

Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School Early Years Curriculum Statement

Parent and Child group

For ages 0-3

Our Parent and Child group is a small, friendly group that welcomes parents, grandparents and carers with babies and younger children.

This is a chance for you to relax and chat in a peaceful, calm environment while your child explores playing with newfound friends, happy knowing you are close at hand. As soon as you walk in you'll notice the warm atmosphere and the lack of plastic toys! It's a bit different from other groups and we try to keep it that way with toys crafted from wood and other natural materials.

Sessions are held on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, 1.40 to 3.15 pm – £5.00 per session (includes free tea/coffee for adults and healthy snacks for the children). The first 2 sessions are free. All sessions are led by an experienced Early Years teacher.

Each session follows a similar structure of play, craft activity (for adults too!), ring time (a time to gather in a circle and sing songs, move and play games), tidying up and snack time. Snack time in the morning might be something wholesome such as homemade soup and bread, while in the afternoon there will be fruit and rice cakes for any children who want them. When the weather permits there is also the chance to play outside and explore Elmfield's beautiful grounds.

The clear rhythm in both the morning and afternoon sessions provides the children with a sense of reassurance and security. It also supports the adults in the group. The rhythm we establish continues into our Nursery and Kindergarten.

The group is also an opportunity for you to find out more about Steiner education if you are interested.

If you would like to come along all you need to do is call the School Office on 01384 394633, let them know which sessions you are interested in and we will call you back to confirm. When you come for the first time simply go through the double red doors, ring the bell outside the Reception Office and they will be able to show you how find us. We look forward to seeing you very soon!

For ages 3-4

For the young child, play is work

Our Nursery welcomes children between the ages of 3 and 4. Sessions are held between 8.40am and 12.40pm, Monday to Friday during term time.

There is a strong sense of community within the Early Years with plenty of opportunity for the older and younger children to work and play together under the gentle and guiding presence of the teacher.

Time to reflect

At Elmfield we provide:

Time for free play

Seasonal materials taken directly from nature and natural toys

Traditional games and songs such as ring time and skipping

Baking, gardening, weaving, cooking, food preparation, painting, modelling

Story time

Beautiful natural gardens, play areas and classrooms

An age appropriate curriculum

Solid foundations for social, literacy and numeracy skills, and technical and scientific knowledge

An atmosphere of warmth, love and security

A secure platform for formal learning when they reach school

Activities appropriate for the seasons of the year

At Elmfield children can grow up at their own pace

We allow time for real childhood, with an age appropriate curriculum which engages the young child's innate drive for learning through imitation, rhythms and exploration.

We respect the child as a developing human being

In the nursery and kindergarten we take time to play both in and out of doors, taking full advantage of Elmfield's beautiful grounds. Through the children's imaginative play as well as having a great time they also learn to co-operate with others and develop empathy and social responsibility.

We believe that creative activity helps to develop skills for life

A strong sense of rhythm runs through the week and the years incorporating all the regular activities and creative play alongside ring time and daily storytelling or puppet shows. We follow the seasons of the year in our songs, outdoor play and celebrations of the festivals, such as Michaelmas and Harvest, Advent, Easter, Whitsun and Midsummer. Ring-time and sharing a special story brings a sense of togetherness and the opportunity to enjoy the rich variety of songs, poems, fairy and folk tales.

Kindergarten

For ages 4-6

We offer your child a home-like environment where they are able to enjoy playing and learning at their own pace.

Elmfield Kindergarten welcomes children between the ages of 4 and 6. For younger children we also offer a Nursery (3 to 4) and a Parent and Child group (0-3).

In today's hurried modern world we believe it's important that children are allowed to develop at their own speed, free from unnecessary pressures and "hot-housing". We work at a much gentler pace than many mainstream establishments, with an age appropriate curriculum which engages the young child's natural love of learning through imitation, rhythms and exploration.

Our gentle, caring teachers inspire and support the children through this early developmental stage. They encourage the children to be children, rather than rushing them through their childhood. Your child will be able to grow and develop in the secure and loving environment that Elmfield provides, while learning to appreciate the simple routines and rhythms of life.

At Elmfield we provide:

An atmosphere of warmth, love and security

Time for lots of free play both indoors and outdoors

Wooden toys, handmade dolls and seasonal materials taken directly from nature

Baking, gardening, weaving, cooking, food preparation, painting, and modelling

Small class sizes which build self-confidence and trust

Traditional games, songs and story time

An age appropriate curriculum

Activities appropriate for the seasons of the year

Outdoor learning through various activities

Beautiful natural gardens, play areas and classrooms

A secure platform for formal learning when they reach school

An ideal environment for the development of emotional intelligence, self-esteem and positive behaviour

Solid foundations for social, literacy and numeracy skills, and technical and scientific knowledge

There is a strong sense of community within the Kindergarten

We provide plenty of opportunity for the older and younger children to work and play together under the patient and guiding presence of the teacher. The children develop strong social skills and good manners whilst at the same time each child's individuality is encouraged.

The regular routine puts the children at ease

Our morning begins at 8.40am and runs until 12.30pm (with some afternoons for those in the pre-Class 1 year). Afternoon Care is available for those children not able to go home at lunchtime and

runs until 3.15. There is also an after-school club for further care if required, where a member of the Early Years team is present, that runs until 5.15.

The day starts with an engaging group activity then a free play session. This is followed by a range of structured activities such as arts and crafts, preparing a healthy snack such as soup or bread, and ring-time (a time to gather in a circle and sing songs, move and play games). Outside time is for playing, climbing, running, and experiencing the changing seasons and elements. Story time is a quiet moment for listening to a rich variety of fairy tales, songs, poems, and folk tales.

A strong sense of rhythm runs through the week and the years incorporating all the regular activities and creative play. We follow the seasons of the year in our songs, outdoor play and celebrations of the festivals such as Harvest, Advent, Easter, and Midsummer. We also welcome the sharing of further festivals important to families from a variety of faiths and cultures who come to the School.

The children get plenty of fresh air and time to play

Outdoor play and activities are encouraged throughout the year and we aim to give the children as much fresh air as possible. Except in the most extreme conditions your child will get to play outside every day. The playground provides opportunities to climb, swing and play in the sand; the grassy areas are ideal for running free; and the wildlife area and curriculum garden are beautiful spaces to play and learn.

Through all these activities our aim is for the children to develop imaginative qualities and respect for others that will guide and nourish them throughout their lives and provide a strong foundation for their personal, social and intellectual development. Through creative play and the diverse activities in Kindergarten the children learn skills that will later enable them to be practical, to take initiative, and seek responsibility.

The right foundations are being laid

The Kindergarten and the Nursery are where the seeds are planted for a lifelong love of learning. Your child's innate qualities are encouraged and allowed to blossom.

The children are part of a group where they are actively encouraged to do things together, to share, to help each other and so develop social skills. Combined with the loving care and experience of the kindergarten teachers, children grow through gentle nurturing, giving them the best possible start in life.