



# Prospectus and parent handbook

(Revised April 2026)



*Nurturing Your Child's Potential*



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Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Orton BA Ed (Hons)  
Seedlings Manager: Diane Ford



Dear Parents,

### **Welcome to Sutton Seedlings (Pre-School)**

We are a small, friendly, dynamic, child orientated pre-school offering a fun learning environment for children aged 2½ to rising 5s. We welcome children 5 days a week 9.00am to 3.00pm.

Sutton Seedlings Pre-School is an integral part of Sutton Primary Academy. Situated in our purpose-built room and outdoor play area, we have access to all the school facilities such as the large, secure playing fields, library, natural garden and Forest School areas.

We are registered as an Early Years Provider as part of the school. Numbers are limited to 20 children at any one session to ensure small working groups and high staff to child ratios. We are inspected as part of the school ensuring high standards of learning, play, safety and hygiene.

Sutton Seedlings is run as part of Sutton Primary Academy where a strong parental partnership is encouraged, especially in the areas of fundraising and parent liaison. Staff work closely with the management team and parents to ensure the children enjoy a high-quality learning environment.

Our pre-school is an amazing place to be and our children thrive here. We welcome volunteers, which not only benefits the children but also offers the parents an insight into their child's experiences at Sutton Seedlings.

We hope your child's time in pre-school will be a very happy and memorable one. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Diane Ford  
Seedlings Manager

## ***Our Aims***

1. To provide a safe, welcoming and stimulating environment for children to learn actively through play and exploration.
2. To provide an engaging curriculum designed around the children and the EYFS and Every Child Matters policy including the three prime areas and four specific areas of learning and development.
3. To provide fun opportunities designed to support children to interact with others based on the values of respect, cooperation and kindness.
4. To support children with developing self-awareness including learning strategies for self-regulation and beginning an understanding of self-discipline.
5. To develop resilience and confidence to enable children to become more independent.
6. To develop a close partnership with parents.
7. To help all children reach their full potential emotionally, socially and academically.

## ***Opening Times***

Pre-school is open term time only:

Monday to Friday 9:00am – 3:00pm

Parents will be informed in advance of any changes to these days.

## ***Admissions***

It is our intention to ensure Sutton Seedlings is accessible to all families with a child aged 2½ to rising 5s in our local community and beyond. We accept children who are not yet toilet-trained and work alongside parents regarding this when the child is ready.

Places are offered to children from 2½ years and all admissions enquiries should be directed to [admin@sutton.hmfa.org.uk](mailto:admin@sutton.hmfa.org.uk). Visits leading up to starting pre-school are encouraged, but the child must be accompanied by a parent or carer.

## ***Starting Pre-School***

We want your child to settle into Seedlings life as quickly as possible. We find that many children are happy to attend and be left for sessions straight away. However, if your child finds this a challenge, parents can talk to staff about adapting the 'settling in' period to support your child until they are confident and happy in the group. This takes longer for some children than others and parents should not feel worried if their child takes a while to settle.

Each child will be allocated a 'key worker' who will work most closely with your child. The key worker is primarily responsible for building a relationship with you as a parent, gathering information about your child and their home life through the settling in period, and from then on. They will be your first point of contact if you need anything. They will support your child's growth and development through close observation, careful planning and the regular updates on Tapestry, an online learning journal. These journals are regularly updated and will contain observations of your child along with photos. You are welcome to log in to your secure individual account and have a look at your child's profile any time.

To ensure the safety of all children attending Sutton Primary Academy and Sutton Seedlings, pre-school children are not allowed into the building until 9:00am to allow time for the school children to settle into their classes. Parents and children are requested to remain in the courtyard area outside of the school hall until members of staff come to the gate.

For fire safety reasons, all buggies should be left in the covered area beside the main gate entrance and not brought into the building.

### ***What to Wear***

We want our children to feel free to explore and experiment with all kinds of materials, including messy ones, so it is best to send children dressed in clothes which are easily washable or not too new.

It is good for children to practice the skills which will make them independent. Simple clothing including underwear which they can handle themselves, will enable them to go to the toilet when they want to and to put on and take off their outdoor clothes without being too dependent on other people's help.

We try to take the children outside whatever the weather, so we ask that all children are sent to pre-school adequately prepared for the day's activities and weather conditions.



Autumn/Winter: Please provide warm clothes, scarves, hats and gloves.

Spring/Summer: Please apply sun cream to your child before they come to pre-school and ensure they have a sun hat. Please send in your child's sun cream for re-application as necessary.

We also ask that you always leave a spare pair of wellington boots in pre-school if possible.

Please make sure that all personal belongings are clearly named.

## **Staffing**

We have an enthusiastic and professional team of staff, ensuring that experience, professionalism and qualifications are matched to each area of the nursery. With a good understanding of children's individual needs, the staff are able to plan the next steps for your child's play, learning and development. Our staff include: -

<b>Name</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Relevant Qualifications</b>
Diane Ford	Manager	Early Years Care & Education Level 3
Rebecca Davies	Nurse Assistant	Early Years Care & Education Level 3
Kelly Smith	Nurse Assistant	NVQ Business Administration
Kelly Taylor	Nurse Assistant	NNEB
Leanne Thomson	Nurse Assistant	Cache Diploma Level 3 Early Years

Additional staffing is available from students and our parent volunteers.

We ensure a high ratio of adults to children – one adult to four children for 2½ year olds and one adult to eight children for 3-year-olds which conforms to Ofsted requirements. This allows individual attention to the needs and development of each child.

## **Staff Training**

Courses are attended on a regular basis.

Our membership of the Pre-School Learning Alliance: -

1. Ensures that we are in touch with new thinking in the field of pre-school education and childcare.
2. Provides us with up-to-date information and access to courses.
3. Encourages staff to regularly update their knowledge and training in safeguarding and first aid. All staff undertake food hygiene courses.

In addition to this, all staff have access to online training through The National College and Creative Education.

We also have training opportunities through being a part of Herefordshire Marches Federation of Academies (HMFA). In particular, staff receive regular Safeguarding and SEND training.

## **Lunch and Snack Times**

Mealtimes are a sociable time where we model and encourage the children to develop positive table manners which includes chewing carefully, tasting and using simple cutlery.

You are invited to send your child in with a packed lunch or you may order hot dinners from our school lunch provider (Cater Cater) at an additional cost of £2.70 per meal, as we do not provide lunches in the setting and are unable to warm up food. In accordance with Government guidelines, the food is healthy, cooked fresh and provides fruits and vegetables to help towards your child's recommended 'five-a-day' portions. If you would like your child to have hot food, you can order it online. You will be given a code to register your child with ParentPay and from there you will be able to order and pay for hot lunches directly with Cater Cater.

There are two snack times through the day at 10:30am and 2:30pm. Fruit is provided at morning snack. Parents are requested to provide a small snack for the afternoon. Milk and water are available throughout the day.

## **Fees**

For your child to benefit from their pre-school education we ask that they attend for a full session. Session times are as follows: -

Morning: 9:00am – 12:00pm  
Morning (including lunch): 9:00am – 1:00pm  
Full Day: 9:00am – 3:00pm

Our fees for attendance from April 2026 are:

<b>Nursery Fees From April 2026</b>	
9:00am – 12:00pm	£21.00
9:00am – 1:00pm	£28.00
9:00am – 3:00pm	£42.00

**Fees are payable in advance.** Where possible we ask parents to pay in advance for each half term. Where this isn't possible, we ask for fees to be paid at least weekly in advance and we encourage parents to set up a standing order for this.

**All absences must be paid for.** As the nursery is staffed to accommodate the hours requested and booked by parents, absences of any nature will still be charged for. In cases of prolonged absence of more than two weeks or if you have difficulty meeting the fees in one payment, parents should contact the manager to discuss.

## **Early Education Funding (EEF)**

### **Three and Four Year Olds**

Currently, all three and four-year-olds can access 15 hours per week of funded care and education for 38 weeks of the year, regardless of the income or working status of their parent or carer. This is often described as 'universal funding'.

In addition, eligible working families of three and four-year-olds can apply for an additional 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year.

### **Two Year Olds**

Eligible working parents of 2½ year olds are now able to apply for up to 30 hours childcare.

You can start using the entitlements from the term after your application has been granted. These terms begin on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1<sup>st</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> September.

To check if you are eligible visit the [Gov.com](https://www.gov.uk) website.

You must claim your EEF hours at Sutton Seedlings in blocks of three or four (i.e. you must claim for a whole session of three or four hours in the morning and/or three hours in the afternoon). Any hours used in excess of your EEF funded hours will be charged at the chargeable hourly rate. EEF Parent Declaration Forms must be completed at the beginning of each term.

## **The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Learning Programme**

### **Curriculum**

Above all, Seedlings is fun! Every day there are fun things to do, new things to learn, exploring to be done and best of all, friends to share it with.

Attending a pre-school setting provides your child with an important introduction into the social world of interaction, sharing, talking with others and learning to play co-operatively. This is supported by the sensitive and nurturing input of the staff, who take time to listen to and talk with each child.

Your child will have many exciting experiences which are designed to support and extend their growing curiosity. They will be able to take part in activities which are planned to develop a wide range of skills and to foster a love of learning. In the Nursery, we place a great emphasis on the children's developing creativity and sense of imagination. Young children are natural adventurers and enjoy finding out about the world



they live in. We go outside every day and in most weathers whether we are building, role playing or making dens, we are having fun!

The EYFS defines seven areas of learning and development sub-divided into prime and specific areas. Prime areas are the basis of all learning and provide children with the foundations on which the rest of their learning can be built upon defined by the specific areas.

### **Prime**

- ***Communication and Language***

In both small and large groups, children are encouraged to extend their vocabulary and fluency by talking and listening, and by hearing and responding to stories, songs and rhymes. A well-stocked book corner gives every child the opportunity and encouragement to become familiar with books, able to handle them and be aware of their uses, both for reference and as a source of stories and pictures.



- ***Personal, Social and Emotional Development***

Within a nurturing environment, children are individually supported in developing confidence, autonomy and self-respect. They are encouraged to work and concentrate independently and also to take part in the life of the group, sharing and co-operating with other children and adults. Through activities, conversation and practical examples, they learn acceptable ways to express their own feelings and to have respect for the feelings of others. All children are given the opportunity, as appropriate, to take responsibility for themselves and also for the group, it's members, and it's property.

- ***Physical Development***



A range of equipment and opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, allows children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the use and development of their own bodily skills. A very high level of adult supervision enables children to safely create and meet physical challenges, developing increased skills and control in moving, climbing and balancing. At the same time, children are supported in the development of fine motor skills required to use tools, including pens and pencils, and to handle small objects with increasing control and precision.

## **Specific**

### ▪ **Literacy**

Children are helped to understand that written symbols carry meaning, to be aware of the purposes of writing and, when they are ready, to use drawn and written symbols for themselves. Emergent writing is encouraged giving children the opportunity to provide their own interpretation to their mark making.

### ▪ **Understanding of the World**

A safe and stimulating environment allows children to explore and experiment with a range of natural and manufactured materials. They learn to observe the features of objects and substances, recognising differences, patterns and similarities, and to share and record their findings. Children are assisted in exploring and understanding their environment, both within the group and also in the wider community. A range of safe and well maintained equipment enables children to extend their technological understanding, using simple tools and techniques as appropriate to achieve their intentions and to solve problems.



### ▪ **Mathematics**

By means of adult-supported practical experiences, children become familiar with the sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting activities which form the basis for early mathematics. As they use their developing mathematical understanding to solve practical problems, children are assisted to learn and use the vocabulary of mathematics, identifying objects by shape, position, size, volume and number. Songs, games and picture books help children become aware of number sequences and when they are ready, to use simple mathematical operations such as adding.

### ▪ **Expressive Arts and Design**

Children are encouraged to use a wide range of resources in order to express their own ideas and feelings and to construct their individual response to experience in two or three dimensions. Art equipment, including paint, glue, crayons and pencils as well as natural and discarded resources, provides for open-ended exploration of colour, shape and texture and the development of skills in painting, drawing and collage. Children join in with and respond to music and stories, and there are many opportunities for imaginative play and dance, both individually and as part of a group.



## Forest School and Outdoor Learning



At Sutton Seedlings, every child has the opportunity to take part in Forest School, and we have three qualified Leaders in school. Forest School is a child-led initiative which means that although each session is planned, it is also guided by the choices and interests that each child makes. By

using the outdoor environment, children of all ages and abilities are encouraged to grow in confidence, independence and self-esteem. This is made possible by providing them with small achievable tasks so that a child never 'fails'. As the child grows in self-esteem and self-confidence, the challenges become more complex.



## Timetable

The timetable below illustrates a typical day's structure of activities: -

Time	Activity
9:00 – 9:10am	Register
9:10 – 10:30am	Free play Physical and focus activities
10:30 – 11:00am	Snack time / rest period
11:00 – 11:30am	General activities
11:30am	Tidy-up time
11:30am – 12:00pm	Physical activities
12:00 – 12:55pm	Lunch followed by quiet time
1:00pm	Pick up for children not staying for the afternoon
1:00 – 2:30pm	Structured and free-flow play
2:30 – 3:00pm	Snack and story time
3:00pm	Home time

## **Special Educational Needs**

At Sutton Seedlings, we believe that children with SEND add a richness to the diversity of our setting and we highly value the progress that *all* our children make when they are with us. Our aim is to help children to integrate into our nursery settings and support them responsively to reach their full potential. We promote self-confidence and a positive attitude to learning in all children whatever their gender, ethnicity, home language, special educational needs, disability or ability.



If you would like to discuss our ability to meet your child's special needs, please talk to the pre-school manager.

Our school SENDCO (special education needs and disability co-ordinator) is Mrs Zayla Beecham.

## **Behaviour & Relationships**

We believe that children and adults flourish best in a calm environment in which expectations shared with the children, consistently, allowing them to develop their play and learning without the fear of being hurt or hindered by anyone else. Children are supported to develop confidence, resilience and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect, encouragement and kindness.

If a child's makes poor behaviour choices, we will work with the child to help them to understand the right choices to make and be clear about the expectations for behaviour. Where appropriate, a sanction may be applied which will be appropriate to a child's level of understanding and maturity.



If we have any concerns about your child's behaviour, we will discuss this with you with the aim of working in partnership to support the child to improve their behaviour.

## **Partnership with Parents**

As parents you are the first educators of your children. We believe in a close partnership between parents and staff as we join you in educating your child. We want to work closely with you.

Good communication between staff and parents enables us to inform each other of relevant matters concerning your child. We appreciate being informed of any change at home that might affect your child and will treat anything you tell us in strict confidence.

At the start and end of each session there is an opportunity to briefly chat to the nursery staff about your child. We provide termly reports for Parents which provide information about your child's progress, learning and development. We keep in regular contact with you so that you are aware of how and what your child is doing.

## **Illness in Pre-School**

All children have the occasional coughs and common colds, most of which would not require them to be absent from pre-school. The UK Health Security Agency publishes a table of common illnesses and the required exclusion periods. It can be accessed using this link: - [UK HSA](#)

Exclusion periods for some of the most common illnesses are shown below: -

Chickenpox	At least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Conjunctivitis	None
Covid 19	Individuals who have a positive test result for COVID-19 should not attend pre-school for 3 days after the day of the test
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours from their last episode of sickness or diarrhoea
Colds and Flu-Like Illness	Unless your child has a temperature or feels too poorly to attend we are happy to accept children with colds
Hand, Foot and Mouth	None
Impetigo	Until all lesions are crusted over or 48 hours after commencing antibiotics
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after starting antibiotics
Slapped Cheek	None (once rash has developed)
Whooping Cough	48 hours after starting antibiotics

### ***Medicines in Pre-School***

Seedlings staff will only administer prescribed medicines for your child. If your child needs to take a prescribed medicine during pre-school you are requested to inform your child's keyworker and complete a medicines form. All medicines should be clearly named and given to a member of staff at the beginning of each day.

If your child requires an Epi-pen, is asthmatic or requires regular medicine, a care plan is completed to ensure all staff are aware of the needs and requirements. For emergency medication such as an Epi-pen we request that one is kept permanently in pre-school in case of an emergency.

We do not administer Calpol or similar products within pre-school unless prescribed by a GP. Such an instance would be for febrile convulsions and would require a care plan.

### ***Wrap-Around Care (Sutton Kids Club)***

Sutton Primary Academy provides wrap-around care in the form of breakfast and after school clubs (Sutton Kids Club). There are limited spaces available to pre-school children aged three and over and these need to be booked in advance to ensure ratios. Parents need to be aware that Kids Club is not pre-school based and there will be a proportion of older children attending from the primary school.

There are certain criteria that need to be met before a pre-school child is admitted to Kids Club. They must be: -

- Aged over 3
- Confident with an older age range of children (5 to 11)
- Able to play with or alongside other children – not requiring 1:1 adult supervision

If your child requires 1:1 adult supervision, we invite parents to talk to the Kids Club manager, Becky Davies, about any additional needs prior to booking sessions. Safety is our priority and we will only book 1:1 sessions if we have the staff numbers to accommodate it.

For further information regarding Kids Club provision please refer to the Sutton Primary Academy website [Sutton Kids Club](#).

### ***General Policies***

Our detailed policy statements are available on the school website for all parents/visitors to read. Our policies are revised and when necessary renewed on a regular basis. Comments and suggestions from parents are always welcome. A brief outline of our key policies are given below.

## ***Safeguarding***

Safeguarding of children is everyone's responsibility. Staff attend regular training to ensure that they are aware of and are able to deal effectively with all safeguarding guidelines.

Safeguarding protects all members of pre-school, staff and children. Parents need to be aware that as a staff group the welfare of all the children within our care is of utmost importance. Please be aware of our 'no mobile phone' policy, which states that no mobile phones should be used within the school building around the children.

Our safeguarding policy is available for you to read at all times.

## ***Complaints Procedure***

We believe that children and parents are entitled to expect courtesy and prompt, careful attention to their needs and wishes. We aim to work in partnership with parents and welcome suggestions regarding improvements. Complaints are taken seriously and dealt with fairly and in a way which respects confidentiality.

Our complaints policy can be found on the Sutton Primary Academy website.

## ***Equal Opportunities***

We are committed to provide equality of opportunity for all children and families in our community regardless of gender, race, religion, colour, marital status or political persuasion. We aim to ensure that those suitable who wish to work in or volunteer to help with our pre-school have an equal opportunity to do so.

The implementation of our equal opportunities policy is the responsibility of all staff.

## ***Health and Safety***

We recognise our responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), so far as is reasonably practical, to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children and adults whilst on Sutton Primary Academy premises.

Sutton pre-school promotes a healthy lifestyle and a high standard of hygiene in its day to day work with children and good practices are observed to prevent the spread of infection.

Training is available to staff to ensure emergency procedures can be appropriately applied.

### ***Sutton Seedlings and Beyond***

We work closely with Reception teachers to assist a smooth transition into the Reception year, and all children are supported through this time of change both socially and educationally.

As Sutton Seedlings is an integral part of Sutton Primary Academy, staff are always happy to accompany children moving into Sutton Primary on their school visits, to be a friendly face and to help them to adjust to this next step in their lives.

### ***Term Dates***

Sutton Seedlings follows the same school term dates as Sutton Primary Academy which can be found on our website <https://sutton.hmfa.org.uk/information/term-dates/>.