Malmesbury
Primary & Nursery School

Nursery Handbook
2026-2027

Welcome to Nursery at Malmesbury Primary School. This booklet contains key information that will ensure that your child's transition into our setting is as smooth as possible.

At Malmesbury, our Nursery accommodates children from aged 3. We have three intakes a year: in September, January and April.

All Nursery pupils are entitled to 15 hours provision and this can be offered in morning, afternoon or full day sessions to support working parents. Additional Nursery sessions can be booked and paid for at the school office. The number of available places is limited.

We are able to offer a flexible timetable that is bespoke to your needs.

<u>30-hour offer</u>

We provide places for children who are entitled to 30 hours free education and aim to accommodate all families who are entitled to this offer. The government offer is for 30 hours per week of free Nursery provision for those parents meeting the criteria. In order for children to benefit from the full school day, at Malmesbury the offer is 35 hours per week: from 8.30am to 3.30pm. This offer is more than the number of free hours provided by the government so there is a charge of £6.50 a day for the additional hour.

If you would like to only use your 30-hour entitlement please speak to a member of staff to discuss your pick-up times.

Extra charges will be based on your chosen pattern (hours/days) regardless of the sessions actually attended. The same approach is used for funded hours. Hours should be used as per your chosen pattern and cannot be changed due to non-attendance.
Should you wish to amend your pattern, at least 4 weeks' notice should be given but, whilst we do our best to accommodate such requests, there may be some occasions where this is not possible.

During the lunch hour the children are supported by Nursery staff. Children must bring a packed lunch or can request to buy a school lunch.

The School Day

	Drop-off	Pick-up
Morning session	8.30-8.45am	11.30am
Afternoon session	12.30pm	3.15-3.30pm
Full day session	8.30am-8.45am	3.15-3.30pm

Any children who arrive after the drop-off window must come through the school office.

If you cannot collect your child and have arranged for another parent or relative to collect them, you **must** inform a member of Nursery staff. This can either be done in the morning when you bring your child to school, or you can phone the school office before the end of the school day and they will pass the message to Nursery staff. We will not hand children over to unfamiliar adults for safety reasons.

Lunchtime

Children staying for the full day have their lunch between 11.30am – 12.30pm. There are a variety of options each day including vegetarian and Halal options. You can see the current school dinner menu on our website. While you may find your child is fussy about food at home, we encourage all children to have school dinners as they are healthy and balanced. One of the Early Learning Goals in the Early Years is for children to understand the importance of healthy food choices, and we have found that with encouragement many children are willing to try new foods at school. If sending a school lunch, please remember that we have a "No Nuts Policy."

If your child has medical dietary requirements, please let us know on the forms provided within our Nursery pack.

Children are also provided with water and fruit throughout the day. Children under the age of five are entitled to free milk. If you would like your child to receive this, please fill in the form contained in your Nursery pack or visit https://www.coolmilk.com/. We encourage the children to bring their own water bottle to Nursery. This should be labelled with your child's name.

More information is available on our website here:

Wraparound Care

Please visit the 'Breakfast Club' and 'Junior Adventures Group' section on the website for more information. You can find this under the 'School Life' tab.

Breakfast Club

Junior Adventures Groups

Clothing

Children in Nursery are encourged to wear the school polo shirt and jumper/cardigan. If you would like to order school uniform, you will find an order form enclosed in your Nursery pack and the office will be able to assist you with this. Alternatively, you can buy them from shops and supermarkets.

We encourage the children in Nursery to wear clothes which will help them to be independent when going to the toilet or changing. Elasticated jogging bottoms and skirts work well. We would also suggest buying jumpers and coats in a slightly bigger size so that the children can manoeuvre their arms easily. At home, please practise doing up zips and buttons as well as independent dressing. When deciding which shoes to purchase for your child, please consider buying shoes with a Velcro fastening as these are easier for children to do up independently.

All items of clothing must be labelled clearly with your child's name. Please ensure that your child's clothes are labelled before they start school.

Sometimes your child may wet or soil themselves at school. We would appreciate if you could send a spare set of clothes in for your child. Please ensure all items are also labelled.

If your child is not yet toilet trained, staff will work with you to support this important stage of development once children are settled. Ensure your child has spare nappies and wipes in school in order for them to be changed.

Outdoor Learning

We do a lot of learning outdoors, in all weathers, so children must be dressed appropriately for cold, rain, snow, wind and sun! It would be useful if the children could have:

- Spare welly boots to use on wets days or in the mud kitchen.
- Mittens (instead of gloves) as these are easier for the children to put on independently.
- Warm waterproof coat in the winter.
- Rain jackets or ponchos in warmer seasons.

Learning

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning

The characteristics are a very important part of the Early Years. These are not **what** the children learn but **how** the children learn. These help us to plan and support the children to learn well. Likewise, the children learn the skills for being a good learner which we hope they can take with them as they move through the school. Some of the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are:

- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Communication and Language

We have a big focus on developing the children's spoken language in Nursery as it supports all the other areas of learning and development. We create a language-rich environment where the children have lots of opportunities for back-and-forth interactions with adults and children. Staff take an interest, echo back, extend and model good language to the children throughout the day. Reading, story-telling and role play support the children to use and embed new words.

Learning at Home

Each half term we will inform parents/carers of the curriculum information for the coming half term which will be published on our website. You can see what they children are learning at the moment on our website under the 'What are we learning at school?' tab.

Every few weeks we will also publish 'Nursery News' on our website which includes information about what children have been learning that week and suggested activities that you can do at home to support your child's learning.

Working with parents

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there is a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

The role of parents is vital during the EYFS and we engage with parents in a range of ways including:

Before joining EYFS

- Welcome booklets
- Home visits/1:1 meetings for new starters to Nursery

Throughout the EYFS

- Parental engagement events including reading sessions and workshops
- 'Wow' moment forms for parents to fill in to share key development
- Meetings to discuss the children's special sheets
- Nursery and Reception newsletters published on our website
- Regular updates on the school's Instagram account. Our user name is **malmesbury_primary**

Learning through play

In Nursery your child will learn through play. Your child's activities are carefully planned and children are engaged in a variety of activities every day. These can be both adult supported or independent. We base our learning around quality storybooks throughout the year. More information about this can be found on our school website under the 'Nursery' tab.

In the Early Years we place great emphasis on knowing each child as an individual in order to respond to their arising needs and to instil high expectations.

We prioritise the prime areas of learning in the Nursery curriculum and for those children needing this continued focus in Reception. Our enabling environment and warm, skilful adult interactions support the children as they begin to link learning to their play and exploration.

We promote the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking. We value imagination and creativity and seek to create a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning through a vibrant continuous indoor and outdoor provision alongside visitors and regular enrichment experiences.

Messy Play

In our Early Years setting we have messy play resources out each day. We have a mud kitchen where children can use soil to engage in imaginative play and make mud cakes! On a daily basis we may have other messy play resources for children to play with. These can include spaghetti, play-dough, gloop, slime and jelly. Children love to explore and discuss the texture of these things and all children in Nursery are expected to engage with these activities. Messy play is a natural and essential part of childhood so please be patient when your child sometimes comes home with messy clothes. We do not provide aprons for children as we want children to fully explore, develop independence with managing clothing and hygiene and experience uninterrupted play.

Areas of Learning

The EYFS framework includes 7 areas of learning and development that are equally important and inter-connected. Three areas, known as the prime areas, are seen as particularly important for igniting curiosity and enthusiasm for learning as well as for building children's capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

The prime areas are:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

The prime areas are strengthened and applied through 4 specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

In Nursery, learning is focused on the prime areas of learning.

Throughout the year, we will focus on various areas of learning which follow the children's interests and expand on the children's knowledge of the world. Activities may include:

- Looking at different people and communities around the world and how our community or religion might be different to others.
- Learning about our local environment and compare it to other places.
- Learning about animals in a real-world context.

We will do activities that support children's physical development and work on communication skills such as speaking, listening and understanding. We will also have learning sessions aimed at developing children's self-confidence, friendships and behaviour.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. In Nursery we provide opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors so that adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being.

Books

Your child will choose a school library book to take home each week. This is an opportunity for you to read to your child and develop their understanding of stories and to foster their love of reading. Bedtime is a great opportunity to read a story with your child.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum. We use high quality, language rich texts as a basis to plan and deliver a stimulating curriculum which builds on the understanding of all children whatever their starting points, matching the needs of our community. Our curriculum is made up of core books and supplementary books. These can be viewed on our annual curriculum overviews which are published on our website.

In addition, there are story time sessions across the early years which help to promote a love of reading from an early age. By providing a range of reading experiences, we are ensuring that children have access to books in a way which best suits their learning needs.

Writing

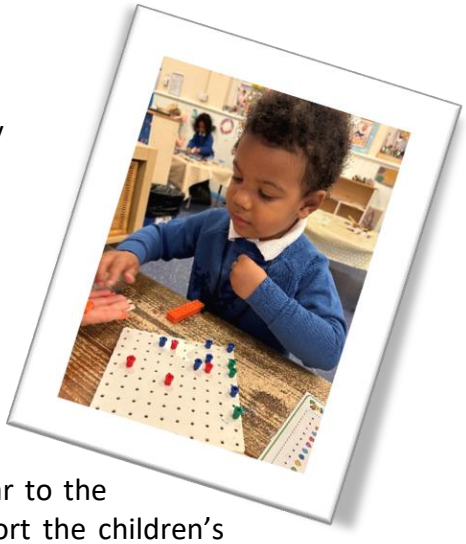
Nursery children work on building phonological awareness by:

- playing games with sounds;
- exploring rhythm, rhyme and alliteration;
- blending and segmenting orally.

Let's Talk

At Malmesbury, talk is seen as fundamental to the writing process. Children in the early years are provided with a weekly stimulus to talk about in a guided adult-led session. This might be an object, picture or video usually related to the topic. As the children progress through the early years, mark-making and writing are supported through this process.

Maths



Along with the rest of the school, we follow a mastery approach to mathematics: particularly focusing on embedding the different counting principles. Mathematics is incorporated throughout the other areas of learning as well as in the environment. Children are given lots of real life examples of maths in action through story time, songs, routine, objects and manipulatives.

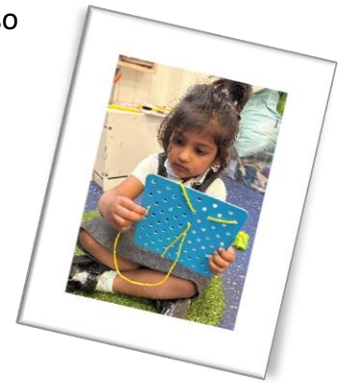
We use high quality resources, which will be familiar to the children as they move through the school, to support the children's understanding. We create an environment full of lots of mathematical talk and thinking!

At the beginning of the year, we will concentrate on careful counting. In order to prepare your child, please count everything…objects, jumps, claps, sounds! For your child to be as confident as possible with maths, they need to be able to count. While some children may be able to say numbers up to 100, this is very different from actually counting objects. When you are out and about, count everything you see with your child and talk about numbers in the environment. How many red cars can you see? How many buses? What are the numbers on the buses? Can you find any numbers in the supermarket?

Throughout the year, we will also look at different mathematical concepts such as 2D and 3D shapes, measuring weight and distance, talking about size, learning about time, money, patterns and problem solving. Your child's teacher will tell you when we are learning about certain topics so you can support your child at home. Termly curriculum maps and regular newsletters will provide more detail.

WOW moments

Parents' and carers' contributions to their child's assessment in Nursery is highly valued. At home, children may surprise you with the things they have learnt or new things they can do. We regularly send home 'WOW moments' so that parents/carers can record a time when their child impressed them. These can then be given to their child's teacher so that they can be included in their child's learning journey. You can also email any comments or pictures to our school email: school@malmesbury.merton.sch.uk



Woodwork

We believe that woodwork is a wonderful medium for children to work with. It has a long history in Early childhood education and is one of those really special activities that truly engages children and encompasses all areas of learning and development. Children really respond to the challenge and very much enjoy working with wood and real tools.

Children will develop:

- their physical coordination, fine and gross motor skill and hand eye coordination
- basic mathematical concepts, such as shape and measure and develop their mathematical thinking skills
- their understanding of the world – seeing tools as basic technology, understanding wood as a material and observing many scientific concepts such as the rotation of a wheel, levering nails back up or using a drill to drill holes
- their language with new vocabulary, using language to talk about their ideas and to problem solve
- their mark-making and drawing to express ideas on paper and also mark on the wood itself.

There are two areas where woodwork really excels. Firstly, it develops children's self-esteem and confidence – it is really empowering for children to create with real tools and they take great delight in their achievements - it really develops a can-do spirit! Secondly it develops children's thinking skills –their creative and critical thinking as they problem solve and express their imaginations with wood – which is not easy to work with!
Safety is prioritised at all times.

- The children must wear safety glasses at all times. Children who wear eyeglasses will continue to wear those and they will also protect the eye.
- Sawing is only ever done with 1:1 adult supervision.
- Of course, we cannot eliminate all risk, and there will be the occasional bruised thumb, but part of children's development is that they need to learn to manage risk and make judgements to protect themselves so they are better able to make decisions in all situations that life presents.

Children manage to get through a lot of resources with woodwork and our biggest challenge is keeping up with demand. We would appreciated if you could help by sending bottle tops, corks and lids into school. They really can join a lot together quite quickly so we need on-going help with this! Thank you. We very much look forward to the children showing you what they have created – but remember the real product that is being made is the changes within the child! As children make with wood they are learning skills that will empower them to shape their world - encouraging them to become the innovators, makers, sculptors, tinkerers, engineers and architects of tomorrow!

Nursery Check-List

- A small rucksack that also holds a tote bag or bag-for-life for art work to be sent home in.
- A spare clothes bag to be kept in the Nursery in case your child has an accident **or** gets messy. Bag should contain pants, socks, trousers, tops, jumpers and spare shoes.
- A water bottle with water only.
- A poncho or rain jacket to be kept in Nursery to be used on wet days so children can fully access the curriculum.
- Wellington boots to be kept in Nursery to be used on wet days so children can fully access the curriculum.
- Shoes should be slip-on or have Velcro fastenings.
- Trousers should be elasticated and can be jogging bottoms (rather than with buttons or other fastenings which are difficult for children)
- Suitable clothing for winter: warm coat, hat, scarf and mittens (rather than gloves which are difficult for children to put on)
- Suitable clothing for summer: sun hat and sun cream.

ALL ITEMS TO BE CLEARLY LABELLED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME

We are looking forward to welcoming your child in Nursery. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask a member of staff. We are here to help and are always ready with ideas and suggestions of ways in which you can support your child's learning at home.