

The **Benjamin** Foundation

Ditchingham Day Nursery

Our Nursery on the Norfolk – Suffolk border for children aged from three months to five years.

Ditchingham Day Nursery provides childcare in a safe and supportive environment which gives parents peace-of-mind. The nursery is part of The Benjamin Foundation, a local charity which brings hope, opportunity, stability and independence to local children, young people and families.

This handbook gives you information about our nursery and what you should expect from our service.

Ditchingham Day Nursery
Belsey Bridge Road,
Ditchingham,
NR35 2DT
T: 01986 895091

Delivered by:
The Benjamin Foundation, 23–27 St Andrews St, Norwich, NR2 4TP
T: 01603 615670 | E: kara.evans@benjaminfoundation.co.uk

Registered Charity Number: 1124936
Company Number 3825425
www.benjaminfoundation.co.uk

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About The Benjamin Foundation

The Benjamin Foundation is a local charity which helps people across Norfolk and Suffolk to deal with some of the challenges that life throws at them.

Whether it's the prevention of youth homelessness, helping families to build stronger relationships or providing positive activities for young people with limited opportunities in life, our work brings hope, opportunity, stability and independence to the people we support.

For more information about The Benjamin Foundation, please visit www.benjaminfoundation.co.uk



Rated 'Good' by Ofsted in July 2017, Ditchingham Day Nursery provides childcare in a lovely rural setting just two miles from Bungay on the Norfolk/Suffolk border.

There's a warm and welcoming environment to ensure children and their parents or carers feel safe, valued and happy, and we provide activities to enhance children's social and learning skills which cover all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage with activities planned around the interests of the children.

All staff are trained to meet the legal requirements from the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and staff and volunteers have full Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS) records.

Our aims

We offer individual care and attention for young children by providing:

- A safe and secure setting, where children are treated as individuals in a warm and caring environment.
- Positive relationships between children, parents and key persons.
- Equality of opportunity to ensure all children are included and supported, whatever their religious beliefs, backgrounds or any other individual needs.
- Learning and development to inspire and nurture a child's inquisitive and curious mind. Our Early Years Practitioners use authentic resources and wooden natural treasures to explore and engage with children.
- A wide range selection of activities to promote this style of learning and development.
- Individual Learning Stories to track development on our interactive nursery system.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework

At Ditchingham Day Nursery, we follow the Government guidelines from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. We support the legal requirements and are Ofsted registered (rated 'Good' at our most recent inspection in July 2017).

Children have areas of Learning and Development that are promoted through the children's play. There are seven areas to support this; three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas.

Prime Areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Making relationships and understanding others.
Self-confidence and self-awareness.
Managing feelings and behaviour.

Physical Development

Moving and handling.
Health and self-care.

Communication and Language

Listening and attention.
Understanding.
Speaking.

Specific Areas:

Literacy

Reading and writing.

Mathematics

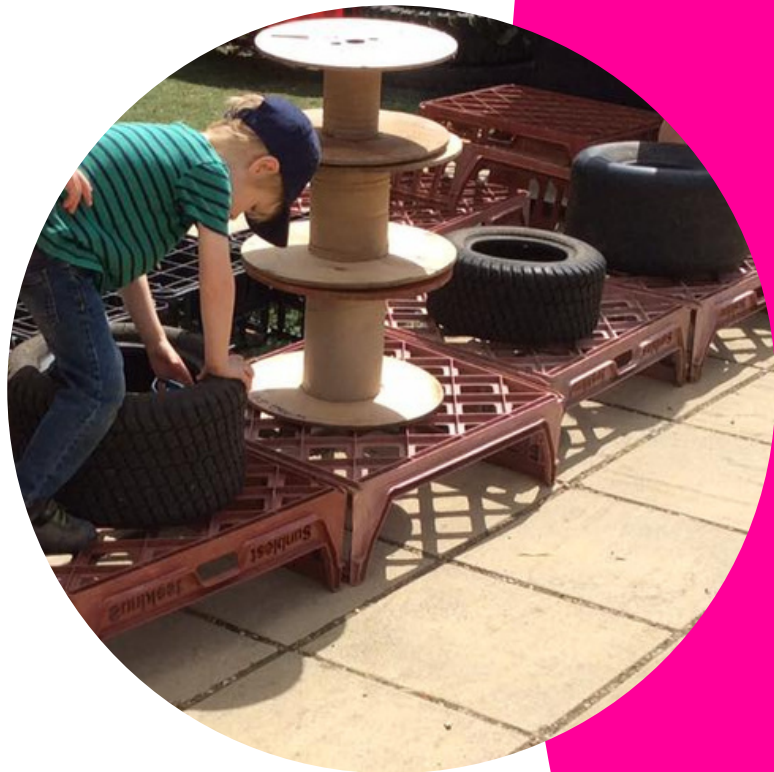
Numbers, shapes, space and measurement.

Understanding the World

People and communities, the world, technology.

Expressive Arts and Design

Exploring and using media and materials. Being imaginative.
Early Years Practitioners (Key Persons) have key children who they work with to support their individual learning and development, with support and advice from their main parent/carer. Each child has their own Learning Story with home interaction, which tracks their learning and development while they are in the care of the nursery.



Support and Partnerships

If there are any concerns for your child, or if they need any additional support, the practitioner will support this by referring them to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in the setting. The SENCO will then contact outside agencies for more support or advice if required, with communication at all times with parents.

We have various link and partnership working with outside agencies to help support the needs of the children if needed. Some health visitors will link their two year review with our check. Please speak to your child's Key Person for more information.

"Something which stood out from the other nurseries is how keen staff are to try new things and develop the facilities and activities."

Parent – Ditchingham Day Nursery

The Nursery and Who Can Attend

The nursery is housed in a large school building, occupying the whole of the ground floor with large and airy rooms, which provide a comfortable environment for the children.

We also have a large garden for children to play in and we can also go for lovely walks around local grounds. In the nearby wooded area we also provide forest school activities and have our own forest schools qualified members of staff.

All children between the age of three months and five years are welcome. The Nursery is currently registered for 40 children at any one time, and up to 12 of those may be less than two years old.

All children are offered a home visit and settling sessions prior to starting at the nursery.



Opening Times

We are open Monday to Friday from 8am to 6:00pm

The nursery is closed on all Bank Holidays and between Christmas and New Year.

The Nursery is also closed for four days through the year for staff training. Parents are notified in advance of these dates.



The Curiosity Approach

What is The Curiosity Approach?

The Curiosity Approach is an accreditation that Ditchingham Day Nursery is working towards. This is a modern day approach that fits perfectly into current changing technological times, bringing curiosity, awe and wonder into early childhood and creating the 'thinkers and doers of the future'.

It is about more than just beautiful play spaces; it's an inspirational modern day approach to early childhood, which takes inspiration from Reggio, Steiner, Tewhariki and a sprinkle of Montessori, underpinned by the Early Years Foundation Stage.

It's a beautiful recipe of wonderful ingredients, carefully mixed together with experience, passion and a love of early childhood.

It's baked together in a mindful oven of loveliness that needs thoughtful Practitioners; professionals to be mentally present, thankful and forever curious about their careers with young children.



"We use natural materials and items for the children to explore and engage. This engages their curiosity and imagination."

Ditchingham Day Nursery Staff
Member

Bunny Room (3 months to 2 years)

The Bunnies learn and develop through play, by being active, creative and exploring. Our aim is to provide a learning environment that stimulates their natural curiosity, while being warm and welcoming. The activities are linked to the EYFS and are chosen from the child's own interests and conversations with the family, and the children have daily visits to the garden or walks around the beautiful grounds to explore and observe the outdoors.



The Bunny Room offers all year care. We understand the importance of building key relationships with both child and their families so before your child starts in the Bunny Room, we offer 'settling' sessions, which are tailored to the families own needs and are supported by a key person.

The Hedgehog Room (2 to 3 years)

The Hedgehog Room caters for two to three year olds and can take up to twelve children.

All seven areas of learning are supported through child-led activities and invitations to learning. Following in the moment planning, practitioners build strong and understanding relationships of each child as an individual, which provides learning opportunities tailored to their own interests.

All children have daily access to the garden and go for walks near the nursery. In the warmer months we offer outdoor naps so children are able to reap the benefits of sleeping in the fresh air.

When children join the Hedgehog Room, we encourage independence during the sessions. At snack times, we support the children to select their own fruit and pour their own drinks. We also promote independence for outdoors activities by encouraging the children to put on their own coats, hats and shoes.

We also offer 2
year old funding
places!

The Owl Room (3 years until school)

The Owl Room follows the 'In the Moment' planning approach. This allows learning to be child-led, focusing the areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage around the child's current interests and engagement in activities.

Our Owls are encouraged to make independent choices and develop their critical thinking through a variety of natural and authentic resources. There is a stronger focus on Literacy and Mathematics, with daily activities that support these areas.

Quality time is spent engaging with the children during their play, role modelling ideas and encouraging thinking that will further learning opportunities.

Our mornings begin with self-registration before the opportunity to engage with the various invitations and provocations to play that have been carefully arranged to inspire learning and curiosity.

During our snack times, we promote further independence by asking each child to collect their cup and plate, serve their snack and wash their snack things afterwards.

The children have access to a variety of fictional and factual books that they will often help to choose from the nursery library. The library bus also visits us each month where, again, the children have the opportunity to pick their own books.

There is free-flow access to the garden from the owl room where the children are able to choose whether to continue their learning outdoors.



"Best nursery by far in the local and surrounding areas!

The staff are fantastic and the children enjoy going, lots of outdoor activities – just fab all round!"

Parent of a child at Ditchingham Day Nursery



The Dining Room

We are lucky enough to have our own in-house cook who produces a variety of homemade nutritious meals to suit our children's growing needs! All meals produced are nut free.

Rated 5* by The Food Standards Agency in August 2021, our kitchen offers a range of wholesome, healthy and nutritious hot meals all prepared by our in-house cooks at lunch time. At tea time, a lighter meal is provided.

Please see the daily menus for more information.



Lunches are served at 12pm.
Tea time is at approximately 4pm.



We are happy to support any medical, allergy and dietary requirements. Any other requirements, we will try our best to cater for.

Children are also offered a healthy, nutritious snack in the morning and afternoon, and drinking water is available at all times within the individual rooms.

“Although I love to cook all meals for the children, my favourites to make are lasagne and chocolate cake”

Nikki, Ditchingham Day Nursery Cook



Forest School



Forest School is an inspirational process that offers all learners regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in an outdoor woodland or natural environment with trees.

It's an opportunity for children to lead their own learning experience and learn new skills within an outdoor environment. Just some of the benefits include:

- Increased self-esteem and confidence.
- Improved social skills as the children lead their own learning.
- Better understanding of the natural environment through exploring.
- Improvements to physical development, making them physically stronger, more balanced and coordinated.
- Contributes to the development of communication and language skills.
- Developing the ability to work cooperatively with their peers.
- Ability to manage their own risks.
- Enabling them to become independent, creative and holistic learners.

Amy is our Forest Schools Leader and holds a Level 3 Forest School Accreditation. James is currently working towards his Level 3 Accreditation. Both Amy and James embrace the role of Forest School Leader to enable small groups of children to have this great experience within a safe outdoor environment.

Amy and James add equipment, such as ropes and tools for children to use and explore to aid their own learning experiences.



“Our children love the Forest School scheme – the sessions are always in demand and it is amazing to see what they get out of it.”

Amy, Forest School Leader

Fees

At Ditchingham Day Nursery we have a 'Deposit Retainer' system which consists of a £210.00 deposit which is required before we are able to secure your child's nursery place. The "deposit retainer agreement" will be emailed or posted out to you and we ask for it to be returned, signed with payment to be made within 2 weeks. The £10.00 is an admin charge, which is non refundable.

Once this is received we can begin the meeting and settling process. Your deposit will be returned in 2 stages, £100 to be taken off your first invoice and £100 to be returned at the end of your time at Nursery, as long as your child starts on their set date/month. If the start date is deferred into the next calendar month you would lose £100 of the deposit and then if you continue to defer the place any further you will lose the remaining £100. After this you may lose your nursery place altogether or your application form would be removed from our waiting list.

Session fees:

0 to 2 years

Half Day 8am to 1pm = £32.00
Half Day 1pm to 6pm = £32.00
Full Day 8am to 6pm = £64.00

2 to 3 years

Half Day 8am to 1pm = £27.50
Half Day 1pm to 6pm = £27.50
Full Day 8am to 6pm = £55.00

3 to 4 years

Half Day 8am to 1pm = £27.50
Half Day 1pm to 6pm = £27.50
Full Day 8am to 6pm = £55.00
School hours 8.30am – 3.30pm = £38.50

Meals are priced as lunch at £2.50, tea at £2.00 and snacks at 50p per morning and afternoon session.

Forest School:

Forest School sessions are charged at an additional fee. Days and times for these vary each half term so prior to the sessions starting you will receive a letter with more information and asking if you would like your child to take part.

Invoicing and Payments:

Invoices are issued each month in advance. All invoices are handed out around the first of the month and payments are due by the 25th of each month.

If the payment is not received in full, a 10% charge will be added to the outstanding balance and carried forward to the next month. Failure to make payment will result in referral to our Finance Department and your child's place being stopped. We accept payments by BACS transfer, childcare vouchers and 2,3 and 30 hour funding where eligible.

Items to Bring to the Nursery

If your child is in nappies, we kindly ask that you supply nappies with appropriate cleaning items.

We go outside whatever the weather, therefore we ask you to provide your child with a warm, waterproof coat and wellington boots for wet/cold days.

For sunny days, please provide your child with a sun hat and sun cream.

We also ask you to provide a selection of spare clothes to suit all weather conditions. Please make sure all of your children's items are named.

When the children are at our nursery, they are encouraged to explore and have fun. This can involve water, paint and many other materials.

Please ensure your child wears clothes that you don't mind getting messy.



Partnerships with Parents and Carers

We like you to share your experiences with us about your child so we can support both you and your child at different stages of their learning and personal development. Please keep us up to date with home life as this helps to develop your child's interests.

All parents have access to their child's learning journal and to nursery information via our online system, Tapestry. Tapestry keeps you updated on your child's development at the nursery, along with you being able to share information from home.

We will offer you an opportunity throughout the year to attend a Consultation Session so you can discuss your child's development and look through your child's learning story with your child's Key Person.

If you wish to speak to your child's Key Person, they will be happy to talk with you at the start or end of your session or, alternatively, at a time to suit you.

Don't forget to include indoor and outdoor shoes, and coats suitable for all weathers!

Remember sun hats and woolly hats for warmer/colder days.

Contracted Hours

Each parent will sign a contract agreement for their child to attend the nursery. This will stipulate the regular hours you require your child to be looked after. This is an ongoing agreement until either party cancels with **four weeks paid notice in writing.**

The Bunny Room is an all year round contract. We cannot offer a term time only contract for the Bunny Room.

The minimum contract is for two sessions per week, for your child's continuity.

If you wish to change your hours, we ask for four weeks paid notice in writing.

Any extra sessions will be charged accordingly and any non attended sessions, including sickness will be charged in full. If you wish to change your hours, we ask for four weeks paid notice in writing.



"We've really appreciated the fun, laid back approach with lots of emphasis on outdoor play."

Parent of a child at Ditchingham Day Nursery

Other Information

Medication and Illness

We are only able to administer prescribed medication from a Doctor; it must be clearly labelled and the parent/carer must sign all relevant paperwork before the staff are able to administer the prescribed medication.

If your child becomes unwell, they may not want to play or be with other children and would prefer to be in a familiar home environment.

We ask that you do not send your child who is suffering from illness to the nursery to prevent outbreaks of infection to others. Children with sickness and diarrhoea need to remain absent from the nursery until all symptoms have cleared for at least 48 hours. This is in line with the Public Health England Guidelines.

Our Sickness and Medication Policy gives full details and guidance on our procedure for sickness.

Health and Safety

We take Health and Safety at Ditchingham Day Nursery very seriously, ensuring we comply with Health and Safety legislation at all times.

Every morning, a member of staff completes a daily risk assessment before children enter the building. All activities and outings are risk assessed, and a fire drill is carried out every term.

Our Health and Safety Officers are Kara and Teresa.

Accidents and Injuries

Should your child be involved in an accident while in our care, they will be given First Aid by a qualified First Aider. All of our staff are First Aid trained.

All accidents are recorded on Tapestry, which you will be required to digitally sign at the end of your child's session.

Should your child need emergency treatment, we will treat the child's needs first and then contact you to inform you what is happening.

Emergency Contacts

It is important that all contact details we hold about your child are kept updated and correct in case we need to contact you in an emergency.



Safeguarding

We have a strong commitment to safeguarding children within our care. We follow a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure, which can be viewed on our website: benjaminfoundation.co.uk/safeguarding

Should you have a concern about your child or a child in our care, please speak to our manager, Kara or one of our Senior Lead Practitioners, Maxine or Louise.



Policies

We have a range of policies to support all the daily requirements to run the nursery, either from the Local Authority or The Benjamin Foundation.

All policies can be viewed on Tapestry. Policies are reviewed regularly on a monthly basis and parents/carers will be notified of changes.

Complaints

We are committed to ensuring quality childcare, but should you feel the need to discuss any concerns about Ditchingham Day Nursery or a member of staff, please ask to speak to the Manager, Kara Evans. In Kara's absence, please speak to the senior room leads, Louise or Maxine.

Ofsted

Ditchingham Day Nursery was rated 'Good' by Ofsted in July 2017. The full Ofsted report can be viewed via our website:

benjaminfoundation.co.uk/service/ditchingham-day-nursery/

Useful Contacts

Ditchingham Day Nursery: 01986 895091

Ofsted: 0300 123 1231

The Benjamin Foundation: 01603 615670



facebook.com/DitchinghamDayNursery/

And finally... if there is anything you would like to ask about Ditchingham Day Nursery, please speak to a member of staff who will be happy to help.