



Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten

Poplar Hall, Poplar Drive, Hutton, Brentwood CM13 2UW

Parent Information: SEND Local Offer

Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten aims to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We are supported by the Local Authority to ensure all children, regardless of their specific needs, make the best possible progress in pre-school.

How does Sunflowers know if a child needs extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

At Sunflowers, every child is treated as an individual. Each child is assigned a Key Person, who is experienced at observing, assessing and planning next steps for their key children.

If you have concerns about your child, you should speak to your child's Key Person, or Sue Nicholas, the Manager and SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Officer)

How will the staff support my child?

Your child's Key Person will make the next steps plans based on his or her interests, which they will share with you. Additionally, the SENDCO can make specific Play Plans focused on your child's area of need which will again be shared with you.

Sunflowers is able to call on the Essex County Council Early Support team, a group of specialists who will come to the setting and suggest strategies that will support your child at nursery. You will be invited to be part of the visit.

How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

We follow your child's interests while planning according to these interests. We have a Learning Journey for each child and use Observation, Planning and Assessment processes.

What does a Montessori setting offer for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

A Montessori education can be a wonderful option for children with Special educational Needs. The classroom is filled with beautiful materials that engage and stimulate the senses of all children. The emphasis is on peace, cooperation and respect. Equipment is displayed on easily-accessible open shelves and is hands-on, therapeutic and includes built-in control of error. It teaches one skill at a time and is a wonderful opportunity for children to use their hands to explore and learn.

Children are taught in a multi-age classroom, which means that a child remains with his or her Key Person throughout their time at nursery, allowing a strong relationship to build between teachers, parents and the child. The stress of starting a new class with a different Key Person does not exist. The child is encouraged to work at his or her own pace, without competition; this freedom allows SEN children to flourish.

How will both you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?

A strong relationship between the setting and parents is important to Sunflowers. We have Parent/Teacher Meetings at the end of the Autumn and Summer terms, but we are always available to discuss any concerns you may have. Learning Journeys can be viewed at any time.

What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?

We offer settling-in sessions prior to your child starting, to familiarise you with Sunflowers and enable support to be discussed. We are able to administer prescribed medicines with your written consent. If additional training is required, we will undertake this as necessary. We will discuss any behaviour concerns you may have and work to maintain a consistent approach between home and the setting.

The safety of your child is paramount. Children will only be allowed to leave the premises with their parent/carer unless we are made aware of changes. A password is required in this event. A daily risk assessment is undertaken to ensure our equipment is safe and also completed before any trip, including short walks around the nursery.

What specialist services are available at, or accessed by Sunflowers?

We work with all professionals as required for each child and encourage them to visit the setting. If required, we will contact and work with the Essex County Council Early support team. We will always obtain parental consent before doing so, and we will include parents in all decisions made and meetings held.

What training has the staff supporting children with SEND had or will they be having?

Staff continually receive or refresh their training. All staff have Early Year's Qualifications or are working towards them and attend on-going training in SEND, promoting positive behaviour and English as an additional language.

How will my child be included in activities outside Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten, including trips?

All children are welcome to attend trips. Parents are notified beforehand and volunteers are requested to assist on the outing. We undertake risk assessments and always carry a mobile phone and first aid kit.

How accessible is Sunflower Montessori Kindergarten?

We have a ramp up to the main door and an accessible toilet. All of the nursery is situated on one floor. Visual timetables are used to assist children with the daily routine. We have access to books that we can share with families of children with English as an additional language to help with communication.

How will Sunflower Montessori prepare and support me child to join pre-school or transfer to a new setting or school?

Sunflowers offers taster sessions for your child for them to become acquainted with the setting and meet their Key Person. We also ask parents to complete an "All About Me" form to give us as much information as possible about their child which we can then use to plan their next steps. Where a child attends another setting, we visit them to share their Learning Journey with them, or, if moving on, pass on the Learning Journey.

We have good relations with several of the local primary schools, and invite all reception class teachers to visit the children who will be joining them. We also, with parental approval, send copies of a child's report on to their new school.

How are Sunflower Montessori's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

We are a private nursery, but are able to access support and equipment from Essex County Council as required. We also ensure that staff access training regularly.

How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

The Manager and SENDCO will work closely with you and other professionals to determine your child's needs. In addition, your child's Key Person will be able to identify any additional support required through the Early Year's Foundation Stage (EYFS) observation procedure.

How are parents involved at Sunflower Kindergarten? How can I be involved?

We operate an open-door policy and share a daily diary of your child's activities with you. There is a newsletter at the start of each half-term and we have recently set up a Facebook page. We always welcome parents who wish to take part in special activities such as cooking, festival days and story time.

Who can I contact for further information?

Sue Nicholas (Manager) is always available to contact (01277 201120). We encourage prospective parents/carers and children to visit us.