



Ladybirds Nursery: SEND Local Offer

What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

Speak to your keyworker who will then pass the information to Bernadette Lee and Julie O'Kelly who are both experienced early years teachers and share the role of overseeing special needs at Ladybirds. If your child has an identified special need before joining our nursery, we will work with you to ensure everything is in place before your child joins us. The nursery frequently works with other agencies to support children who have a wide range of needs. This is always done in conjunction with parents so we can ensure that the most appropriate support is given to the child.

How will staff at Ladybirds support my child?

All the staff at Ladybirds participate in 3 'in service' training days per year (in addition to other core courses such as first aid or food handling). Consequently, staff are regularly kept up to date with changes in SEN (special educational needs) and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Children are assessed upon entry (once settled) using the EYFS ages and stages sheets. At points of transition, a 'settling in' sheet is used to assist in the communication between nursery and home. If a child is moving rooms within nursery an 'all about me' sheet is compiled by the old keyworker. All this information helps Ladybirds decide if your child requires an Individual Support Plan (IEP). This makes clear what targets your child is working towards and how s/he is being supported. This is reviewed with you every 6-8 weeks, and if the targets have been achieved, new ones are discussed together and set. Progress is tightly tracked during the Individual Support Plan and if appropriate targets are not being met Ladybirds may suggest involving outside agencies. Staff are skilled at matching the learning to your child's individual needs. Planning is organised by topic and broken down to weekly themes. Keyworkers plan for their group of key children and will build on the individual's interests eg dinosaurs, Octonauts, football,

How will I know how my child is doing?

There are many opportunities for formal feedback, but staff strive to chat to you at the end of a session. If you child has an IEP there will be a review meeting every 6-8 weeks. Parents' evenings are held twice a year where learning journals are shared. Babies and toddlers have a daily record sheet and older children have informal feedback from their keyworker. A '2-year-old check' is completed and where possible shared with the Health Visitor. When children leave Ladybirds to transfer to school, a comprehensive Foundation Stage profile is

prepared detailing the child's progress and achievements across each of the seven areas of learning. A copy is sent on to the receiving primary school.

What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

Our ethos is one of encouraging positive behaviour and independence. Specific praise is used liberally eg 'Alex, well done! I can see you really listened carefully to that story'. Stickers and rewarding children with special jobs eg being the monitor for a day, also work to promote positive behaviour. As Ladybirds takes children from 3 months old, we are very experienced at helping families through potty training and children gaining full independence of their toileting and personal care. The best approach is always collaborative, and staff work hard to ensure consistency for each child. Detailed policies explain how health needs are addressed including the administration of medication.

What specialist services and expertise are available or accessed by Ladybirds Nursery?

The nursery is owned and managed by two experienced early years teachers who both taught in maintained schools and managed a wide range of special needs before they established Ladybirds Nursery together in 2002. Frequently, the teachers have been involved in helping families reach a diagnosis then supporting them in coming to terms with what this means for their child and the whole family. We have supported children with

ADHD, Asperger's, Autistic spectrum disorder, Down's syndrome, dyspraxia, global delay and speech & language disorders to name but a few. Some children have required 1:1 support within the classroom to

maximise their full potential. Consequently, we have recruited and trained staff into such roles. We are delighted we have managed to retain these richly experienced staff even after the child has left the nursery for school. They have enhanced our staff team and increased the expertise we are able to offer all children. We have very good links with our local children's centre and often recommend parent courses that they run.

How will my child be included in activities outside the setting?

Ladybirds Nursery has an inclusive policy so the expectation is all children are included in any activities. Detailed risk assessments are undertaken before any trip. As the nursery is located within Highfield park the children enjoy trips to different areas within it every day. Any specific piece of equipment that helps a child with SEN participate eg a walker frame is bought/ borrowed. Parents give signed permission for their child to go on walks within the park and are consulted on any trips further afield.

How accessible is Ladybirds Nursery?

Ladybirds Nursery's building has a disabled ramp giving access from the garden into the pre-school room. All rooms housing the children are off a central corridor on the same level as are the children's toilets. The kitchen, staff room and staff toilet are up 4 steps. Both the main and toddler gardens are on one level. There is a disabled toilet. The building is surrounded by parkland with newly re-surfaced paths that are largely flat or gently sloping. They reach down to the large carpark.

How will Ladybirds Nursery prepare and support my child with transitions between home, nursery and school?

Before your child starts at Ladybirds you are invited to visit for several 'settling in' sessions with your child so you can meet your keyworker and exchange information and your child can experience the room they will be based in and explore the toys. Once started, a 'settling in' sheet aids the communication between nursery and home; this supplements the informal feedback given at the end of the session by your keyworker.

In the summer term before your child transfers to school we invite local Reception teachers into Ladybirds to meet their new children in the nursery environment in which they are secure and familiar. We have liaised directly with schools receiving a child with SEN from Ladybirds and advised on arrangements for helping the child to settle in smoothly. As we have been educating and caring for young children for over 18 years, we have built up strong relationships with local schools.

Who can I contact for further information about the early years offer in the setting?

Bernadette Lee/ Julie O'Kelly
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For further information about provision offered in Hertfordshire across education, health and social care for children and young people who have SEN or are disabled please visit:

www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer