



Little Crackers Nursery

An independent nursery for 2-4 year olds

Information booklet 2023-24



Governing Body

Chair of Trustees	Mrs Liz Griffin, BSc, PGCE, CTC
Trustees	<p>Jatinder Birdi</p> <p>John Fisher</p> <p>Mrs Barbara Forster, Cert Ed</p> <p>Miss Shannon Fry, BA, APM*</p> <p>Richard Harcourt, MBA</p> <p>Charlie Jenkinson, BA, CIPS, MILT</p> <p>Rowland Johnson, BCom, MSocSc</p> <p>Mrs Helen Knight, BA, PGCE, MA, NPQH</p> <p>Robert Lee, LLB</p> <p>Kieron Shaw, MBE, MSc, FCIS</p> <p>Commodore Bernard Warner</p>

* *Old Princethorpeian*

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Introduction

The Princethorpe Foundation

The Princethorpe Foundation welcomes children of all denominations and provides co-educational, independent day schooling with a strong Christian ethos. We support and nurture children from age two to eighteen years, through Little Crackers Nursery, Crackley Hall School, Crescent School and Princethorpe College.

Ethos

Our schools pride themselves on providing a caring, stimulating environment in which children's individual needs can be met and their talents, confidence and self-esteem developed. We aim to encourage a lifelong love of learning and an understanding of moral values and to put young people on the road to happy and fulfilled lives.

Little Crackers Nursery

At Little Crackers we believe it is never too early to start on an exciting journey into learning. Backing onto beautiful woodland our light and natural nursery rooms, at the heart of Crackley Hall School, give children a blank canvas to experiment, create, explore and learn.

Supported by our friendly, caring Nursery Team and qualified Early Years Teachers, our Dormice (2s), Hedgehogs (3s) and Badgers (Pre-school) enjoy a wide variety of ever-changing activities.

The nursery is based in two rooms and benefits from having access to three outdoor spaces, our covered play area at the front of school, our Garden Room and our very own wood. The rooms reflect the different areas of the curriculum and children are able to explore many different activities from mathematical concepts and early writing skills to painting, scissor skills, sand and water and role play.

Our children also enjoy trying new activities at an early age including music, yoga, PE, Forest School and French lessons, all taught by specialist teachers.

The nursery and Crackley Hall School, along with Princethorpe College, and the Crescent School in Bilton Rugby, now form The Princethorpe Foundation, a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

The Nursery was last inspected by the ISI in June 2022 as part of a whole school compliance inspection of Crackley Hall School. At the end of the thorough two-day inspection the inspectors concluded, "The school meets the standards and no further action is required as a result of this inspection."

In their report inspectors highlighted, "The teaching enables pupils to make good progress", "Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils", and "Leaders and managers demonstrate good skills and knowledge".

Opening weeks and hours

The nursery is open from 7.45am until 6.00pm Monday to Friday. Term time only and year round (51 week) places are available. Nursery closes for one week over the Christmas/New Year holidays.

Morning session	7.45am – 12.45pm	free entitlement 8.15am-11.15am
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or

Afternoon session	1.00pm – 6.00pm	free entitlement 12.30pm-3.30pm
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Short Day 7.45am - 4.00pm

Long Day 7.45am – 6.00pm

Staff



Robert Duigan
Headmaster

I attended an all boys' Catholic School in South Africa, where I was actively involved in all areas of school life, from sport through to charitable work. While

at university in Port Elizabeth, I assumed various leadership roles at the university itself and in the local community.

At the end of my tertiary education, I underwent 18 months' compulsory national service, attaining the rank of First Lieutenant – basic training and officers' course were great at the time and I enjoyed my stint in the army, but was pleased when it was finished!

After my first teaching post in a large state school, I accepted a post as Head of Sport at St Dominic's Priory Catholic School, an established co-educational independent school of 425 pupils. I taught all subjects across the curriculum and coached cricket and football.

I was appointed Principal of St Dominic's in January 1997 and held this position until my emigration to the United Kingdom in January 2002. During this time, I was convener of selectors and coach of our provincial (county) football and cricket teams and served on the committees of both the Primary Schools' Football and Cricket Associations.

On emigrating, I accepted a post as a class teacher at St Columba's Preparatory School in St Albans and felt it a privilege to be appointed Headmaster at St Teresa's Catholic Independent School in Princes Risborough in 2003.

I see the benefits of personalised learning and am encouraged by the appropriate differentiation in our lessons. We all learn differently and are at different levels in our educational (and life) journey. This must be borne in mind at all times as we aim to help each child reach their goals.

The self-esteem of every child is so important to their development and I place every emphasis on knowing the individual and ensuring that they feel a sense of worth as one of God's children.

'Right relationships' are essential in any walk of life, particularly so in a school – they form the basis of any achievement and well-being.

I see open and clear communication as crucial in this regard. We are here for the pupils. The support of school for home and vice versa is essential in their development.

I would argue that one of the most important tasks of any Head Teacher is to appoint excellent members of staff – those capable of, and willing to, fulfil the mission – academic excellence, personal and spiritual growth and to nurture polite, confident and articulate children who are ready to become leaders in their own right and who will be able to contribute to the future of all. One cannot underestimate the value of a good teacher. I believe that Crackley Hall is blessed with very good members of staff.

I love the outdoors, nature and all forms of sport – especially cricket, rugby and football. I play golf and enjoy the gym (when time allows).

I am a keen reader, enjoy amateur photography and appreciate just about all forms of music – listening to it, that is, as I am not a very capable musician at all!

My family are very important to me and I like travelling, meeting people and learning about other cultures and ways of life. I have thoroughly enjoyed twelve busy and happy years at Crackley Hall and continue to look forward to welcoming all visitors to our successful and high achieving school where all pupils are encouraged 'to be the best that they can be'. I am confident that you will be impressed by the warm and dynamic environment that is Crackley Hall and Little Crackers Nursery.



Mrs Susan Glen-Roots **Early Years Foundation** **Stage and KS1**

I qualified from Kingston University in 1993 with an education degree in English and Drama. Having taught in primary schools in London,

Warwickshire and Solihull, I have gained a wide range of experience working in deprived areas, faith schools and large county schools, plus the independent sector.

I have lengthy senior leadership experience within the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, alongside a curriculum specialism in Literacy and Phonics. More recently I have gained a Diploma in 'Counselling Skills' and regularly use these skills to help support children and their families within a school setting.

I joined Crackley Hall School as Assistant Head in September 2017. My passion is to provide a high-quality education for all children, whilst allowing for their individual needs. Learning should be motivating, interesting and exciting and should also provide important life skills. Crackley Hall certainly has all of these elements in abundance!

Outside of school I am mum to three children, one of whom attends Princethorpe College. We are a musical family, playing the acoustic and electric guitar, the violin, flute, the violin, ukulele, piano and drums between us. As well as making music, we also spend time outdoors with our family dogs, Mollie and Bailey, and enjoy skiing and snowboarding in the winter. Life is never dull in the Glen-Roots household!



Emma Birch **Nursery Manager**

From an early age I always had a keen interest in working with young children. After leaving secondary school in 2008 I attended Warwickshire College to do

a Level 2 qualification in Childcare, as part of this course I completed a placement at The Rugby Montessori Nursery School, based on the Bilton Grange School site. Once I gained my qualification, I was delighted to be offered a permanent position at the nursery school in 2009.

I stayed at Rugby Montessori for 14 happy years, over the course of my time there I gained a wide variety of skills and experience and secured several promotions, firstly to Room Leader, then Manager of the Baby Nursery, and finally Manager of the whole setting in 2019, responsible for some 80 children from babies to pre-school and 30 members of staff.

When the setting closed in 2022, I decided to take a break and became a private nanny over the summer months. Following on from that, I took a job teaching secondary school children in an alternative provision for vulnerable children. I supported many different subjects there and led the Childcare NCFE qualification for students in Years 10 and 11. During my time there, I realised that Early Years is definitely where my heart is and so decided to explore my options again, which led me to Little Crackers Nursery.

I was excited to take up the role of Nursery Manager and to lead the Little Crackers Nursery Team. From the moment I entered the building on my interview day, I knew that this would be a fantastic place to work, and I am enjoying this new adventure.



Mrs Clare Bird
Deputy Nursery Manager

I qualified with an NNEB in 1985 and from doing my training knew I wanted to work in a nursery environment. Initially I did some live in nanny work,

to gain experience, which took me to London for a while. On getting engaged I moved back to Warwickshire and got a job at the Child Development Centre at Warwick Hospital, working with professionals from the area of Health and Education, pre-school children with all types of developmental delay or illness and their parents.

We assessed the children over a couple of weeks, during the mornings and on many occasions the parents would have a diagnosis for their child's condition for the first time. In the afternoons I ran short play sessions for small groups of these children.

From 1990 -1994 I had my own three children. In 1994 I became a deputy manager of Warwickshire College Nursery where I later became Nursery Manager. In 2006 it was time for a change and a new challenge and I joined Little Crackers Nursery as the Nursery Manager.

In September 2007 I gained my NVQ4 in Early Years Care and Education (Management in the Early Years Setting).

We have seen the nursery grow in numbers and the introduction of 2-year olds to our setting and nursery teachers have added a new dimension to our learning. Nursery has flourished through many changes in the Early Years curriculum.

My three children are all grown up now, with my youngest still living at home. My two grandchildren keep me on my toes and my greatest pleasures are spending time with my family and a little quiet time for myself with a good book and my feet up.



Milly Allen
Teacher

I qualified from Warwick University in 2002 with a BA (Hons) in Primary Education, with a specialism in Science. Since then, I have mainly taught in Reception, but I

have experience teaching in all year groups from Nursery to Year 6. Throughout my career I have held a variety of senior leadership and management positions including EYFS manager, and as such, I consider myself to be an experienced early years teacher and this is where my passion lies. I love being part of a child's first few years in education, seeing their development from the first day to their last.

I started at Crackley Hall school in January 2022 teaching in Reception and I was a History lead across the school, before moving to teach in Nursery. I love being part of the Crackley family, everyone has been so welcoming and friendly, being part of a team that puts the children in the centre of everything we do. I endeavour to make my lessons fun and engaging for all pupils; I want every child to leave my class with a love of learning, a thirst for knowledge and the self-belief to reach their potential.

I live with my husband, Neil, and our two children: Heather and Reuben both of whom attend Princethorpe. We are a full household, having two dogs and four cats, plus my in-laws who also live with us! We are fortunate to have nine acres of mixed woodland and a meadow attached to our house, and this land keeps me, and my family occupied during the weekends and holidays. Whether it is chopping firewood, strimming nettles, harvesting fruit, or making jam, there is always something that needs to be done whatever the season. We are keen campers and I always look forward to our annual trip to France each summer.



Nicola Whitehurst
Teacher

I studied at Christ's and Notre Dame College, graduating from Liverpool University in 1991 with a BEd Honours degree and a Catholic Teacher's

Certificate. My journey began far from city life, as an Infant teacher in rural Suffolk. I was then invited to join a team tasked with introducing French across Key Stage 2 in every primary school upon the Isle of Man. I absolutely loved living by the sea and enjoyed the wild terrain and the vagaries of the Manx weather. However, I missed my family and so eventually decided to return to mainland Britain, to lead literacy at an infant school in Solihull.

I then took a break from teaching whilst I brought up my own young children. During this time, I became involved in animal husbandry, supporting my parents in their livestock business. I also earned a qualification in Apiculture and worked for my local Beekeeping Association, mentoring new members and lecturing regularly at Stoneleigh Agricultural Centre. However, I was inevitably drawn back to classroom teaching and decided to further my skills base with a post at a Special Needs School in Coventry, before returning to mainstream education, to a Catholic school in Leamington where I taught across Nursery, Reception and Year 1, and as a Key Stage 2 French Teacher.

I was then offered the opportunity to teach at Crackley Hall. I had attended the senior school at the original St Joseph's Convent, so it feels very special to teach where I was once a past pupil. I am passionate about the acquisition of sound Literacy and Numeracy skills, underpinned by excellent Pastoral provision.



Mrs Verity Clark
Forest School Practitioner

I love teaching! A wonderful, varied and exciting career that brings new challenges every day.

Since qualifying in 2004, I have taught in every year group from Reception to Year 6 in a variety of schools, both in Warwickshire and Northamptonshire.

In my degree, I specialised in Art and I have a studio at home on the farm where I design prints and paint and make glazed ceramics. My latest focus is animal realism using coloured pencils.

I am very interested in the philosophy of Forest Schools, I think it enables us as teachers to 'catch' and empower some of the children who may otherwise slip through the net in mainstream schools. I enjoy leading Forest School at Crackley Hall. Its ethos is of child led learning and we can glean much from this, not only by introducing more play into the curriculum, but also by quiet observing. If we can understand what drives each child to learn, then we can fuel their fire by planning for their interests. I believe that a creative curriculum makes for more meaningful learning and more motivated, independent learners.



Sarah Francis
Early Years Practitioner

I began working with young people as a drama and performing arts workshop leader for a local theatre company. I then developed my own interest as a

gymnast to coach 4-11 year olds gymnastics with Coventry Olympic Gymnastics Club. Prior to starting my degree, I spent two years at a pre-school setting in Leamington Spa.

In 2004 I qualified as a Primary Teacher from Warwick University. I started my teaching career in Key Stage 2. However, since then I have gone into specialising in Years 1 and 2 becoming Key Stage 1 Phase Leader. I have led curriculum subjects in PE and Art, leading whole school projects and igniting children's interests in these subjects.

In the build up to the London Olympic Games, I was given the opportunity to become Warwickshire School Sports Advisor, assisting local primary schools to generate sports and well-being opportunities, as well as organising a trip to the Olympic grounds.

I have continued to maintain my own personal enjoyment from sport and enjoy offering opportunities for children to enjoy embracing different activities.

I have since welcomed the opportunity to become part of the Early Years team at Little Crackers and continue to inspire children's interests in the different areas of learning and development. I also get to work with a fantastic group of 'little crackers'!



Lucy Hutchinson
Early Years Practitioner

I began my career in childcare when I was 19, as an apprentice at a nursery in Nuneaton. During my time there, I completed my Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications

as an Early Years educator. Soon after becoming qualified, I moved to Kenilworth where I accepted my first job as a qualified nursery assistant, in a local nursery.

In January 2023 I was fortunate to be offered a position at Little Crackers. The team are extremely supportive and it is wonderful to see children thrive here every day. I hope that my career here continues to grow.



Mary O'Brien
Early Years Practitioner
and Stay 'n' Play

I first joined the Crackley Hall family as a parent helper in 2000 - attending school trips, helping in the dining hall, taking photos and supporting

sports events, to name a few! Crackley Hall was very much the centre of our lives for my family during these years.

I am married to Mike and have two boys Harry and Josh. They both attended Crackley Hall and Princethorpe College, before continuing on to university; Harry to Portsmouth and Josh to Cardiff, graduating with degrees in BSc Sport and Exercise.

Mike and I are originally from Skibbereen Co. Cork, which is as far south as you can go in Ireland!

I moved to Letterkenny Co. Donegal, where we were later married. I worked at the Bank of Ireland in both Derry N. Ireland and Dublin branches.

In 2005 I joined the Nursery team as an Early Years Practitioner, gaining my Level 2 and 3 in Early Years Education.

In 2014 I semi-retired and became bank staff for Nursery as well as partnering Gail Buswell in running the two toddler groups associated with Crackley Hall; Stay 'n' Play at St. Francis on a Monday and Stay 'n' Play at Crackley Hall on Wednesdays.

In my spare time I practise Iyengar yoga twice a week and have added 2 HIIT sessions to my weekly exercise! I love to crochet and bake and attend rugby matches to watch my boys play.



Susan Olden
Teacher of Music

I am the longest serving member of staff at Crackley having been originally Head of Music at the then St Joseph's. I seem unable to get away from

the school as I was also a pupil here for five years.

Music has always been my main interest and passion from the age of five and after studying music for a number of years I went on to gain my LRAM, ARCM, LLCM (TD) and AMus TCL. At Crackley I am responsible for music throughout the school as well as supporting a number of peripatetic staff.

In addition to this, I am an examiner for the London College of Music. I examine for them three times a year and thoroughly enjoy doing this work in the school holidays.



Dolores Simmonds

Stay 'n' Play Assistant

My first association with Crackley Hall was in 1981 when my daughter started in the senior school, which was at that time called St Joseph's Convent School. My

youngest daughter started a few years later in the junior school. During their time there I spent several years on the PTA and helping out in many different ways with events and trips. Many years later my granddaughter started in Reception and in the years that followed, was joined by her sisters and cousins.

In 1996 I started working as a part time teaching assistant, before taking up the role of Chaplaincy Assistant in more recent years. I also help in a voluntary capacity in our Stay 'n' Play toddler groups and listening to children read.

In the near 40 years of my time at Crackley Hall, I can truly say I have enjoyed every minute. I am full of admiration for all that this school represents. Each child is treated with respect and dignity by all the staff and children are taught to respect and be kind to each other.



Louise Walters

Early Years Practitioner

I started my career in advertising after gaining a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Graphic Design at Loughborough University.

I began working in Digbeth, Birmingham, gaining experience as an Apple Mac Artworker, but with the long hours and intense deadlines I decided to leave so that I could spend more time at home with my daughter, who is now off to university to study Law.

Whilst pregnant with my son, who is now 10, I embarked upon a new, more family friendly, career path as a Teaching Assistant. I gained my Level 2 Teaching Assistant qualification, and then my Level 3.

In 2014, I was offered a job as an Early Years Practitioner and I began my Level 2 and 3 Early Years Children and Workforce qualification at Hampton in Arden Pre-school, where my son attended. It was a small pre-school that was open for three hours a morning, I knew the staff who worked there and I worked there for eight years. I thoroughly enjoyed my time there, watching the children's confidence grow and their friendships develop, whilst forming positive relationships with all the staff and parents.

As my children have started to grow up, I felt it was time to move on to a setting that could offer me more hours and further my career development, and luckily for me the perfect job came available at Crackley Hall. I am very much looking forward to starting my new journey at Crackley Hall School and can't wait to be able to share my enthusiasm, friendliness, care and creativity with the wonderful team at Little Crackers.

Admissions



If you are interested in your child attending Little Crackers, we would recommend that you contact Mrs Jenny Vaughan, our Registrar, who will talk to you about your chosen sessions and then make an appointment for you and your child to meet with a senior member of the Nursery Team. Alternatively, come to one of our regular Open Events or join us at our Stay 'n' Play toddler group, which takes place on Wednesdays in term-time from 10.30am to 11.45am, to get a feel for the Nursery and chat with the staff informally.

We take children from when they turn two-years old and advise parents to apply in good time, at least a year in advance for places in our youngest Dormice room.

To secure a place, simply complete a Registration Form with your required sessions and preferred start date and return this with the child's birth certificate and accompanying fee of £50 to the Registrar.

You will then receive confirmation in writing that we can offer a nursery place with an acceptance form for you to sign. If the sessions you require are not available your fee will be returned.

Little Crackers Nursery at Crackley Hall School is registered for 52 children. A waiting list for places is kept and as places become available, we offer them to prospective parents/carers. Prior to starting, you and your child can attend a number of short settling in sessions, typically two or three, where you will meet your child's key person who will then be able to confirm a start date. Some children take longer to settle than others and through discussion with parents, staff will arrange as many settling in visits as necessary for each child.

All parents are required to complete the admissions paperwork before their child can be left with us.

We welcome all children and aim to respond appropriately to each child's background and interests including children with special requirements.

For further information regarding Admissions to the nursery please contact **Mrs Jenny Vaughan** our Registrar on 01926 514410 or email admissions@littlecrackers.co.uk



Stay'n'Play

Little Crackers Stay 'n' Play Group

Throughout the year in term time Little Crackers hosts a weekly Stay 'n' Play session, which includes fun activities for the children (aged 0 to 4 years-old) and a chance for parents to meet and chat.

The sessions usually take place in the nursery rooms or in the hall on Wednesday mornings at Crackley Hall School from 10.30am until 11.45am. (Term time only) and cost £2.00 per family, including refreshments.

Visiting activity providers are scheduled approximately once a month featuring age appropriate activities including music, craft, language development, health and well being. Highlights of the year include our Teddy Bears' Picnic in the summer and Christmas Party with a visit from a very special person in December.



Fees

Registration fee - £50.00 (non refundable)

Fees to end of August 2024

All year

Morning session – snack and lunch included	7.45am - 12.45pm	£39.75
Afternoon session – snack and tea included	1.00pm - 6.00pm	£39.75
Short day – 2 snacks and lunch included	7.45am - 4.00pm	£55.90
Full day – 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	7.45am - 6.00pm	£64.50
Weekly charges		
Full time – short day – 2 snacks and lunch included	7.45am - 4.00pm	£268.00
Full time – all day – 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	7.45am - 6.00pm	£300.00

Term time only

Morning session – snack and lunch included	7.45am - 12.45pm	£41.90
Afternoon session – snack and tea included	1.00pm - 6.00pm	£41.90
Short day – 2 snacks and lunch included	7.45am - 4.00pm	£58.00
Full day – 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	7.45am - 6.00pm	£65.50
Weekly charges		
Full time – short day – 2 snacks and lunch included	7.45am - 4.00pm	£279.00
Full time – all day – 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	7.45am - 6.00pm	£309.00

There is a minimum requirement of 4 sessions a week.

Age 3 and over where claiming free entitlement

Children are entitled to 15 hours a week free-of-charge for a maximum of 38 weeks. The entitlement starts the term after the child turns three and ends the term after they turn five or at the end of Reception, whichever is earlier. How the entitlement is allocated will depend on whether parents opt for a term-time or all-year-round nursery place.

Parents who access the free entitlement are charged for the additional services they use as follows:

All year

All-year-round parents may access free entitlement for a maximum of 11.2 hours per week and for 51 weeks of the year subject to a minimum of 4 sessions a week and no more than 1 session a day.

Morning session – comprising	7.45am - 12.45pm	free entitlement, snack and lunch included	£29.67
Afternoon session – comprising	1.00pm - 6.00pm	free entitlement, snack and tea included	£29.67
Short day – comprising	7.45am - 4.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks and lunch included	£45.82
Full day – comprising	7.45am - 6.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	£54.42
Weekly charges			
Full time – short day	7.45am - 4.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks and lunch included	£217.59
Full time – all day	7.45am - 6.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	£249.59



Term time only

Term time parents may access free entitlement for a maximum of 15 hours per week and for 34 weeks of the year subject to a minimum of 4 sessions a week and no more than 1 session a day.

Parents who access the free entitlement are charged for the additional services they use as follows:

Morning session – comprising	7.45am - 12.45pm	free entitlement, snack and lunch included	£28.37
Afternoon session – comprising	1.00pm - 6.00pm	free entitlement, snack and tea included	£28.37
Short day – comprising	7.45am - 4.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks and lunch included	£44.47
Full day – comprising	7.45am - 6.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	£51.97

Weekly charges

Full time – short day	7.45am - 4.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks and lunch included	£211.35
Full time – all day	7.45am - 6.00pm	free entitlement, 2 snacks, lunch and tea included	£241.35

Parents may access just the free entitlement for a maximum of 15 hours per week and for 34 weeks of the year subject to a minimum of 4 sessions a week and no more than 1 session a day.

The sessions for parents wishing to take up their funded entitlement only are:

Free entitlement morning	8.15am - 11.15am
Free entitlement afternoon	12.30pm - 3.30pm

Payment of Fees

Fees are due on or before the first day of each month. Parents can view their accounts and bills for each term using the Bills and On-line Payment site. Advice is sent by email when bills become available for a new term.

Parents are requested to make payment to us in the following ways:

- using child-care vouchers;
- debit card payment, via the Bills and On-line Payment site;
- direct bank transfer, please state billing reference number and send to:

Bank	HSBC Bank plc
Account Name	The Princethorpe Foundation - Crackley Hall
Sort Code	40-26-04
Account Number	01318128

Parents are asked to be vigilant in respect of any communications purporting to be from the Foundation requesting money that do not match our normal procedures.

Please note:

- **invoices are only available through the Bills and On-line Payment site;**
- **our bank account details will NOT change during the academic year 2023-24;**
- **if you receive an email purporting to amend our bank details, do not make any payment and please contact us by telephone immediately to clarify;**
- **we do not email details of unsolicited discounts for payment of funds.**

Please contact the Bursary if you have concerns about any communication you receive and in particular if you receive any request for payment of funds outside our normal routines.

Please note we do not accept payment in cash for the fee bill.

Late payment of fees

Interest is charged for late settlement of fees at a rate of 4% above base rate per annum or part thereof. Letters relating to late payment of fees are charged at £10.

Free Nursery Entitlement

The nursery is able to claim the Free Nursery Entitlement (FNE) for children aged between 3 and 4 years of age. The entitlement offers children up to fifteen hours, nursery education sessions per week, providing they do not attend a Local Education Authority Nursery, school or class. We currently offer either morning sessions 8.15am-11.15 am or afternoon sessions 12.30pm-3.30pm, one session per day, as nursery entitlement. If children attend a non-LEA setting, then the NEG is divided between both nurseries.

If a child's session is changed partway through a term, parents will be charged full fees for the change in sessions as the free entitlement can only be changed at the beginning of each term.

Parents must ensure their child attends the booked free entitlement sessions and inform us if their child is not coming into nursery on their set nursery days.

Terms and Conditions

Four weeks written notice is required for any change in your child's nursery sessions or for withdrawing them from nursery.

Full Terms and Conditions are available on request or from our website www.littlecrackers.co.uk.

Nursery Dates

Year-round Parents (51 weeks)

Christmas Closure

Friday 22 December 2023 to
Tuesday 2 January 2024 inclusive.

Term Time Only - 2023/2024

Michaelmas Term

Monday 4 September to Wednesday 20
December 2023

Half Term

Saturday 21 October to Sunday 5 November
2023

Lent Term

Monday 8 January to Friday 22 March 2024

Half Term

Saturday 10 February to Sunday 18 February
2024

Trinity Term

Monday 15 April to Wednesday 3 July 2024

Half Term

Saturday 25 May to Sunday 2 June 2024

Term Time Only - 2024/25

Michaelmas Term

Tuesday 3 September to Wednesday 18
December 2024

Half Term

Saturday 19 October to Sunday 3 November
2024

Lent Term

Tuesday 7 January to Thursday 3 April 2025

Half Term

Saturday 15 February to Sunday 23 February
2025

Trinity Term

Monday 28 April to Thursday 3 July 2025

Half Term

Saturday 24 May to Sunday 1 June 2025



Practicalities

Nursery Food

Healthy snacks are provided each morning and afternoon for all children. These consist of fresh fruit, vegetable sticks, and a plain biscuit in the afternoons with milk or water to drink. Drinking water is provided throughout the day.

Lunch is served at 11.30am. The Nursery Manager will discuss the menus during the settling in process.

Tea is served at 3.45pm for children staying after 4.00pm.

Good table manners are expected and encouraged.

If your child has any dietary requirements, please advise the nursery as soon as possible

Our caterers, Holroyd Howe, provide hot meals, cooked on the premises every day. Menus are selected by parents.

Sample Nursery Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Chicken tortilla wrap, salsa and soured cream with wedges	Beef lasagne with garlic bread	Roast of the day, roast potatoes, selection vegetables, gravy	Sausages, mashed potato and mixed vegetables	Fish Goujons, chips, peas or baked beans
<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>
Vegetable chilli and rice	Thai noodles with prawn crackers	Vegetable Hot Pot	Pasta Arrabiatta and salad	Vegetarian sausage rolls with chips, peas or baked beans
<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>	<i>or</i>
Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato	Jacket Potato
Fresh fruit Selection of yoghurts Jelly	Fresh fruit Selection of yoghurts Jelly	Fresh fruit Selection of yoghurts Jelly	Fresh fruit Selection of yoghurts Jelly	Fresh fruit Selection of yoghurts Jelly
Teas A selection of sandwiches, vegetable crisps, vegetable sticks and fresh fruit	Teas A selection of sandwiches, vegetable crisps, vegetable sticks and fresh fruit	Teas A selection of sandwiches, vegetable crisps, vegetable sticks and fresh fruit	Teas A selection of sandwiches, vegetable crisps, vegetable sticks and fresh fruit	Teas A selection of sandwiches, vegetable crisps, vegetable sticks and fresh fruit

Nursery Clothing

A Little Crackers t-shirt is available from the Foundation school shop at £8.50 each.

All items of children's clothing should be clearly named and of a practical nature due to the range of 'messy' activities taking place each day. Also please provide shoes that your child can undo, take off and put on and do up themselves, Velcro is ideal. This encourages self-help and independence.

When children begin to toilet train please dress them appropriately e.g. no vests with poppers underneath, clothes with elasticated waists. This will make it much easier for your child.

In fine weather we ask that a sunhat and suncream can be left in nursery, so that the children always have one to wear when they are outside. Warm coats, hats, gloves and wellington boots can be left in nursery for when the weather gets colder.

We ask that you provide plenty of named spare clothes, which can be kept on your child's peg in a named drawstring bag.

We ask that parents provide all of their child's nappies and wipes, which can be left in your child's nappy changing box.



Nursery Learning

The emphasis is very much on learning through play, underpinned by proven educational practice.

Activities in the nursery rooms change regularly to give a wide range of experiences to suit every type of learner. Nursery numbers are limited so that each child gets plenty of attention from our friendly and experienced staff

Activities are planned to fit children's individual needs throughout the nursery day.

Through a process of observation of each child, including discussion with parents about their child in the home environment, Early Years Practitioners develop knowledge of each child's needs. Your child's key worker will constantly review and plan activities, to see which areas of development to work on, possible activities to encourage this and the next stage to work towards.

A copy of the planned activities for the week is displayed in nursery.

Phonics is planned daily by the teachers where the children are taught the letter sounds of the alphabet, as well as listening to the sounds in words by segmenting and blending them, before trying to write what they can hear. We also foster a love for books and teach a variety of pre reading skills. There are lots of reading activities taking place in Nursery and the children are given the opportunity to take a book home each day. Mathematics is also taught every day to ensure the children are fully prepared for the Reception year.

As each child gets older, we watch them become more competent at moving, talking and pretending. They show increased confidence in themselves and skills in forming relationships.

All the areas of learning are accessible to all the children. Each child's day is divided into areas of child-initiated activities, adult-initiated and adult-focused activities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The environment and the curriculum in the nursery will provide the framework for each child's future learning by supporting and developing work and play in and around their home environment.

The Early Years Foundation Stage, which is statutory in all schools, is the first part of the National Curriculum focusing on the distinct needs of children aged from birth to the end of the Reception year in primary school.

The philosophy underpinning the Early Years Foundation Stage is that play is vital.

The environment created at Little Crackers enables children to play and learn whilst having fun with adults who understand and care about them.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised around seven areas of learning:

Prime areas:

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

Specific areas:

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

Each of these areas has a number of objectives for the children to work towards and achieve by the end of the Foundation Stage (Foundation Stage is for children from Birth to the end of Reception Year).

During the Early Years each individual child is learning through high quality play which is tailored specifically to them, so they develop at their own pace, having fun, making friends and learning as they play. They become confident and secure children, who, when the time comes, are better prepared for school and are able to reach their full potential.

Our Nursery Groups

Dormice

The Dormice (children aged 2) are encouraged to follow their natural urges to be curious and explore their world, to think for themselves and use their imagination.

With lots of energy to burn, children experience fun and investigative activities that have been carefully selected to stimulate minds, talk and foster understanding through playful interactions.

Those children needing a sleep can rest for as long as they need. Toilet training is part of the learning process, we encourage children to become independent over time.



Hedgehogs

The Hedgehogs (children aged 3) learn by doing, having fun and finding out why.

Children are encouraged to play, learn and have fun whilst using all of their senses to develop their individual interests, skills and most importantly their own personalities through carefully planned activities and opportunities.

Through valuable discussion children explore their world, making decisions, judgements, forming opinions and understanding why things work or happen, answering all those 'why?' questions.



Badgers

The Badgers (children aged 4) in their important pre-school year, continue to learn through play, but are encouraged to become independent in their investigations and choices as they get ready for the transition to Reception.

They also have specific time with the teacher to prepare them for Reception. This may be individually or in a small group where the focus is on early number skills, reading/writing development and phonics.

The Reception classrooms are sited next door to the nursery rooms, which makes for a smooth transition as they will get to know the Reception staff and environment before moving up to 'big school'.

In addition to our regular open events, we have a specific Nursery and Reception Open Evening each year for parents of children entering Nursery or Reception.



A Typical Day at Little Crackers

Welcome

As your child comes into nursery they are met by staff who take the time to chat with parents and carers, sharing news before helping them to start their day. The children become increasingly independent as they hang their coats up, pop to the bathroom and decide where they want to start their learning journey. The pre-school children are usually keen to discuss their library books and change them at this time too.



Lunch

In order to prepare the room for lunch we all work together as a team to tidy the nursery. This is usually a popular and often busy time, especially as the children particularly like the dustpan and brush sets near the sand! Once the room is ready, we sit together and have a story, or share our news. Sometimes, we talk about topical subjects such as the changing seasons or a particular celebration. This gives us a chance to listen to each other, before we say a small prayer of thanks and sit together for lunch.

Quiet time

After lunch, some children need a sleep and all our children benefit from some quiet time. We usually share an activity or a clip on the interactive whiteboard to give the children the opportunity to be calm, rest and reflect before the afternoon session begins.

Learning through play

The afternoon follows a similar pattern to the morning with the children being offered a mid-afternoon snack and drink. The staff are careful to include every child whilst catering for their individual needs. This could be, allowing our youngest children, the Dormice, to experiment in the writing area, exploring with various materials and working freely to make marks on the paper whilst our Hedgehogs and Badgers will access the area in a different way. Some children are ready to form letters, others are keen to write for a purpose, drawing pictures, writing lists and letters. All staff will be encouraging the right level of learning from each individual child.

Morning

On entering the main room your child will see the areas set up with exciting activities which encourage them to jump straight in, whilst other areas left as a blank canvas for them to develop their own ideas. The room reflects the different areas of the curriculum and your child will be able to explore such things as mathematical concepts, early writing skills, painting, scissor skills, sand and water, making their own playdough, or simply taking over the role play area. At this time of the day our priority is to allow the children time to lead their own learning whilst we observe the friendships they are building, the conversation that takes place and their particular interests.

Learning through play

During the morning we often split into small groups whilst other children continue to play. Different adults in the room lead and support the children through various activities, to encourage and enhance their exploration and learning. This is where we make the most of our indoor and outdoor environments (including our Garden Room) to explore phonics, Literacy, Mathematics, Physical Development, Understanding the World and Creative Development. There are also planned sessions throughout the week when the children can participate in specialist teaching sessions such as Music, PE, French or Forest School.

Snack time

During the morning the children are invited to come along and help themselves to a healthy snack, along with a drink of milk or water. We encourage a very sociable experience whilst they sit together with their friends.



End of the day

As your child nears the end of their day they help again with a quick tidy up, and then we sit together for a story. At this point some children leave, whilst others stay for tea. Those children who stay, will sit together and enjoy a light supper of sandwiches before enjoying a free and relaxing end to their day. Whenever it is time to go home, we will bring your child to meet you and feedback about how their day has gone.



Communication with parents

We recognise that parents know their child best and through our key person system we work with them to share information. We operate an Open Door Policy where parents are welcome to discuss any queries or concerns they may have quickly and easily with the nursery staff or manager.

We encourage parents to be involved within the nursery. We invite them to help with reading stories, art activities, or any other talents or skills they have, like speaking a different language, cooking, sewing or gardening.

We provide notice boards and leaflets for parents to share information on learning activities in each curriculum area, as well as health issues and handy hints on many areas of development and meeting dates. A newsletter goes into the school e-newsletter *The Chronicle* each week, which includes general nursery information.

Assessment of children's progress

All of the staff work with all of the children, but each child will have a key person who will get to know them particularly well, monitor their progress and regularly feed back to you.

At Little Crackers we use *Evidence Me* to record and monitor your child's progress. *Evidence Me* is an award-winning assessment, observation and reporting app. It captures your child's experiences, monitors their development and creates reports to share each child's progress with parents. *Evidence Me* has been designed so that teachers can easily take a photo, a video or write a note which will be instantly uploaded to the app. Teachers can track, evidence and support their classes' learning with confidence. The dedicated parent app can also be used for two-way communication between parents and teachers, to share information in real-time.

Observations are shared weekly, allowing parents to comment on the observation, before sending it back for the teacher to view. Parents can also add their own photos, videos or notes to share any significant moments which may take place at home. It's the perfect way for parents to be updated on their child's progress and learning journey.

Staff will be observing and talking to your child as they are playing and learning. This helps us to plan for their progress and to make sure they are feeling 'at home' with us.

We like to get to know each child really well because the more we understand about their interests, skills and talents, the better we are able to support their learning.

Your child's key person will work closely with you to make sure that your child settles quickly, feels safe, enjoys being here and makes good progress.

Specialist Teaching Programme

Our children also benefit from trying new activities at an early age including Music, PE and Games, Forest School and French lessons, all taught by specialist teachers in term time. The timetable can vary so please contact the Nursery Team for full details of specialist teaching and any extra costs.

Sample Timetable

	Morning	Afternoon
Monday		Rugby Tots
Tuesday	RE	
Wednesday		Forest School
Thursday	PE	
Friday	Music	

Frequently Asked Questions

Does my child need to be dry to attend Little Crackers?

No, we have nappy changing facilities in place and will support toilet training with parents. Parents are asked to supply nappies, wipes and changes of clothes.

I am worried about leaving my child for the first time, how do you manage children settling in and what do you recommend as a settling in period?

Most parents are anxious when leaving their child for the first time, which is why we arrange a free one hour settling-in session before your child starts Nursery.

Can I stay with my child during the settling in period?

We encourage you to leave your child in order for them to experience nursery independently. However, if your child needs further reassurance you can stay with them for a short time.

How many sessions do you recommend? Does this change as the child gets older/ closer to school age?

There is a minimum requirement of four sessions per week, we recommend gradually increasing to full time as the child nears their Reception year.

What happens at lunchtime – can nursery children have school meals or do they bring a packed lunch?

The Nursery fees include a school meal but if your child has any special dietary requirements we recommend talking to our Registrar.

Do you accept employers' childcare vouchers? How does this work?

Yes, we do accept employers' childcare vouchers. We need you to supply us with details of your employer, and the agency they use to administer the vouchers, along with a registration form from them for us to complete. (Please contact the office staff for further information).

How do I find out about/apply for nursery funding and when would my child become eligible?

Information is available on request to explain Nursery funding. Children are eligible in the term after they reach the age of 3. Please see office staff for further details.

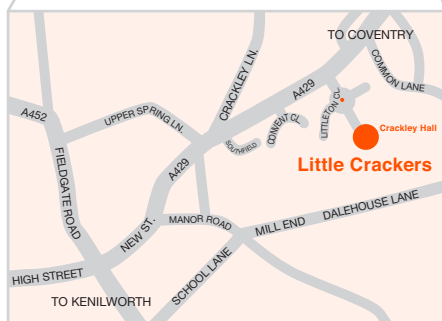
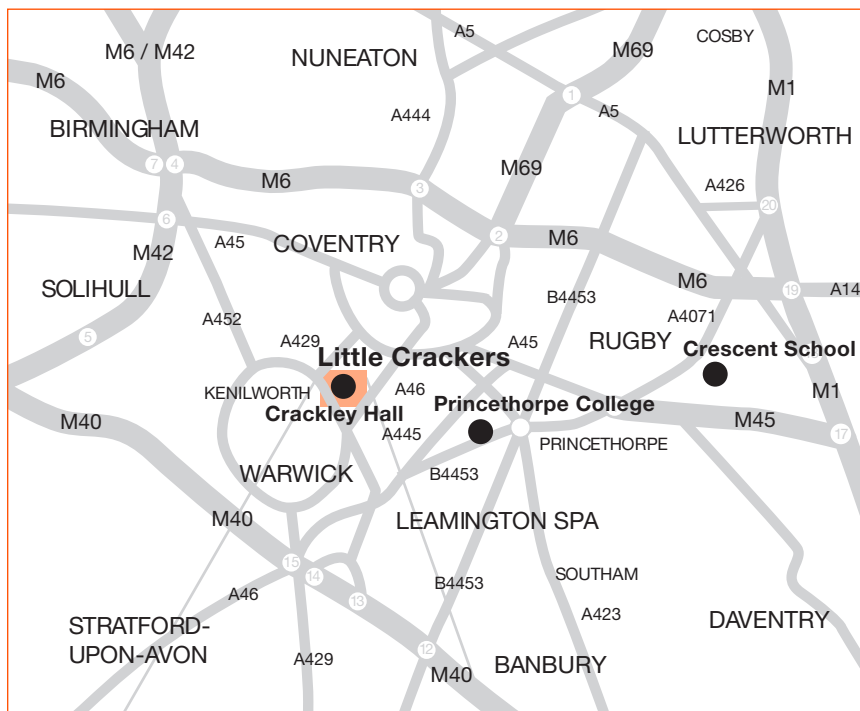
What do I need to send my child with?

Change of clothes, nappies, wipes and creams (if appropriate), a comforter if needed, in summer a sun hat and sun cream, in winter a woolly hat, gloves and wellington boots.

Who do I speak to regarding my child's progress at Nursery?

Each child is allocated a key person who is responsible for observations, communication with parents and helping your child's progress in all areas of development. Your child's key person is carefully chosen once your child has started, they will then be introduced to you.

Directions to Little Crackers



Little Crackers is located on Crackley Hall School's secure site with beautiful buildings and playing fields at St Joseph's Park on the outskirts of Kenilworth, just off the A429 to Coventry.

Using Satellite Navigation

Experience has shown us that keying CV8 2FT into a SatNav device may well deliver you to Convent Close. We suggest that using CV8 2WA will take you to Littleton Close, from which you can see the School's entrance.

From Birmingham via A45

Follow signs for Coventry A45, London M45 and M1. After going past turn offs for Earlsdon and Canley in Coventry, you will come to traffic lights with the A429 signposted for Kenilworth, take the right hand lane and turn right here. Follow the A429 for approximately 2 miles. Crackley Hall is signed on the left hand side of the road, just after Common Lane. Proceed up Littleton Close, straight over a mini roundabout into the school grounds.

From Coventry via A45

From the A45, take the A429 to Kenilworth. Follow the A429 for approximately 2 miles. Crackley Hall is signed on the left hand side of the road, just after Common Lane. Proceed up Littleton Close, straight over a mini roundabout into the school grounds.

From Leamington Spa via the A452

Take the A452 from Leamington towards Kenilworth, go straight ahead over the A46 roundabout, following the A452 through Kenilworth town centre, past Abbey Fields on your left. At the traffic lights with the A429 turn right signposted to Coventry, follow the A429 for approximately 1 mile, Crackley Hall is signed on the right just after Convent Close. Proceed up Littleton Close, straight over a mini roundabout into the school grounds.

From Solihull via M42

From the A41 direction Warwick, join the M42 at junction 5 signposted The North. Leave the motorway at the next junction (6) and merge onto the A45 direction Coventry. At the Stonebridge roundabout take the 3rd exit onto the A452 direction Leamington. Follow the A452 Birmingham Road, on reaching the outskirts of Kenilworth, go past the left hand turn off for Burton Green and take the next left turn up Beehive Hill. Then after Hollis Lane, take the next left onto Upper Spring Lane. At T-junction turn left onto the A429, signposted Coventry, follow the A429 for half a mile. Crackley Hall is signed on the right just after Convent Close. Proceed up Littleton Close, straight over a mini roundabout into the school grounds.

From Stratford via A46

Take the A46 direction Coventry, proceed over the M40 Longbridge roundabout and follow the A46 for approximately 11 miles. Leave the A46 at the Kenilworth turn off signposted A452, leave the roundabout at the first exit, follow the A452 through Kenilworth town centre, past Abbey Fields on your left. At the traffic lights with the A429 turn right signposted to Coventry, follow the A429 for approximately 1 mile, Crackley Hall is signed on the right just after Convent Close. Proceed up Littleton Close, straight over a mini roundabout into the school grounds. From Warwick via A46 Take the A46 direction Coventry, leave the A46 at the Kenilworth turn off, leaving the roundabout at the first exit, follow the A452 through Kenilworth town centre, past Abbey Fields on your left. At the traffic lights with the A429 turn right signposted to Coventry, follow the A429 for approximately 1 mile, Crackley Hall is signed on the right just after Convent Close. Proceed up Littleton Close, straight over a mini roundabout into the school grounds.



The
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