



Leigh Academy
Bearsted



Early Years Foundation Stage - Nursery Policy

**Reviewed: August 2025
To be reviewed by: August 2026**

Little Bears Nursery at Leigh Academy Bearsted

Little Bears Nursery offers free 15 hours places for three and four year olds. In addition to this, we also provide funded 30 hour spaces to three and four year old children whose parents/carers are eligible.

Little Bears Nursery provides Early Years education to our pupils for 38 weeks per year in line with the main academy term dates.

Educational Provision at Little Bears Nursery

We pride ourselves within Little Bears in supporting children to become independent children who are confident to communicate, take risks in their play, and are able to solve a range of problems within their learning. Our highly skilled Early Years Practitioners acknowledge that each child is unique and individual. As such, we tailor our Early Years provision to meet and challenge their learning further. This ensures that children are able to make quick progress from their individual starting points.

Within our Nursery sessions children are able to access both our indoor and outdoor learning environments, both of which are carefully designed to support and extend children's learning and understanding of the world around them. Our staff and children value the importance of both learning areas as well as the importance of adults when scaffolding young children's learning.

Our provision ensures children quickly settle into the nursery environment, and develop strong relationships with staff and peers to ensure that they make sustained progress to prepare them for starting full time education in their Reception year.

Little Bears Nursery curriculum is delivered within the framework of the IB PYP Curriculum, alongside our wider academy school. The aim of the Primary Years Programme (PYP) is to develop children's learning profile attributes. These are the fundamental skills that a child will need to learn and grow in our modern world.

These Learner Profile Attributes run alongside the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning as detailed within the [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Our PYP Programme of Inquiry allows our staff to plan and deliver an inquiry based curriculum that covers the EYFS requirements, as well as encouraging children to form links about the world around them and to develop their understanding of their place in the world.

Transition to Little Bears Nursery

It is paramount for our young pupils to feel safe, secure, happy and independent when attending Little Bears Nursery. Parents/Carers are fundamental in developing their child's understanding of the world around them. With this in mind, our Nursery staff foster strong

relationships with parents/carers to ensure the very best possible experience for each child in our care.

Once a child's place has been agreed within the nursery, a member of the Nursery staff will be in touch to arrange a transition call. This provides an opportunity for parents/carers to share important information about their child(ren) and any concerns that they may have. This is also a valuable opportunity for our Nursery staff to begin to build a relationship with both parents/carers as well as our young pupils.

When a child first starts at Little Bears nursery they will have taster sessions to allow them to familiarise themselves with the setting and staff. It is during this time that we will work with the family to discuss any specific needs a child may have or how we can support them settling into nursery life. If a child has additional needs that may need further support, transition may be gradual and a transition plan will be put in place. This will be planned with the Nursery lead and reviewed regularly. We withhold the right to make the final decision as to when children start full-time Nursery if it's in the best interests of the child, but we will take into consideration the views of the parent(s)/carers.

Observations and Assessment

Our skilled Nursery team carefully plan the learning opportunities within the nursery to scaffold and extend the thinking and skills of the pupils within our care. Observation is a key skill that enables our staff to develop an in-depth understanding of every child's current level of development, identifying what they need next to ensure that they make progress from their unique starting points.

Our assessment depends on us getting to know our children very well and to this end we gather information from a range of sources; observations of the children in play, in adult led activities, through discussions with parents and carers, and through talking to the children and immersing ourselves in co-play. Every child in Nursery and Reception has a 'Learning Journal' which they take complete ownership of. These journals are used to capture the 'wow' work and experiences that are meaningful to our children, and that can talk proudly about.

Little Bears Admission Policy

Little Bears Nursery offers places within the nursery on a first come, first served basis. Parents/Carers are asked to complete an application form for their child. Once this has been completed, our school office team will confirm via email whether or not your child has been allocated a place within the nursery class. A holding fee will then be taken to secure your child's place with us. Your child's starting date will be agreed by the Nursery team following a transition call with you, and upon all the required admission paperwork being completed and returned to us.

Nursery Session Times & Costs

15 hours universal funding = 5 x 3 hour main sessions a week

Children are funded the term after their third birthday to attend 15 hours at nursery each week. At Little Bears Nursery this is split into five three-hour sessions. Children are able to attend 15 hours in the following ways, depending on availability. Parents/Carers are able to request:

Session	Time	Cost per session
Morning Session	8:30am - 11:30am (3 hours)	£21 (privately funded)
OR		
Afternoon Session	12pm - 3pm (3 hours)	£21 (privately funded)
OR		
ALL DAY Session (including lunch)	8:30am - 2:30pm (6 hours)	£42 (privately funded)
Lunch	11:30am - 12pm	£2.50 for a school dinner provided by Cucina or bring own packed lunch
Optional additional half an hour	2:30pm-3pm	£3.50 (unless only attending the afternoon session)

Session payments are invoiced and paid directly to the school via MCAS.
Late collection of your child will incur an additional fee of £3.50 per half hour

30 hours extended funding = 10 x 3 hour main sessions a week

Within Little Bears Nursery we also offer 30 hours spaces for children who are three and four years old with parents/carers who are eligible for this funding.

A child qualifies for the extended entitlement if both parents/carers are working (or the sole parents/carer is a lone parent/carer is working) and each parent earns, on average, a weekly minimum equivalent to 16 hours (National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage) and less than £100K a year.

Please see below an outline of how this funding works, and when to apply for your child(ren)'s funding.

Session	Time	Cost per session
ALL DAY Session	8:30am - 2:30pm (6 hours)	Covered by 30 hours funding
Lunch	11:30am - 12pm	£2.50 for a school dinner provided by Cucina or bring own packed lunch
Optional additional half an hour	2:30pm-3pm	£3.50 (privately funded)

Additional add on payments (e.g. the optional half an hour or optional school dinner fee) are invoiced and paid directly to the school via MCAS.

Late collection of your child will incur an additional fee of £3.50 per half hour

When do I apply for my funding?

When does your child turn three?	Apply by
Between 1st September-31st December	15th October-30th November (Start term following January 1st)
Between 1st April-31st August	15th June - 31st July (Start term following 1st September)

Please note: Little Bears Nursery only accepts new pupils in **September** each academic year. **January** places can be applied for but will only be offered if there is space following the September intake.

Payment of Fees

You will receive an invoice emailed after the end of each month and we would ask that it is paid in full within 30 days of the invoice date.

Late invoice payments

Fees are to be paid within 30 days of the invoice date. If you are experiencing financial hardship please speak, in confidence to a member of the Nursery team, the EYFS Lead, or a member of the office team. If, without negotiation, fees are not settled, we are left with no alternative but to withdraw your child's place. Children in receipt of 15 hours free entitlement will only be able to access their free funded hours.

Closure of Nursery

Should the nursery be unable to open due to bad weather or any other unforeseen circumstances, parents will be refunded for a chargeable session or have it discounted from their next invoice. Should closure need to take place part way through a session, a refund will not be given in this instance.

Uniform within the nursery

Nursery Uniform
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plain white polo shirt.• Little Bears navy jumper/cardigan or a plain navy jumper/cardigan.• Navy blue joggers/Navy blue leggings (No denim).• Black, navy or grey velcro fastening trainers or shoes that are appropriate for climbing and playing in a busy nursery. (No laces).• A <u>named</u> waterproof coat.• A <u>named</u> water bottle - water only.• A <u>named</u> nursery bag - please put in spare clothes should your child get messy or wet during the day.• A <u>named</u> lunchbox should they be having a packed lunch.• Wellie boots to stay in Nursery• All in one weather suit.
Clothing for the Summer terms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Navy Blue shorts• Green gingham dress• A <u>named</u> sun hat.
Clothing for the Winter terms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gloves• Hat

Little Bears Nursery logo jumpers are available via [Brigade](#).

Snacks and Meals:

Each morning and afternoon session, children are provided with a fresh fruit snack and a carton of milk. If you wish your child to have a packed lunch then we ask you to bring this in for each session. However, if you would like your child to have a cooked lunch please let a member of staff know and we will order this for them. The cost of this will then be added to your monthly invoice at a charge of £2.40 per meal.

If you would like your child(ren) to have a packed lunch please see guidance on [ideas for a healthier lunchbox](#).

Please also see our 'Nutrition & Healthy Eating' policy.

Partnership with Parents

We acknowledge parents as primary educators and encourage parental involvement throughout a child's time at Nursery. We seek to build strong home links in order to enhance and extend children's learning both within the nursery environment and in their home. We want parents to feel they can speak to us about their child and to feel comfortable in our setting.

We encourage parents to play an active role in their child's time in at Nursery and throughout the EYFS, and with this in mind we run 'play and stay' sessions which give our parents the opportunity to explore life in the nursery as well as regular opportunities to contribute to your child's learning journey, through such things as sharing 'wow moments' from home.

Safeguarding and Health & Safety

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements detailed in the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Guidance and we adhere to [Leigh Academy Bearsted Early Years Child Protection Policy 2025-26](#)

The nursery has its own toilets within the provision and we teach children the importance of hygiene, hand washing techniques and self-care.

For further details of our Personal & Intimate care policy and procedures please speak to a member of the Nursery team.