



*"Shining brightly together"*

Welcome to Nursery at Rockcliffe First School

## Nursery Team



**Mrs Duggan**  
Nursery Teacher  
Early Years Lead



**Mrs Ratcliffe**  
Nursery Teacher



**Mrs Burkin**  
Nursery TA

# Welcome to Nursery

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to Nursery 'Sandcastles' Class at Rockcliffe First School.

The information in this booklet is designed to give you a guide as you join our school.

You will find key information about the Nursery day, what your child will be learning, and how we support them as they begin their time within The Early Years Foundation Stage.



## Session Times:

### **Group A** (Mrs Ratcliffe):

Monday and Tuesday 9.00am – 3.15pm

Wednesday 9.00am – 11.30am

### **Group B** (Mrs Duggan):

Wednesday 12.45pm – 3.15pm

Thursday and Friday 9.00am – 3.15pm

### **30 Hours** (Mrs Ratcliffe and Mrs Duggan):

Monday – Thursday 9.00am – 3.15pm

Friday 9.00am – 2.00pm (optional paid top up to extend to 3.15pm)

## Contact Information

Nursery Telephone Number:  
0191 607 6484

Address:

Grafton Road, Whitley Bay,  
NE26 2NR

School Email:

[office@rockcliffeschool.org.uk](mailto:office@rockcliffeschool.org.uk)

Website:

[www.rockcliffeschool.org.uk](http://www.rockcliffeschool.org.uk)

Head Teacher:

Mr Tom Jones

## The Foundation Stage Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development which shape provision in early years settings. All areas of learning are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, building their capacity to learn and to form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Early years settings must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child initiated activities. The activities that we carry out both in and out of Nursery are carefully constructed to ensure the children's progress across all of these areas. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to solve problems and to relate to others.

### Communication and Language

Communication and Language are at the heart of young children's learning. In Nursery, we feel it is vital to provide a range of opportunities for the children to talk and listen; on a one to one basis, in small groups and in whole class situations, in order to develop their speaking, listening, attention and understanding. This involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment and by engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems to provide them with the opportunities to use and embed words in a range of contexts. Children are helped to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations; through conversation, storytelling and role play. Through support, modelling and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

## Personal, Social and Emotional Development

At Rockcliffe Nursery we feel very strongly that successful personal, social and emotional development is vital if children are to lead happy and healthy lives and succeed in other areas of learning.

We want your child to feel safe, secure and valued, so that they may develop confidence, independence and self-belief. We shall help them establish effective relationships with their peers so that they may become sensitive to the needs and feelings of others and learn to work together in a relaxed, supportive atmosphere.



## Physical Development

Physical Development is vital for children's overall development, enabling them to lead happy, healthy and active lives. Children join Nursery with a wide range of physical skills and we provide daily opportunities, both indoors and outdoors, for them to practise existing skills and develop new ones.

Through active play, children develop their core strength, balance, co-ordination, stability, spatial awareness and agility. These gross motor skills provide the foundation for healthy bodies, confidence and social and emotional well-being.

Children are also encouraged to develop their fine motor skills through activities such as small world play, puzzles, arts and crafts and the use of a range of tools and equipment. These experiences help to build hand-eye co-ordination, control and confidence, supporting children's independence and early writing development.



## Literacy

At Rockcliffe, we promote a lifelong love of reading. Children and adults share and enjoy books together daily, helping to develop language, listening skills and vocabulary through stories, rhymes and meaningful conversations.

Children are given opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities that support early reading skills. We also encourage children to experiment with mark making and early writing in a variety of meaningful ways, both indoors and outdoors, and on a range of scales. Children have access to a rich variety of reading materials, including books, poems and other texts, designed to spark curiosity, imagination and a love of literacy.



## Maths

Children will develop positive attitudes and interests in maths, looking for patterns and relationships, spotting connections and having a go. We aim to develop a strong grounding in numbers to excel mathematically. Overtime they will develop a deep understanding of numbers to 10 and the relationships between them. Children will also develop their use of spatial reasoning skills across all areas of maths including Shape, Space & Measures.

A range of opportunities such as water play, singing, role play, puppets, ring games, outdoor play and cooking are all used to help develop mathematical understanding and skills such as problem solving, counting, pattern, sorting, matching, sequencing, shape and number recognition.

## Understanding the World

'Understanding the World' covers the children's scientific, geographical and historical learning. We ensure that all children are given the opportunity to experience activities that encourage exploration, observation and discussion. Working outdoors is a vital part of the Foundation Stage curriculum, therefore the children are offered the opportunity to work outside most days. We are very proud of our Nursery garden, where we encourage the children to 'sow, grow, cook and eat' their own produce. Regular crops include potatoes, peas or beans, strawberries and rhubarb.



## Beach School

Living on such a beautiful coastline, we make the most of our local area through regular Beach School sessions at Cullercoats Beach, Jakey's Beach and Browns Bay. These sessions encourage children to explore their environment, develop curiosity, ask questions and describe what they see around them. Through hands-on experiences, children begin to notice changes in the natural world and build an appreciation of their local coastline.

The focus of each visit is led by the children's interests, imagination and discoveries.



## Expressive Art and Design

Creative development is an integral part of our Nursery curriculum. Children have daily access to a wide range of experiences designed to develop their imagination, creativity and self-expression. Through activities such as painting, printing, collage, malleable materials, junk modelling, dance, drama, singing and storytelling, children are encouraged to explore colour, texture, shape, sound and movement in both two and three dimensions.

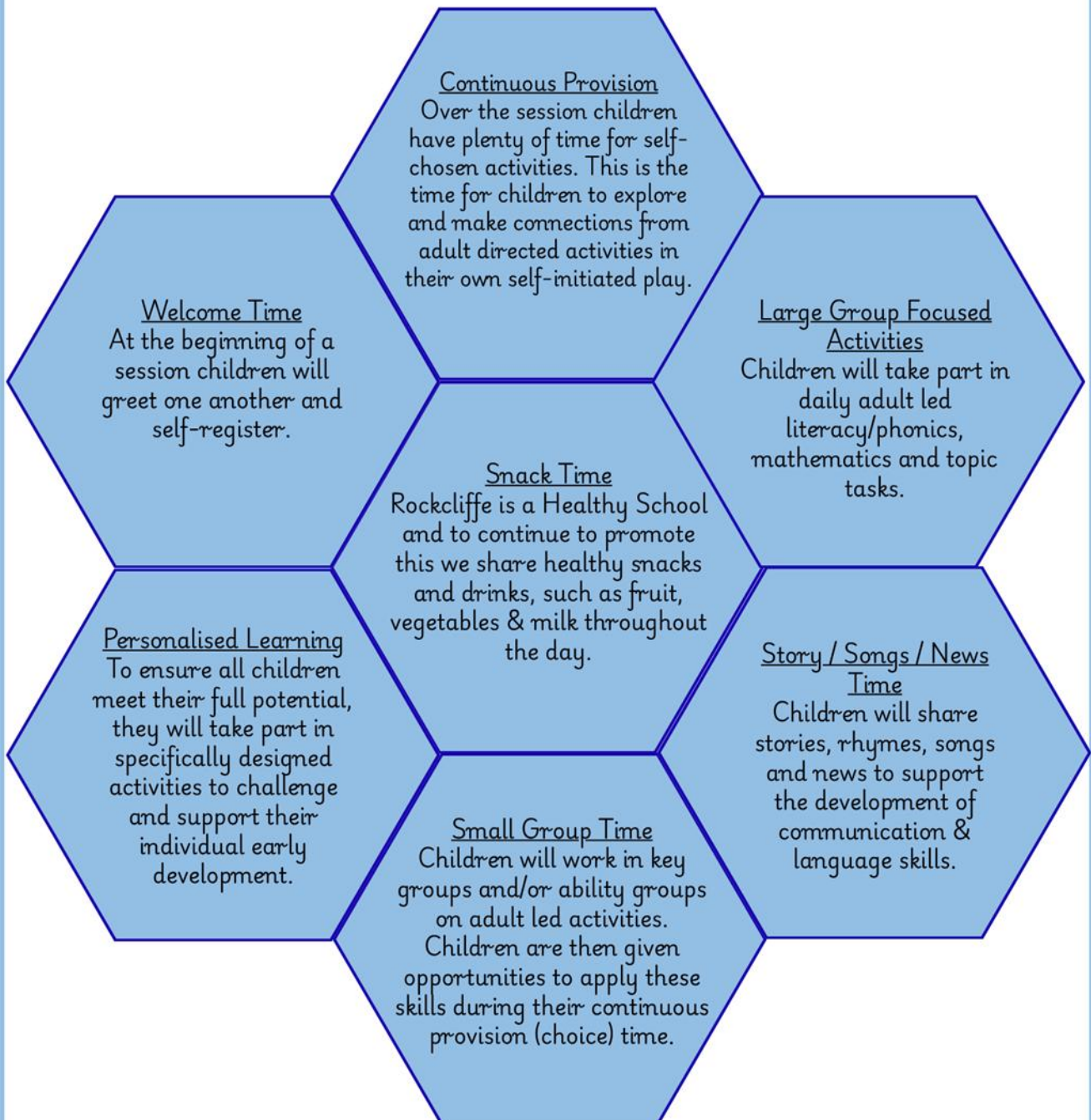
We value the creative process as much as the finished outcome and encourage children to experiment, take risks and develop their own ideas and interests.

Whenever possible, we enrich our creative experiences by working with local artists and visitors. In the past, children have collaborated with performance artists, scientists, poets, dancers, visual artists and musicians.



## What does my day look like in Nursery?

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, your child will be supported in making progress towards 'The Early Years Learning Goals' (ELGs). In order to make as much progress as possible, your child will take part in a combination of child led and adult led activities.



## The Nursery Day

Nursery gate will open at **8.55am** each day ready for **Nursery to start at 9.00am** and at **12.40pm on Wednesdays for Group B children.**

At the beginning of each session the Nursery children are greeted at the gate by a member of Nursery staff. The children then stand on the ramp until everyone has been safely admitted through the main gate before proceeding into the cloakroom to begin their session.

We encourage families to arrive as close to the start time as possible so that sessions can begin promptly. Children are encouraged to develop independence within Nursery routines, including hanging up their coat and bag, and completing their self-registration.

If you arrive after the session start time, please use the Nursery intercom to let staff know you have arrived. This is situated on the left-hand side of the main electronic gate.

In order to make home time as calm as possible, we open the door five minutes before the end of each session. Adults are invited into the Nursery to collect their child at the end of the session. The Nursery gate will open at **3.10pm** each day and **11.25am on Wednesdays for Group A children.** This helps to ease congestion and stagger leaving times.

To enable this to happen smoothly, the children need to be seated on the carpet ready for collection. Therefore, it is vital that all children are collected by 3.15pm each day and 11.30am on Wednesdays at the latest, to prevent them from waiting longer than necessary. This can be very distressing for some children, particularly at the beginning of the year.

## What do I need...

In Nursery, children learn through hands-on experiences, which can sometimes be messy! We encourage children to wear aprons where necessary but they may feel distressed if they think they have spoiled good clothing, so please do not send your child to Nursery in special clothes. As we also spend lots of time outside so it is helpful if all children have a pair of wellies. Wellies should be clearly named and can be left on the shelves in the cloakroom. Children also need to bring a spare set of suitable clothing in a bag each day, this includes spare socks and underwear.

### What I need to bring each day...

- A suitable coat
- A bag containing spare clothes, underwear and socks
- A named packed lunch and water bottle (more information on the next page)



## Packed Lunches

Children will need to bring a healthy packed lunch for each full day session they attend, along with a small water bottle (this must only contain water). Please ensure that all lunch boxes and bottles are clearly named.

We are a nut free school to keep our children safe who have allergies. Please ensure that all packed lunches contain nut free items. Please be mindful of items such as Nutella, peanut butter products and some cereal or snack bars, including certain Nakd bars.

30-hour children will require a packed lunch every day. Group A children will need a packed lunch on Mondays and Tuesdays, and Group B children on Thursdays and Fridays.

Lunch time is a meaningful and important part of our Nursery routine. It provides valuable opportunities for children to develop independence, social skills and positive eating habits within a calm and supportive environment.

## Milk and Snack

All Nursery children are entitled to free school milk (you must register via the Cool Milk website [www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com)). Each day, as a snack, all children are given a piece of fruit or a vegetable.

We regularly cook and bake bread in Nursery so children experience a wide range of food and cooking practices.

## Assessment

In EYFS, assessment is carried out daily, with practitioners playing alongside children and making regular observations of what they do and say. Assessments may include photographs, observations, annotated pieces of work and practitioners' knowledge of each child's individual progress. This information is used to inform future planning and learning opportunities.

We keep relevant evidence in individual online learning journals and share these with parents through the Seesaw app. Observations and assessments are shared regularly via Seesaw, as well as during Parents' Evenings, which are held in the autumn and spring terms.

Written reports are prepared for parents and your child's Reception teacher in the summer term to support a smooth transition to school.

## Absence

If your child is unwell, please contact the school office on 0191 607 6573 on the first day of absence. In cases of sickness or diarrhoea, children should remain at home for 48 hours after their last episode before returning to Nursery. This helps to reduce the spread of infection and protect the health of all children and staff.

## Communication

Letters and other school communications are shared with families via email and the School Gateway app. You will be able to download the School Gateway app once your child has started with us in September as it provides the easiest way to stay up to date with school news and information. The app can also be used to make payments for trips and other school activities.

Please follow us on Facebook and Twitter to keep up to date with news and events.

## Working Together

We believe that strong relationships between home and Nursery are essential in helping children feel happy, secure and ready to learn. If you ever have any worries or concerns, no matter how small they may seem, please speak to a member of the Nursery team. We are always happy to listen and work together to support your child and family.

Open communication is very important to us and we encourage parents and carers to share any information that may help us to support their child's wellbeing, learning and development.

**We hope this booklet has been useful in building a picture of life in Nursery at Rockcliffe First School. All of the Early Years staff very much look forward to working with you and your child and aim to make this transition into Nursery as smooth as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact school and speak to a member of the Nursery team if you have any further questions.**

