But I also love to explore—find out what's going on around me. So I may pull away to see who else is around, or to find out where all the noise is coming from. I'll also want to grab your fingers and your clothing, or just look up at you with an ear-to-ear smile. When I coo at you, coo back. When it's your turn to eat, it's really interesting to watch. I'll be eating solids soon and will want to feed myself, so let me play with a spoon. Later, when I'm big enough, give me little bits of soft food that I can pick up by myself. For right now, just give me an interesting rattle to chew on. Mealtime is more than just food; it's time to take it all in and to explore and feel close to you.

Lerner et al 2000

What home time means to your baby:

Home time is an occasion when the child realises that their parent has returned to them. To the child this time has very significant social and emotional benefits. It shows the child that the parent really cares for them and builds their self esteem. It also builds the trust between the child and the parent indicating to the child that even though the parent may go away for a short time they will return for them. This part of the routine should not be under estimated.