**Est. 1991**

**Introduction**

Ambourne House is a small family run nursery, located in South Gloucestershire and very close to Bristol. We have been providing high quality childcare since 1991 and have established an enviable reputation as a warm and welcoming nursery, where the emphasis has always been placed upon the security, happiness, education and individual needs of each child. We are proud of the recommendations given by our current parents, views that can be echoed back over the years from the generations of families that have passed through our doors.

We provide a safe environment where children can explore, experiment, plan and make decisions for themselves. Our ethos has always been to promote a loving, caring and totally inclusive environment that nurtures children’s unique qualities and potential, thus empowering them to become lifelong learners.

We offer set full or part-time sessions for children aged 3 months to five years, although try to be as flexible as possible to best meet the needs of your family. The nursery opens at 7.30am and closes at 6.00pm. We open during school holidays; however, we close for Bank Holidays and have an extended break at Christmas, for which **no fee** is payable.

The nursery had an Ofsted inspection in November 2021 and we were delighted to receive a good rating, which Ofsted states that “The setting strives to promote children's independence and individuality. Through positive praise and a deep respect for children's cultural background, children learn to be confident about who they are.”

We would very much welcome the opportunity to show you and your family all that we have to offer and for you to see for yourself why our nursery is a very special place. If you would like any further information or would like to visit the nursery, please contact our nursery manager, Lorraine Doyle or Roberta Ferri our Duty Manager.

“Children experience a wide range of traditions and festivities, for example parents reading stories in another language or wearing traditional dress. Staff focus on children's self-esteem and sense of identity. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Children are given a wide range of opportunities to learn about their community. For example, they travel by minibus to the nearby beach, following their interest in a story about a mermaid.”

Children of all ages have plenty of opportunities to develop their physical skills. Babies pull themselves up and hold onto staff, eager to toddle around the room. Older children race over planks balanced on logs and play chasing games with staff. Children are encouraged to take risks in a safe environment and challenge their own thinking. They enjoy banging nails into pieces of wood. They know they must wear goggles and take care when using tools. They expertly use the claw of the hammer to prise nails out and reposition them. Leaders identify that using tools enables children to develop hand-to-eye coordination. They also use these opportunities to strengthen hand muscles. This lays the foundations for handwriting later on.

Parents speak very highly of the setting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, parents do not enter the setting but wait at the door. Staff have adapted how they communicate because of this. Parents know what their children are learning and understand what they can do at home to support them. Parents speak warmly about the genuine, positive relationships between children and staff.

**Ofsted 2021**

**Communication**

We strongly believe that a trusting and mutually respectful relationship between parents and ourselves is crucially important to a child’s well-being and development. We work closely in all matters pertaining to a child’s individual needs/learning and feel that parents play a key role in all aspects of the care and education we provide. We share ongoing information via our website, emails, newsletters, questionnaires and daily contact. We always welcome suggestions and comments from parents.

We know how upsetting it can be for parents and their children when they are first separated, and we aim to make the transition as easy as possible. We offer tailor-made settling visits to suit you and your child’s needs and we recommend that your child becomes familiar with the nursery prior to commencement. We offer an initial meeting, where information can be shared, and arrangements made for admission.

When your child commences nursery, we will require from you, various pieces of information, which will be confidential to the nursery and kept in either a locked filing cabinet or password protected on our computer, in accordance with Data Protection procedures. You will be given a ‘Parent Pack’, which contains relevant policies and information to help you understand how the nursery operates. All this shared information will help us to work in partnership with you to provide the very best care and learning for your child.

**Our Team**

Our team is at the cornerstone of all that we do, and we pride ourselves on the quality and experience our practitioners have. All our staff are carefully selected to provide the highest standards of care and education for your child. All personnel undergo DBS criminal record checks are never left unattended with children until received.

Our management team have over 30 years’ experience within the childcare sector. Our manager Lorraine is a qualified Montessori Teacher, Forest School Leader and holds a BA Hons degree in Education and Professional Practise.

Each section has a Team Leader who hold either a Level 3 or a level 5 qualification. Any staff that hold a Level 2 qualification are working towards their Level 3. Training courses are provided that are suitable to individual requirements. Monthly staff meetings are held, which enable staff to share ideas and plan and review the care and learning provided.

We operate a key person system, whereby your child will be confident with his/her assigned member of staff who will also be your point of contact and responsible for all aspects of your child’s care, learning, development and records.

For children aged 0-2, the staff ratio is 1:3; for children aged 2-3 the ratio is 1:4; and for children aged 3-5 the ratio is 1:8.For outings ratios are lowered depending on age and the outing.

**The Learning Environment**

The nursery is divided into four sections where the children are grouped appropriately, according to age and ability. The Baby Unit and Toddler Room are located on the ground floor. The Kindergarten and Pre-school is located on the upper floor.

In all sections, environments are designed to create a feeling of homeliness and foster a sense of belonging, whilst offering stimulating and challenging spaces for children to use flexibly. Equipment, toys and furniture have been chosen to suit the needs of the developing child.

**Babies**

In the Baby Unit, younger babies are cared for by qualified members of staff in their own quiet yet stimulating room. There, they receive the individual attention, re-assurance and continuity that babies need to feel safe and secure. Staff nurture babies as they explore their new world, responding sensitively and quickly to individual needs. We offer a wide range of stimulating resources and activities and a safe environment for babies as they start to crawl and walk. Olderbabies are given the opportunity to integrate with toddlers in order to make a smooth transition from one section to another. At all times we work closely with parents regarding each baby’s routine.

**Toddlers**

The Toddler Room is an exciting place for exploring! It has been specially designed with resources that support and promote children’s rapidly developing skills and physical abilities, across all areas of learning with a Montessori inspired ethos. Within this environment, staff support children’s social skills as they learn about themselves, others and the world in which they live. They also encourage their growing independence and learning in preparation for their further adventures into the Pre-School.

**Kindergarten**

Our Kindergarten room offers children more advanced Montessori apparatus. The children are becoming more independent and this is where real tools and life objects becomes evident such as real glasses, china plates etc… The room is designed with the childrens interests and play opportunities in mind. Staff support the growth of independence within this room, homing in on the individual character and personality of the child. Language is flourishing in this room and for many children English is an additional language. We support the development of a childs home language first and ask that all parents share stories, videos, poems etc.. within their language. This supports the development and understanding of English language. Our kindergarten children are exploring the ideas of who they are and where they are from. We encourage parents and wider family to help us to celebrate each as an individual by gathering as a group and promoting our differences. Promoting a self of belonging is of high priority to us, at self-registration children feel a sense of belonging and Kindergarten becomes an extension to their home.

**Pre-School**

Our Pre-School offers a challenging and stimulating environment, which enables children to become confident, successful and independent learners who have high self-esteem and are fully prepared for school. One large and one small playrooms have been carefully planned, to cover all areas of learning, according to the developmental needs of the children, whilst a smaller room offers children a quieter small group environment. Staff utilize and enhance these areas and associated resources to empower children to think for themselves, solve problems, work with others and gain an increasing understanding of the world and how it works.

**Outdoor Play**

We strongly believe in the importance of physical exercise and outdoor play! We have two large gardens as well as a mud kitchen to the rear of the property and to us they are additional areas, which offer endless opportunities for children to explore nature, enjoy planting, continue learning and have fun! We are very aware of the dangers of over exposure to the sun; therefore, you will be asked to sign a form giving us permission to apply sun cream to your child. We also ask you to supply a sun hat to keep at nursery during the summer months.

We also have our own mini bus and take lots of adventures in the great outdoors. It is very important part of our ethos to give children a wealth of experience across all areas of life. Some of the places we have seen is Blaise Castle, Leigh Woods for Forest School sessions, Weston super mare, Pumpkin picking, Christmas tree hunt, visiting local parks and our favourite at the moment is Beach School! Which I am sure will continue as the weather gets better.

**Learning & Development**

We believe that young children are social beings and that they are competent learners from birth. We feel that learning is a shared process that parents and families are central to the well being of the child and relationships with other people (both adults and children) are of crucial importance. Children learn most effectively when, with the support of knowledgeable and trusted adults, they are actively involved and interested. They learn to be independent by having someone they can depend on.

All children at our Nursery follow The Early Years Foundation Stage - a framework created by the Department for Education, to support children’s development and learning from birth to age five. The EYFS consists of four themes and overarching principles, which if starting with the Unique Child and adding Positive Relationships and Enabling Environments, will lead to Learning & Development as follows:

Within the EYFS there are seven areas of learning and development that shape our educational programme. Three of these are referred to as the Prime Areas and four are referred to as the Specific Areas. Although they are all important and inter-connected, the three Prime Areas, are particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and interest for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. We therefore focus strongly on the three Prime Areas when working with our youngest children. However, as children grow in confidence and ability within the three Prime Areas, we place a more equal focus on all the areas of learning.

Along with the EYFS curriculum. In April 2018 we introduced a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) in our garden. Our manager Lorraine completed a woodwork training with artist educator Pete Moorhouse. After being inspired by his work and observing the benefits to the children the first introduction to STEM was through woodwork. After a thorough induction to the tools and materials. The children soon became experts in using real tools such as hammers, screwdrivers, hand drills and saw. Through our observations we seen critical thinking, problem solving, maths, lifelong skills and so much more learning from the children. Lorraine our Manager trained as a Montessori teacher in 2006. After observing the impact using real tools had on the children’s learning it was decided to introduce the Montessori Apparatus into our setting. We have included a separate information leaflet about the Montessori Approach and how we at Ambourne House use it within the EYFS curriculum.

**Healthy Eating/Mealtimes**

We value diversity of cultural and religious views towards food and are sympathetic to all medical needs. We are therefore happy to cater for individual dietary requirements. We have always been committed to a healthy eating philosophy and promote this with children. We offer a mid-morning/afternoon snack, which comprises of milk/water and fresh fruit. However, fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. Meals are provided daily by our in-house chef. No artificial additives or salt are used, and our menus offer a healthy and balanced diet suitable for young children, which exceed government standards. Menus, which are on a four-week cycle, and changed seasonally.

We encourage our families to share their favourite family meals and recipes so we can introduce them to our menu, even better if you come and cook with us to share your recipe. Our menu tries to incorporate food from all around the world. So having our family favourites on the menus, gives us a sense of home.

**Standards & Policies**

**Health & Safety**

We firmly believe that the safety of the children is paramount. The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 imposes certain obligations and we fully accept our obligations under the Act. We have all the necessary policies, procedures and systems in place regarding Health & Safety and regularly consult with a specialist advisor. We also have CCTV cameras throughout the building to ensure the safety and security of the children whilst they are on the premises. Fire drills are carried out every month. All staff are qualified First Aiders.

**Equalities & Inclusion Policy**

This policy shows how, at Ambourne House we are totally committed to offering a fully inclusive environment, where everyone is treated with individual and equal concern. We aim to remove ‘barriers’, thus enabling equal access to all. We value all children, parents and staff regardless of disability, class, colour, culture, ethnic origin, language, family status, gender, means or religious beliefs.

We welcome children with additional needs and disabilities and follow the guidelines as laid out in the ‘Special Educational Needs & Disability’ (SEND) Code of Practice. Staff promote inclusion in a positive way, creating a happy atmosphere for all children, who benefit from integration and learn a great deal from each other.

**Behaviour Management Policy**

This policy shows how staff always promote and praise positive behaviour. They are always consistent when handling behaviour and act as positive role models. They encourage self-discipline, consideration and respect for others and the environment.

**Safeguarding Children Policy**

This policy explains how our prime responsibility is the welfare and well being of all children in our care and that we have a fundamental duty to act quickly and responsibly, following appropriate procedures, in any instance that may come to our attention

**Admissions**

It is our intention to make our setting accessible to children and families from all sections of the local community through open, fair and clear communication. We ensure that all family members and other carers associated to each child are made to feel welcome. We always pay regard to our Equalities policy when managing admissions and advertise in places accessible to all sections of the community. We also monitor the gender and ethnic background of children joining the nursery to ensure that we continue to be representative of social diversity. When managing admissions, priority is given to existing children and siblings. Consideration, where possible, is given to children with additional needs. Other children are offered places in chronological order.

**Additional Information**

**Free Early Education Entitlement**

We are registered with the Government’s Free Early Education Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds. Children become eligible for this free entitlement the term after their 3rd birthday and continue to receive it until they leave us to attend school. Under the scheme, children are entitled to 15 hours universal and possibly an extended 15 hours. As your child approaches the eligible age we will furnish you with all relevant information and paperwork. At that time you may choose to select the sessions for your child to attend. To check your eligibility please log on to: [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

We are also registered to deliver funding for 2 year olds and the entitlement of 15 hours is the same as for 3 and 4 year olds, although this government funding is more limited and therefore only applies to any family who has a household income of up to £16,190 including claiming Working Tax Credit. If you would like any more information on this, would like to check your eligibility or make an application, please contact the Local Authority on 01454 868008 or go to [www.southglos.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.southglos.gov.uk/childcare).

**Government Childcare Vouchers**

Childcare vouchers is a scheme that is supported by the government, which enables parents to pay for their childcare in vouchers provided by their employers. By using vouchers parents can save on tax and NI contributions. We accept vouchers from all the major and local suppliers, including Accor, Busy Bees, Care4, Sodexho, Kiddi Vouchers, All Save, Imagine/Mid Counties Co-op, Fidelti and South Glos Council. Please ask your employer about which childcare voucher scheme they use. More information can be found at [www.direct.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.direct.gov.uk/childcare)

**Child Tax & Working Tax Credit**

Child Tax Credit is an allowance based on the parents or carers income for children who are still in full-time education. It is paid in addition to child benefit and many families are eligible for this tax credit. For more information and to find out if you are eligible for Tax Credits contact the Tax Credit helpline on 0845 300 3900 or go [www.taxcredits.inlandrevenue.gov.uk](http://www.taxcredits.inlandrevenue.gov.uk)

**Tax Free Childcare**

Ambourne House is also signed up to the new government scheme for Tax Free Childcare. All details can be found on [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

Last updated: February 2022 by Lorraine Doyle, Nursery Manager