

FALKNER HOUSE



Nursery Parent Handbook

2024 - 2025

WELCOME

Your child is about to embark on a new adventure, playing and interacting with new friends, working with new teachers, exploring and learning; full of joy and laughter. A Falkner House child should feel confident, happy, independent and above all love coming to Nursery!



Your child's education does not begin on the day they start school. In fact, it begins at home. Education is a partnership between home and school and the two should complement each other. Parents can be the best teachers a child will ever have and in the first years at home your child will learn more than at any other time in his or her life.

It is of great help if parents talk to their child about all sorts of things: the weather, holidays, how things work, transport, how to get to places etc. School learning aims to build on and develop your child's interests and skills.

At Falkner House we tailor your child's learning to them: building on what you have talked about at home, what they love and what inspires them.

STAFFING

The nursery is headed by Miss Miller and the classes are run by Mrs Caviglia Scott and Miss Wilkinson supported by Miss Torres.

PE and music are taught by Falkner House specialist staff and dance by Chelsea Ballet School.

SCHOOL OFFICE

The secretary and bursar staff the school's office on the ground floor of Brechin Place. They play a vital part in the smooth running of the school and take messages for staff and pupils. Any email contact with staff is via the office.



WEEKLY ROUTINE

Nursery children come to school each morning from 8.30 am until 11.30 am or each afternoon from 12.30 pm until 3.30 pm. The nursery door (front door of 17 Brechin Place) is opened at 8.30 am and 12.30 pm. Children who arrive after 8.45 am or 12.45 pm should come to the front door of 19 Brechin Place and are taken down to the Nursery by their parent or carer. The classrooms are to be found in the lower ground floors of 17 Brechin Place.

Pick up is also from the Nursery door. If someone other than the parent regularly collects a child e.g. a nanny, please can parents introduce them to their child's nursery teacher. It is very helpful if the school also has a nanny's name and contact details. If children are to be collected by anyone other than their usual "minder", the nursery teacher must be given a note or the office emailed or telephoned.

ATTENDANCE

Parents will appreciate that attendance at Nursery is not mandatory. However, routine is very important to small children and it is helpful if planned absences occurring in term time could be discussed in advance with the Nursery teachers.



HEALTH

If your child is unwell, please telephone the school number. Children should only be at school if they are well enough to participate in all usual activities including sport and outside breaks in the playground. In general, they should not be in school if they are on medication and medicines should not be brought into school. We do advise parents to keep children at home until they are fully recovered to ensure minimum infection and avoid continued poor health. If your child becomes unwell during a session and needs to return home we will make every endeavour to get in contact with parents.

CONTACT DETAILS

The school needs always to have a comprehensive list of contact numbers (at least one of which is always answered by a real human being!). When parents are away the school must have details of who to contact in London in an emergency. The school should be kept informed of any change in address, telephone numbers or email addresses.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

The dedicated Nursery section of the website is the main means of communication with parents with all the information you should need. Fixtures are uploaded onto the online Nursery calendar. The News section of the website has all the information about what topics have been looked at that week in Nursery and what is coming up for the following week. For more detailed information such as the Nursery timetable and our recommended book list, please see the Class Information page. A weekly Friday email will come from the office with anything of note for the forthcoming week. Please see the website for all our school policies.



PLAYGROUND

We are very lucky to have a fantastic playground for the children to use at break time and for PE. We try to be out whatever the weather so the children can have a good amount of time to run around and play. Obviously if the weather is cold or wet we make sure they are well wrapped up. Sometimes break time is totally ‘free’ and the children are encouraged to play any games their imagination allows, at other times we may bring up ‘props’ such as tricycles, balls, hoops, building blocks etc.



BIRTHDAYS

Birthday cakes or small cupcakes for the class are welcome if they are **nut-free**. Please **no** sweets!

FOOD

A snack (fruit and water) is available for the mid-session break. Staff monitor discreetly to ensure that children choose a sensible quantity and that good manners prevail. Water is always available throughout the day.



UNIFORM

All pupils wear the school uniform supplied by Perry Uniform - details of which are on their website; www.perryuniform.co.uk Please label everything, including socks and shoes. Any hair accessories should only be in red, white or blue. Second hand uniform is available in the Nursery and funds raised are given to the charity of the term.

Children

- ***must*** bring in a cagoule (rain jacket) to keep in school at all times
- ***must*** wear trainers – white with Velcro without logos or flashing lights etc.
- ***must not*** wear nail varnish
- ***must not*** have watches, necklaces, bracelets or earrings
- ***must not*** have key rings, fobs etc. on book bags
- ***must*** bring in a cap in the summer term to keep in school



PHOTOGRAPHY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We always very much welcome and encourage parental support at school events and inevitably this will of course include parents taking photographs and videos.

Nonetheless, we would like to remind parents that if they take photographs which include a child/children other than their own, that these should not be uploaded/circulated on social media.

KNOWING YOUR CHILD

The objective is to know all aspects of your child's development thoroughly. The better we understand each child, the better we can support their learning. Information is shared with parents on a regular basis and parents are always welcome to make an appointment to discuss their child's progress with the Nursery staff.

OUTINGS

As we are lucky enough to have our Nursery in the middle of London we are able to make the most of the fantastic local options we have for trips. Whether it's a picnic in the park, a nature walk round Fulham Palace or going to the museums, we always enjoy our days out! Plenty of staff, good planning and preparation ensure that fun is had by all.

EYFS

Falkner House has met all the necessary conditions to have been given permission by the DfE to take up an exemption from the 2021 Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning and development requirements. Nonetheless, aspects of the EYFS are still used as a guide by the school to help ensure that children learn and develop as well as possible. The safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS still apply.



SCHOOL EVENTS INVOLVING PARENTS

September	4+ Assessment meeting
September/ October	Harvest charity cake bake
Last day before October half term	Open day
December	Christmas show
June/July	Sports day and Pet day
Ongoing	Parents' meetings

Further information and details of the above are posted on the school website in the Calendar. Depending on the topic of the term, we will sometimes ask parents if they would like to come in to speak to the children about a particular topic, or sometimes read a favourite story, or even cook with the children. Any information about parents speaking in Nursery, is posted within the Notices section of the website.



CURRICULUM

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area of learning is about emotional well-being, knowing who you are and where you fit in and feeling good about yourself. It is also about developing respect for others, social competence and a positive disposition to learn. In the classroom we will be working towards independence in all areas. It will help your child enormously if you could encourage this at home as well.

Naturally all these things take time, but begin to encourage independence with:

- Dressing and undressing
- Using the lavatory
- Hanging up coats and clothes
- Putting on and taking off socks and shoes
- Washing and drying of hands
- Using a tissue or handkerchief
- Playing with other children
- Tidying up and sharing



Communication and Language

The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning. Speaking, listening, reading and writing give children the capacity to participate more fully in society. Their understanding of the world is increasing. They express themselves with more and more vocabulary and can share a conversation but also argue their point of view.

Physical Development

Physical development is about improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. It helps children to gain confidence in their ability and to feel healthy and active. Children have sport in the playground and dance in the Big Room.

Activities which can help to develop hand/eye co-ordination are:

- building bricks
- posting boxes with shapes
- threading beads
- jigsaws



Literacy

Reading and sharing books and stories with your child can be an enjoyable experience for both of you and allows children to learn to love books as well as learning how to handle them. Discuss the stories: what happened? What will happen next? It is important to have books available at home and to find out about your local library. Words are all around in a child's world and this is where reading begins e.g. shop signs, traffic signs, labels on tins and packets, magazines and books. Remember too, the old favourites such as nursery rhymes and fairy stories.



Before your child's first day in Nursery, we recommend that you read some of the following:

- *Starting School* by Janet and Allan Ahlberg
- *Pete & Polo's Nursery School Adventure* by Adrian Reynolds
- *The School* by John Burningham
- *Topsy & Tim start school* by Jean and Gareth Adamson

The letters of the alphabet are introduced by their phonetic sounds. We follow the Read, Write, Inc programme by Ruth Miskin. Much repetition is essential at this stage for the children to grasp the concept of phonics and to recognise the letters of the alphabet. Play rhyming games (mat, sat, cat) and *I Spy* with sounds. Find the first and last sounds in words (dog, d-g).

Encourage your child to do lots of drawing on a large scale with chalk, paint and crayon, and let your child choose which hand to use. Before writing and forming letters, it is important that the children have experimented with different forms of media. If your child does gravitate towards using a pencil then please do encourage to use the correct grip (see photo).



Useful home equipment for developing initial writing skills:

- large pieces of paper
- white and chalk boards
- thick crayons and chalks

Mathematics

Confidence and competence in learning to count, sort, match and seek patterns, together with work with numbers, shapes, space and measures, are all part of mathematical development. Maths is everywhere. Daily routines, activities and the environment all offer rich sources of mathematical experiences for young children.

- Point out shapes, colours and patterns

- Count out objects, and add or remove one
- Make patterns with beads
- Compare (bigger / smaller)
- Match and sort toys, shoes etc.
- Predict e.g. how many sandwiches to make for a picnic
- Spot and read numerals on calendars, buses, clocks, etc.



- Play mathematical games like: dominoes, board games (with dice), puzzles, matching games.
- Sing songs involving numbers: *5 little ducks, 10 green bottles, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I caught a fish alive*

Understanding the World

In this area, children are developing the knowledge skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for science, history, geography and design and technology. Each term runs on a topic e.g. the seasons, mini beasts, fairy tales, the world we live in, journeys, ourselves, animals or shapes in art.

Expressive Arts and Design

Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another. In Nursery we provide a rich environment to promote imagination and creation. This includes art, music, dance, role play and imaginative play. Children have music lessons twice a week in the Big Room. These explore a wide range of musical elements including different instruments, rhythm, sounds and singing.



Art is embedded into every aspect of the curriculum and children explore many different mediums such as paint, pastels, clay and charcoal.

Possible Games and Puzzles

- *Ladybirds* – numbers game (Orchard Toys)
- *Whose Home, Whose Baby* – matching games (Galt)
- *My first number pairs* – numbers game (Dorling Kindersley)
- *Who's in the Jungle?* – puzzle encouraging language (Orchard Toys)
- *Insey Winsey Spider* – (Orchard Toys)
- *Tap a Shape* - hammer and nails activity (online retailers)



A few recommended authors:

Edward Ardizzone	Lynley Dodd	Beatrix Potter
Bonny Becker	Julia Donaldson	Michael Rose
Jan Brett	Mick Inkpen	Aesop's Fables
John Burningham	Judith Kerr	Chris Wormell
Nick Butterworth	Michelle Knudsen	Emily Gravett
Rod Campbell	David McKee	Jean de Brunhoff
Eric Carl	Jill Murphy	Anthony Paul

The Falkner House website has a full list of recommended books for Nursery children. It can be found under Nursery School / Parent Information titled “Falkner House Essential Reading – Nursery to Year 2 books for an adult to read to a child”.

Finally, for all the best reasons, starting school can be an exhausting business — emotionally, physically, socially and mentally. Don't be surprised if your child comes home feeling very tired and does not want to talk about their morning or afternoon at school. Give your child a meal, a bath, a cuddle, a story and an early bed!



Term Dates

Please note that the Nursery term dates are marginally different from the Main School and the Nursery may well be closed for some sessions in January 2025 to allow for the 4+ assessments. Dates will be confirmed in due course. Please see the website for further details.



We hope that your child will be very happy and enjoy life in Nursery. If there is any way in which we can help do please telephone the school office.

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