

Avoncroft Pre-School Nursery

Partnership Of Natasha Harden and Heather Harden

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Avoncroft Pre-School Nursery was established in 1984 at Avoncroft Arts Centre, which adjoins Avoncroft museum. Most of our children attending the setting come to us by recommendation.

In the summer of 2010 we applied and were given a grant by Worcestershire County Council to enhance the setting using money provided by the Capital Funding Programme to extend and update the premises.

The new improved building includes a ramped access, new entrance hall, cloakroom, kitchen, listening area and inside toilets. We are now able to offer places for 20 children per session to maintain the small, friendly, warm, cosy atmosphere, increasing over the summer term to 24 children when we are in the garden most of the time.

In April 2014 we applied for capital funding which helped modify the porch area, allowing an extra area for sand and water play.

In October 2014 we were allocated a grant by Worcestershire County Council to enhance the quality of the setting which consists of a wonderful outside structure to provide shade and additional learning environment for the children.

In February 2015 we received "GOOD" in all areas by OFSTED.

Our setting aims to:

- Provide high quality care and education for children below statutory school age;
- Create a happy, cosy atmosphere in which children can learn and flourish.
- Show respect for themselves, each other, the environment and foster independence.
- Have fun and develop friendships in a safe child orientated environment.
- Value and appreciate that each child is special and give them a sense of belonging.
- Provide a curriculum based on the individual needs of the children based on the EYFS.
- Work in partnership with parents to help children to learn and develop.
- Add to the life and well-being of the local community.
- Offer children and their parents a service that promotes equality and values diversity.

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.
- Included at all levels.

How parents take part in the setting

Our setting recognises parents as the first and most important educators of their children. All of the staff, see themselves as partners with parents in providing care and education for their child. There are many ways in which parents take part in making the setting a welcoming and stimulating place for children and parents, such as:

- Exchanging knowledge about their children's needs, activities, interests and progress with the staff.
- Contributing to the progress check at age two.
- Sharing their own special interests with the children.
- Joining in community activities in which the setting takes part.
- Building friendships with other parents in the setting.

The partners have a warm and friendly approach to the parents and children promoting an open-door policy that allows parents to pass on information at any time. Parent consultations are held twice a year as requested at the last review and we incorporate the 2-year-old check.

The children's books depicting their learning are now documented with extra information relating to the EYFS - parents add photographs from home. A new system called Tapestry is now in place to improve and monitor the children's progress and increase communication with parents.

Questionnaires are given out asking for parents' views on the setting and if a change of hours or activities are required.

We issue a newsletter every half term which is our main means of communicating with parents about what we are doing in the curriculum and we use this to invite you to join in with our topics. This could include sending in food which represents different cultural beliefs, joining us on one of our outings e.g. Avoncroft Museum, Park, or helping us by collecting vouchers to help buy new equipment for the nursery. Last year we held a Christmas Concert, as well as our annual Garden Party/barbecue.

Children's development and learning

We aim to ensure that each child:

- Is in a safe and stimulating environment;
- Is given generous care and attention, because of our high ratio of qualified staff to children;
- Has the chance to join with other children and adults to live, play, work and learn together;
- Is helped to take forward her/his learning and development by being helped to build on what she/he already knows and can do;
- Has a personal key person who makes sure each child makes satisfying progress;
- Is in a setting that sees parents as partners in helping each child to learn and develop; and
- Is in a setting in which parents help to shape the service it offers.

Our provision for children's development and learning is guided by The Early Years Foundation Stage.

Characteristics of effective learning

The characteristics of effective learning describe factors which play a central role in a child's learning and in becoming an effective learner and underpin all 7 areas of learning and development. They represent processes rather than outcomes.

Playing and exploring – engagement

'Being willing to have a go' refers to the child:

- finding an interest
- initiating activities
- seeking challenge
- having a 'can do' attitude
- being willing to take a risk in new experiences
- developing the view that failures are opportunities to learn

Active learning – motivation

'Keeping on trying' refers to:

- the importance of persistence even in the face of challenge or difficulties
- an element of purposeful control which supports resilience Creating and thinking critically

Creating and thinking critically

'Using what they already know to learn new things' refers to the way children use narrative and scientific modes of thought to:

- develop and link concepts
- find meaning in sequence, cause and effect
- find meaning in the intentions of others

'Choosing ways to do things and finding new ways' involves children in:

- approaching goal-directed activity in organised ways
- making choices and decisions about how to approach tasks
- planning and monitoring what to do and being able to change strategies

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.

Prime areas of learning and their associated ELGs

Communication and language

This involves giving children opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations and to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves.

- listening and attention
- understanding
- speaking

Physical development

This involves providing opportunities for children to be active and interactive, and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food

- moving and handling
- health and self-care

Personal, social and emotional development

This involves helping children to:

- develop a positive sense of themselves and others*
- form positive relationships and develop respect for others*
- develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings*
- understand appropriate behaviour in groups*
- have confidence in their own abilities*

- self-confidence and self-awareness
- managing feelings and behaviour
- making relationships

Literacy

This involves encouraging children to read and write, both through listening to others reading, and being encouraged to begin to read and write themselves. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials such as books, poems, and other written materials to ignite their interest.

- *reading*
- *writing*

Mathematics

This involves providing children with opportunities to:

- practise and improve their skills in counting numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems*
- describe shapes, spaces, and measures*

- *numbers*
- *shape space and measure*

Understanding the world

This involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology, and the environment

- people and communities
- the world
- technology

Expressive arts and design

This involves supporting children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. It involves providing children with opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role play, and design and technology

- exploring and using media and materials
- being imaginative

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 Early Years Foundation Stage 'Development Matters guidance 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 Development Matters guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage has been used to decide what equipment to provide and how to provide it.

Characteristics of effective learning

We understand that all children engage with other people and their environment through the characteristics of effective learning that are described in the Development Matters guidance to the Early Years Foundation Stage as:

- playing and exploring - engagement
- active learning - motivation
- creating and thinking critically - thinking

We aim to provide for the characteristics of effective learning by observing how a child is learning and being clear about what we can do and provide in order to support each child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

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 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.

The progress check at age two

The Early Years Foundation Stage requires that we supply parents and carers with a short written summary of their child's development in the three prime learning and development areas of the EYFS: personal, social and emotional development; physical development; and communication and language; when a child is aged between 24 - 36 months. The key person is responsible for completing the check using information from ongoing observational assessments carried out as part of our everyday practice, taking account of the views and contributions of parents and other professionals.

Records of achievement

The setting keeps a record of achievement for each child. 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. Your child's record of achievement helps us to celebrate together her/his achievements and to work together to provide what your child needs for her/his well-being and to make progress.

Tapestry

We use Tapestry software to provide an online Learning journey for your child which shows the evidence gathered to support all the learning and development your child has achieved while they have been at Nursery. This runs alongside all the areas covered in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All parents are able to access the Learning Journal in any way they choose and be able to contribute to their child's learning and development while at Nursery electronically if they wish.

As part of the on-going recording of our curriculum and for children's individual development records, staff regularly take photographs of the children during their play to support observations which are stored on a tablet and uploaded onto the tapestry system. Only cameras on the tablets supplied by the setting are used for this purpose, photographs taken are also used for display purposes within the setting. The photographs are then deleted off the tablet. We may also record events and activities on video. Photos/videos are stored on the setting's computer only; we only store images during the period your child is with us. If we would like to use any image of your child for training, publicity or marketing purposes, we will always seek your written consent for each image we intend to use.

Your child's key person will work with you to keep this record. To do this you and she/he 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 pre-school we maintain the ratio of adults to children which is set as laid down by the Welfare Requirements for Day Care. We are proud of the high ratio of adults to children in our group

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.

Key persons and your child

Our setting 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/he will help your child to settle and throughout your child's time at the setting, she/he will help your child to benefit from the setting's activities.

Staff and their Qualifications

Name	Job Title	Qualifications and Experience
Natasha Harden	Partner / Manager	BA (Honours) Early Childhood with Practitioner Options course and Early Years Professional Status
Heather Harden	Partner / Manager	National Association of Maternal and Child Welfare (NAMCW), National and Vocational Qualification (NVQ3) and Diploma in Pre-School Practice Level 3
Kate Taylor	Deputy manager	CACHE Diploma Level 4
Tina Joinson	Supervisor	CACHE Diploma Level 3
Rebecca Lindsay	Assistant	Advanced Teaching Assistant Award Level 4 Experience in Nursery and School Environment

Sessions Times

The group opens five days a week during school term times (38 weeks a year). Children may attend for a variety of session's dependant on their age

We cater for children aged 2 years to school age.

Morning Sessions	(Monday – Friday)	9.00 to 12.00
Afternoons Sessions	(Monday – Friday)	12.00 to 3.00
All Day	(Monday – Friday)	9.00 to 3.00

We hold specific sessions for Pre-School aged children going to school in the current school year. These operate from the January on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon.

We operate a fully flexible approach and tailor sessions to suit your need i.e. mornings only and fees added to make up extra time required.

All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and children go on local walks or outings.

Additional activities (Reviewed April each year)

If you choose to attend on these sessions additional fees will apply

- Monday (Morning) French
- Wednesday (Morning / Afternoon) Cooking / Messy Play
- Friday (Morning) Outdoor (Forest School / Messy Play Based Experiences)

We are a term time only session – 38 weeks a year.

Our timetable and routines

Our setting believes 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 the setting;
- 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 session

We organise our sessions so that the children can choose from, and work at, a range of activities and, in doing so, build up their ability to select and work through a task to its completion. The children are also helped and encouraged to take part in adult-led small and large group activities which introduce them to new experiences and help them to gain new skills, as well as helping them to learn to work with others.

Outdoor activities contribute to children's health, their physical development and their knowledge of the world around them. The children have the opportunity, and are encouraged, to take part in outdoor child-chosen and adult-led activities, as well as those provided in the indoor playroom(s).

Snacks and meals

The pre-school makes snacks and meals a social time at which children and adults eat together. Do tell us about your child's dietary needs and any allergies/intolerances and we will make sure that these are met. We try to encourage all the children to eat fruit and ask if they could bring in a piece (named please) each session.

Lunch

You have an option of hot meals from outside caterers at an additional charge or you can provide a packed lunch – please ensure you put an ice block into the container for health and safety reasons.

Birthday

Birthdays are celebrated with parent's consent.

Holidays

If children are going to be absent from nursery due to holidays could you please complete a holiday form.

Hygiene:

In the interests of all the other children we ask that a child suffering from a contagious condition does not attend Nursery for the specified exclusion period. Some contagious conditions are; Chicken Pox, Measles, Impetigo, Scarlet Fever, Whooping Cough, Sickness or Diarrhoea. It is very important that if your child is ill you inform Nursery.

Sickness/Absence

If your child is going to be absent from Nursery please inform us on the first day of their absence either by telephone or text and every week if off more than one.

Parking

The car park is on the left as you come down the drive; please do not bring your car to the door. For safety reasons, please walk the children between the art Society building to reach the nursery.

Newsletters

A newsletter is provided at least once a term giving details of the topic and general events and information. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff or phone us.

Policies

Policies are available on-line on our nursery website.

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.

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

The setting works to the requirements of The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and Disability Code of Practice 0- 25 years (2015).

Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is Heather Harden

Fees

Our fees are £4 per hour, £12 per session for the term after the child turns three, £4.80 per hour, £14.40 per session prior to this.

There is an additional charge whenever a child is collected outside specified times without our prior arrangement or phone call (currently £10.00).

Full fees are payable during holiday and sickness absences.

Fees are payable the week after receipt of the bill.

Late payment will give rise to a £20.00 administration charge and dishonoured cheques will incur a £20.00 administration charge.

Interest will be charged on unpaid fees outstanding for more than one month at the rate of 10% p.a. and we may withdraw your child's place from nursery until payment is received.

A terms notice needs to be given to withdraw a child from the Nursery or reduce the number of sessions to be attended and in default fees will be payable in lieu of notice. If you change setting during the term the nursery has the right to keep the funding provided by the government, exceptions do apply, please ask for details.

Early Years Funding is available for children to receive five x 3-hour sessions (15 hours per week). The grant covers 38 weeks per year split over three terms. We are in receipt of nursery education funding for two, three and four-year olds; where funding is not received, then fees apply. You can also apply for an additional 15 hours (Government 30 hours funding), if you qualify on the government system.

Children can receive the funding the term after their third birthday. Two-year-old funding may also be available.

Optional activities with fees apply see Avoncroft Flexible Funding Agreement.

Settling in to Nursery

We want children to feel safe and happy in the absence of their parents, to recognise other adults as a source of authority, help, and friendship and to be able to share with their parents afterwards the new learning experiences enjoyed in the Nursery.

In order to accomplish this we:-

- Encourage parents to visit the Nursery for a few sessions with their children in the half term before admission is planned.
- Introduce flexible admission procedures, if appropriate, to meet the needs of the individual families and children.
- Reassure parents whose children seem to be taking a long time settling into the Nursery.

- Encourage parents, where appropriate, to separate from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up for longer absences.
- Make clear to families from the onset that they will be supported in the Nursery for as long as it takes to settle their child.

Children cannot learn or play successfully if they are anxious or unhappy. Our settling procedures aim to help parents to help their children to feel comfortable in the Nursery, to benefit from what it has to offer, and to be confident that their parents will return at the end of the session.

Clothing

We provide protective clothing for the children when they participate in forest school type activity on a Friday morning.

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

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. We suggest no dungarees or braces or lace up shoes.

Please could you provide a pair of named wellingtons' as we try to go outdoors every day. Coats are needed too. Uniform is optional and Polo shirts and sweatshirts can be purchased in either red or royal blue for £8.50 and £12 respectively.

Structure of each morning session

Each child and parent/carer is greeted by at least one member of staff, allowing opportunity for any matters to be discussed, and if necessary recorded in the communication book.

Free Play: - Children may choose to play with any of a number of activities in the Nursery. There is always painting, sand, water, play dough, construction kits, paper, pens, pencils, crayons, scissors, glue, cards, catalogues and collage materials. We also have a home corner, dressing up clothes, hats, accessories, dolls, construction tracks, plastic animals and a seesaw. There is a book corner, a music corner, with instruments and a CD/tape player and a large selection of toys on table tops and in large boxes. In the drawers of each table is a selection of jigsaws, threading, small dolls, figures, dinosaurs, plastic insects, matching, sorting, cubes, shapes, polyflowers, lacing, peg boards and trolls.

This is a time for children to develop relationships and to talk about any events or experiences that may have occurred. They can select any activity or resource, or initiate imaginative play.

Activities: - During the session children are called to a specific activity by an adult, care is taken to create situations where effective relationships can flourish. Children are encouraged to undertake activities, but we are sensitive to their individual needs and age. These activities are linked to the children's interests and the week's focus letter, shape, number or colour .

Drinks Time: - The children have their snack, after washing their hands, for a drink of milk, or water and fruit. Good manners are expected and encouraged at all times.

Tidy Time: - The toys and equipment are tidied away by the children and the staff, creating a time to show respect for property, co-operation and independence.

Quiet Time: - Children may choose a book from the Book Corner and read quietly on their own or with a friend.

Story / Show and Tell Time: - Children are encouraged to bring in an item from home based on the letter of the day, shape, number or colour or relating to the topic, to show the other children. This helps the children link home with pre-school and develops their self-esteem. We also ask the children to find objects in the room that begin with that letter sound.

Outdoor Play: - If the weather is fine, we all go outside to play on the tricycles, scooters, cars, seesaws, slide, and the climbing frame or with the balls, bats, ropes and hoops. We usually end with playing ring games. If we are indoors, we play with the musical instruments or participate in dance activities.

Singing: - At the end of the session we sing nursery rhymes.

Friday morning sessions

Nursery activities on Friday revolve around garden exploration and play. Our nursery follows the principals of the 'Forest Schools'. This idea of developing the outdoors started in Denmark. Children go out every morning regardless of the weather with the help of our all-weather trousers and coats. They have lots of messy fun; digging, painting, building, chalking, investigating outside environments, looking at the wildlife and building dens.

Structure of each afternoon session (as morning structure but with different activities)

Extra activities:

On Monday morning, we have a visiting French Teacher, who will help the children experience the language through fun and games.

On Monday afternoon, we will be holding what we call a Music and Movement session, this will allow the children to experience other countries' music based on imaginative role play experiences, expressive movement to music, singing and joining in with raps.

On Wednesday, we provide culinary (cooking) experiences with the children or messy play activities. We will be looking at recipe cards, talking about amounts of ingredients and the five main food types / healthy options as well as having fun cooking different food every week.

On Friday morning, we investigate the outdoors / natural and messy activities, dressed in waterproofs provided by ourselves.

On Friday afternoon, we will be using our Beat Baby to increase the children's listening skills in a fun and imaginative way.

Pre-School Afternoon Sessions starting January of the year the children go to school

On these sessions, the parents **do not** collect the children from inside the building. The children are greeted at the outside door as they do at school.

Lunch Time: - These sessions are more structured with the children bringing their own lunch boxes including ice block or have hot dinners. This is a time for socialising and learning to ask for help, putting their hand up, getting ready for school.

Quiet Time: - Children may choose a book from the Book Corner and read quietly on their own or with a friend whilst waiting for the other children to finish lunch.

Registration Time: - At this time the children learn to sit and listen for their names, the letter sound for the day is discussed and the topic activities which are to be provided.

Story Time: - The children are encouraged to listen to the story and join in so that the story can be re-enacted at a later time.

Activities: - The children are divided into three or four groups and where possible they are put together with other children going to the same school. Each group will complete an adult led activity or game relating to our , shape, number, colour topic/letter or number for the week. They then move around the tables as a group until all three activities have been completed.

The children are provided with a book and on each page, there is a letter. The children with their parents are asked to draw or stick in pictures representing the letter **sound**, please note a letter sound is different to what the letter starts with i.e. c and k have the same letter sound i.e. cat, kitten but "i" can be for in and igloo but not ice. One letter sound per week is discussed.

Free Play: - Children may choose to play with any of a number of activities in the Nursery. There is always painting, sand, water, play dough, construction kits, paper, pens, pencils, crayons, scissors, glue, cards, catalogues and collage materials. We also have a home corner, dressing up clothes, hats, accessories, dolls, construction tracks, plastic animals and a seesaw. There is a book corner, a music corner, with instruments and a CD/tape player and a large selection of toys on table tops and in large boxes. In the drawers of each table is a selection of jigsaws, threading, small dolls, figures, dinosaurs, plastic insects, matching, sorting, cubes, shapes, polyflowers, lacing, peg boards and trolls.

This is a time for children to develop relationships and to talk about any events or experiences that may have occurred. They can select any activity or resource, or initiate imaginative play.

Tidy Time: - The toys and equipment are tidied away by the children and the staff, creating a time to show respect for property, co-operation and independence.

Outdoor Play: - If the weather is fine, we all go outside to play on the tricycles, scooters, cars, seesaws, slide, and the climbing frame or with the balls, bats, ropes and hoops.

In the last half term, the children bring in a change of clothes in a named P.E. Bag consisting of T-shirt, shorts and pumps so that the children can get used to getting changed and participating in P.E.

The children enjoy playing circle games involving coloured timers in which at the end of term the children are rewarded with a certificate.