



Caterpillar Room



Parents' Handbook

0 - 21 months

*Strawberry How Nursery School is a Private Day Nursery managed by
Julie Richardson*

■ Introduction and Ethos

Our setting is the only private purpose-built Nursery in West Cumbria . The main nursery was built in 2004 and the house was built in 2011. The link was built in 2016. They incorporate the higher safety features of a single storey building that enables ease of movement for our children to access outside spaces. The new Caterpillar Room occupies a newly built link (with underfloor heating and air conditioning) as well as incorporating the ground floor rooms of the recently acquired) adjoining house.



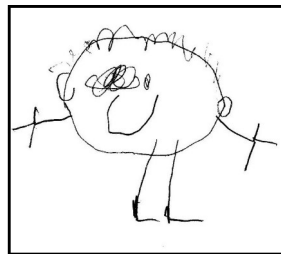
The Nursery is managed by Mrs Julie Richardson B.Ed (Hons) whose last post was as Headteacher of an Independent Infant School with attached Nursery in Teesside. The management and organisation of Strawberry How Nursery attempts to offer a full educational experience for your child that is much more than simple "child care".

We are highly regarded by Cumbria Education Services and many of our practices are seen as models that should be used by other nurseries in our area. Our Nursery Staff are employed full time and all are highly qualified. Our childcare adult to child ratios are higher than those recommended by Ofsted. We were rated as "Outstanding" in our 2013 and 2019 inspections.

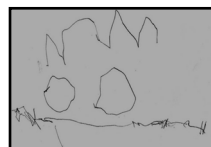
We are committed to providing the very best education with the best childcare. This handbook is designed to help you support your child when starting at the Nursery, it contains information about the Caterpillar Room and should answer some of your questions. Please take the time to read the handbook and then if you want please talk to us about any further questions you may have.

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Mel Champneys
Room Leader
NVQ 3



Sarah Foxwell
NVQ3



Julia Hibner
NVQ3

Our Aims

■ Strawberry How is a home from home environment which provides care for every child that comes to the Nursery. Physical contact, emotional support and practical challenges are part of all our lives, and our Nursery provides the children with a way to enjoy their days spent at the Nursery.

We provide an environment where young children can have space and freedom, noise and peace, opportunities to enjoy themselves, fulfil ambitions, try out new ideas and share friendships within a framework of care and support.

Because we want to be absolutely professional we ask parents to refrain to from including our staff as friends on their Facebook page.

In our new bright and spacious Caterpillar Room, staff are dedicated to making your child's first experience at Nursery happy and stimulating. Our Nursery Practitioners are committed to providing a caring environment where high quality play and education are used to encourage your child's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development. We will:

- provide a happy and secure learning environment in which to learn and play
- encourage children to develop their independence and maturity
- promote physical, social, moral, creative and intellectual development
- try to work with parents to establish genuine partnership between home and parents.



■ Our Curriculum

Children in our Caterpillar Room will have a variety of experiences. We aim to offer a curriculum, which builds on things the children already know and can do. The curriculum your child will receive is based upon the Foundation Stage Curriculum of which it includes seven main areas of learning.

The Prime Areas of Learning

■ Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- A caring, polite attitude to others is fostered at all times helping to develop positive relationships.
- Children are made aware of behaviour that is acceptable to others and are helped to manage their own feelings.
- Good self-esteem and self-awareness is built and nurtured continually.
- Independence increases as a child moves through the nursery.

■ Physical Development

- Children develop their physical confidence by using both the indoor and outdoor environments and by using large and small equipment.
- A child is encouraged to develop his/her manipulation skills by experiencing a wide range of materials.
- A positive attitude towards healthy eating and developing an active life is continually encouraged.

■ Communication and Language

- Children are helped to acquire appropriate skills and competence in speaking and listening.
- Children are helped to develop their understanding of language which is spoken to them.



The Specific Areas of Learning (an extension of the prime areas)

Literacy

- Early skills in reading and writing are supported through play activities.
- Children are encouraged to develop their love of reading through singing nursery rhymes and listening to stories.
- All these skills are successfully developed in other areas of learning.

Mathematics

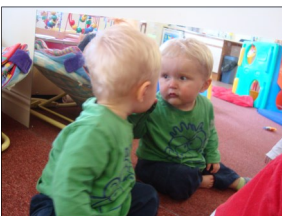
- Children are helped to acquire practical mathematical understanding.
- Shape, space and measure are introduced through play.
- Children are encouraged to develop their understanding of positional and mathematical language.

Understanding of the World

- The child's own environment and experience is the key focus for developing understanding of their world
- Encourage children to talk about people in their community.
- Children are given opportunities to develop their curiosity and interest in making things happen.
- Children are given the opportunity to play and explore Technology

Expressive Arts and Design

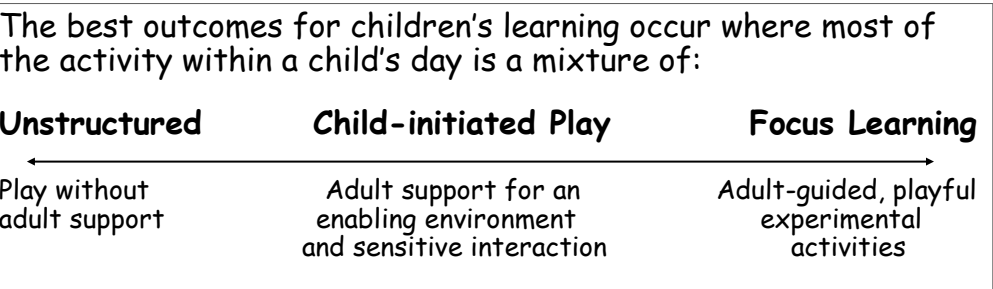
- Children have an opportunity to develop their own imagination through art, music, drama, stories and play.
- Children are encouraged to explore a variety of every-day materials /different media to develop this learning.



■ Learning

Clearly babies and young children are powerful learners who reach out to the world and try to make sense of their experiences. As they explore and learn, children are naturally drawn to play. Children have a 'built-in' exploratory tendency and it is important to give them the freedom to combine resources in many different ways to increase flexible cognitive development. We seek to enable them to build pathways for thinking and learning and to make connections across areas of experiences.

Our Staff organise the time, space and activities in the daily routine to reflect the overall combination which best supports children's well-being and learning.



You will find the current 6 weekly thematic plan on the website after you've logged in. If you note the activities that are planned you will be in a great place to support our efforts in the Nursery.

Adults therefore manage the pace of activities, planning varied and interesting new experiences to stimulate learning alongside opportunities for children to revisit, practise or enjoy a sense of mastery. With this ground-work in place, it is then the adult's skilled interactions which moves learning forward. It is worth noting at this point that it can take between six to eleven weeks for a child to form a secure relationship with a new adults.

■ The Key ways young children learn

- **playing**—indoor and out, alone and with others, quietly or boisterously—allows children to find out things, try out and practise ideas and skills, take risks, explore their feelings, learn from mistakes, be in control and think imaginatively.
- **being with other people**—as well as developing emotional security and social skills, being with other people - other children and adults- stimulates ideas and involvement
- **being active**— young children need to move. They learn and remember things by taking experiences through their senses as they move. Sitting still for too long can disrupt learning.
- **exploring new things and experiences**— children's deep curiosity leads them to use all their senses to explore real hands-on activities, they then put this information together in their minds to form ideas and make sense of the world.
- **talking to themselves**—in 'self-speech' children use out-loud thinking to clarify their thoughts, regulate their activities, take on imaginative roles and rehearse their skills.
- **communicating about what they are doing with someone who responds**—even before they can talk in words children are keen to share their ideas through sounds, gesture and body language. Talk helps them to understand what they experience. It is important that they express their own ideas as well as have conversations to hear other people's ideas, and use language about learning.
- **representing ideas and experiences**—children deepen their understanding as they recreate experiences or communicate their thinking in many different ways—in role-play or small world play, pictures, movement, models and talk.
- **meeting physical and mental challenges**—working out what to do, trying hard, persevering with problems, finding out and thinking for themselves are opportunities for developing understanding. These challenges may occur in play, real-life or planned activities.
- **being shown how to do things**— children learn skills by watching others or being shown how to do something. Adults or peers may directly instruct, model, guide or demonstrate.
- **practising, repeating, applying skills**— rehearsing skills in similar tasks or new contexts helps children to build mastery, to enjoy their own expertise, and to consolidate what they can do.
- **having fun**— there is no place for dull, repetitive activities. Laughter, fun and enjoyment, sometimes being whimsical and non-sensical, are the best contexts for learning. Activities can be playful even when they are not actually play.

■ The Characteristics of Learning (learning through play)

Taking into account recent educational research we offer a Curriculum, which is based on children learning through planned and self-initiated purposeful play-based activities. This allows children to become confident learners; a) by playing and exploring (being engaged), b) by active investigating learning (being motivated) and c) by creating and thinking critically (becoming a thinker). Children learn at their own pace through valuable first hand experiences. We provide learning opportunities through:

- Sand—texture, sorting and matching
- Water—floating, sinking and volume
- Malleable Materials—observing, manipulating and changing substances
- Painting—fine and gross motor control, colour mixing and experimentation
- Music—listening and exploring
- Construction—building, selecting and arranging
- Small-World—imagination and sharing
- Role-Play—imagination, creativity, speaking and listening
- Mark-Making—fine motor control, co-ordination and communication
- Story—sequencing, narrating, left to right orientation
- Outdoors—co-ordination, communication, exploring and movement
- ICT— hand-eye coordination, mouse control, investigation

In the Caterpillar Room these areas are available throughout the day.

■ Curriculum Planning for the Caterpillar Room

Curriculum planning is a continual process and we strive to improve the experiences that we offer the children. The broad outline areas are indicated below and this planning is co-ordinated with the Butterfly and Squirrel Rooms using a thematic approach integrating the six areas of learning.

Autumn	Harvest Food Dinosaurs Transport	Space Halloween Firework Night
	Autumn Motion Week Investigation Week	People Who Help Us Song Week Special Week
Winter	Christmas Toys Weather	Love Week Sensory Week Makaton (Songs)
	All About Me Senses Book Week	Book Week Frozen Week Pirates
Spring	Jungle Animals Spring Farm Animals	Supermarket Makaton (Signs) Nursery Rhymes
	Easter Sensory Week Special Week	Music Outdoors Minibeasts
Summer	Caterpillars & Butterflies Big Messy Week Sports Week	Big Cook, Little Cook Colours & Shapes Under the Sea
	Summer and Beaches Garden Week Transport	Art Attack Water Week Speical Week

As we mentioned the curriculum planning for the Caterpillar Room can be found on the website after log in. Our short term planning is updated fortnightly and parents are welcome to read about the activities designed for the children. There is a parents' meetings held every January although the staff are happy to discuss your child a suitable arranged time.



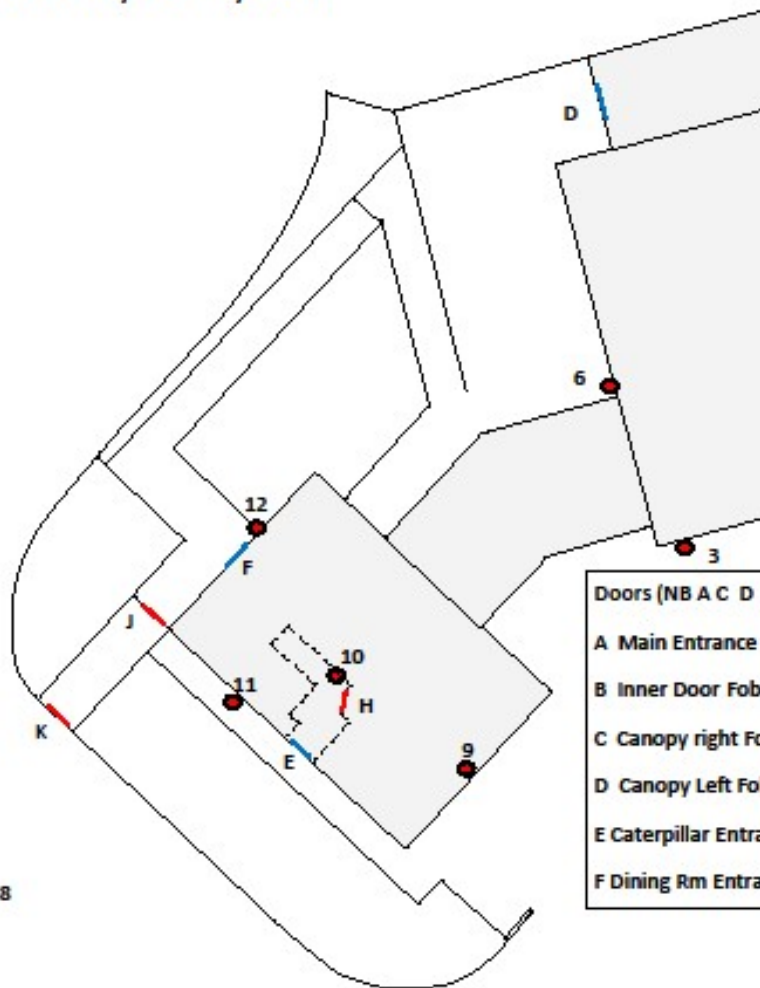
■ Inside and Outdoor Play

We have created a secure outdoor play area with creative and stimulating play equipment on a 5cm rubberised soft surface. This development has been carefully designed to promote and develop positive free and structured play in the fresh air. The Caterpillars can also access the covered canopy for "outdoor" water and sand play and the grassed Paddock.

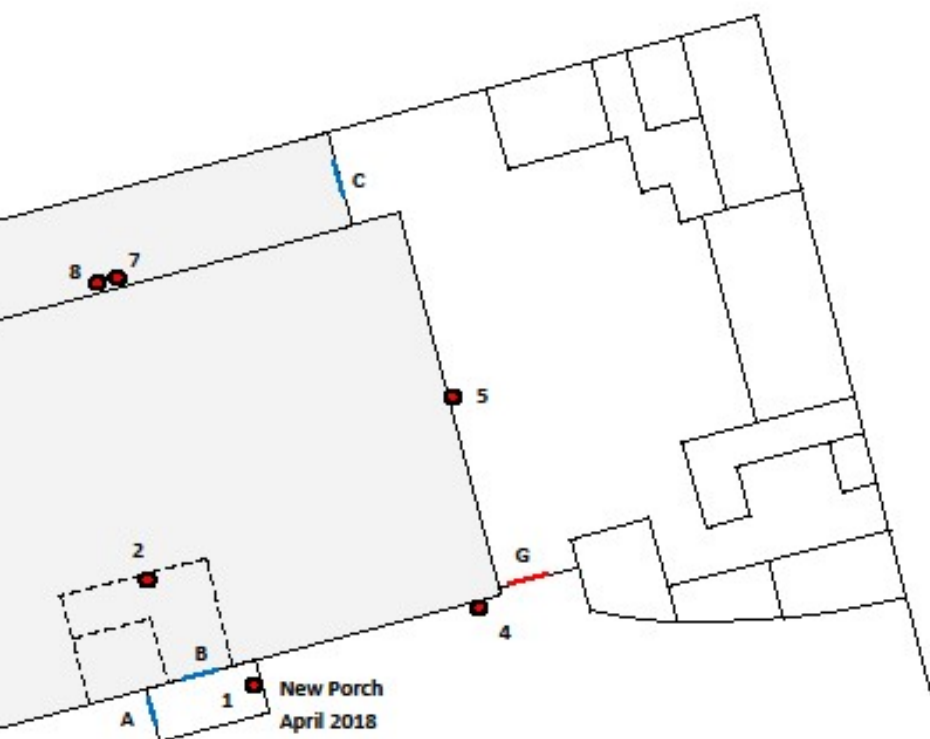


Strawberry How Nursery School Upgraded Physical Security April 2018

- Entrance Cameras
- Locked gates
- Fob Entry Security Doors



12 March 2018



F to be installed April 2018)

Fob G Yard gate Bolt

H Caterpillar Rm Keypad

b J Back Gate 2 Locked

b K Back Gate 1 Locked

nce Fob

nce Fob

Cameras (NB 1 3 4 7 8 to be installed April 2018)

1. Porch

2 Main Lobby

3 Nursery Front Left

4 Nursery Front Right

5 Main Playground Entrance

6 Small Playground Entrance

7 Canopy Right Door

8 Canopy Left Door

9 Dining Room

10 Caterpillar Lobby

11 Caterpillar Entrance

12 Dining Room Entrance





■ Preparing your Child for Nursery

We want your child to 'feel at home' in our Caterpillar Room and to enjoy the caring and exciting learning environment. Some children are very confident when starting Nursery while others may take a little longer to settle. We work with parents to meet the needs of individual children to ensure that they settle quickly.

Please see the web page "New starters" that details the information and processes for parents and children new to nursery

- Before a child starts at Nursery parents will be invited to bring their child for two Taster Sessions. These are free, further Taster Sessions can be booked if required. The first taster usually takes place in the morning from 9.00-10.00am, during which time your child will get the opportunity to begin to get to know the staff and meet new friends. Parents will have a telephone meeting with the Room Leader. You will also be sent, via email, an information form to complete and send back. These are very helpful and gives us an insight into your child's sleeping and eating patterns, their likes and dislikes.

The second taster session takes place from 9.00am-11.00am, both of these tasters happen in the days before your child is due to start full time.

So on the day -

- Please, please **do not** bring your child with a huge bag!
- All spare clothes, nappies and comforters will need to be clearly **labelled with your child's name** and brought to Nursery in a small bag for easy storage.
- Please **use polythene bags not containers** (washing containers takes too much time) and mark clearly on your child's bags the mealtime you wish it to be served to your child by the staff.
- For milk please state whether you would like the milk to be given warm or cold.



Daily Routine

07.30-08.45	Welcome and Breakfast
08.45-09.15	Child initiated play
09.15-09.30	Planned sensory play activities
09.30	Changing nappies (this also takes place throughout the day)
09.30-10.00	Activities and play
10.00-10.15	Snack time
10.15-11.30	Planned activities, child-initiated play, walk
11.30	Changing nappies
11.30-12.30	Lunch time
12.30-13.15	Inside and Outside play (afternoon sleepers)
13.15-13.30	Sensory Play Activities
1.30	Changing nappies
13.30-14.00	Sensory play activities and child initiated play
14.00-14.30	Snack time
14.30-15.00	Music time and Songs
15.00-15.30	Sensory play activities and child initiated play
15.30	Changing nappies
15.30-16.00	Music time and songs
16.00-16.30	Tea and Story time
16.30	Changing nappies
16.30-18.00	Child-initiated play

Activities are designed to promote interest, curiosity, exploration and the spirit of adventure. We encourage children to be independent learners happy to discover the world around them by providing safe and secure environments.

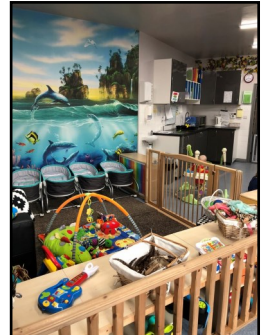
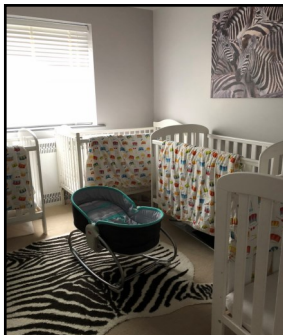




Caterpillar Fun



While the children are in our Nursery they are given the opportunity to experience a diverse array of activities to expand their experiences and develop their knowledge of the world around them. They also have an chance to play constructively with their friends and develop the social skills needed throughout their life.



Food

During the Taster Session parents will be asked to provide the Nursery Staff with as much information as possible to help settle their child into Nursery. Detailed information about their child's routines, eating habits and meal times provide the staff with very useful information to assist them in following routines at home. Other information include:

- Allergies
- Special likes and dislikes
- Rests after eating
- Special medication

Staff make a record of food eaten throughout the day and this information is passed online to parents. Please note that while our nursery aspires to be "nut free" we cannot guarantee this because some purchased food products are prepared in environments that use nuts.

At our Nursery we know that parents understand their child very well and are 'in tune' with their development and changes. We therefore ask to be informed if there are any changes in your child's routines as soon as possible allowing staff to adjust routines in the Nursery to match your child's continual development.

In order to reduce the time spent unpacking/sorting/labelling/washing/sorting and re-packing containers please bring food in disposable polythene bags. We recycle plastic and paper. If this isn't possible, to save time we will return containers unwashed. We simply want to spend all our time with our children.

From the age of 12 months the Nursery provides breakfast, morning snack, afternoon snack and tea. This is included in the fee. The snack menu is changed 8 times a year and can be viewed on the website. Nursery also provides a lunch from Lorton Primary School.

■ Sleep Routines

The policy at the Nursery is for the children to have a comfortable sleep in a cot in our Sleep Room, however, some children prefer to sleep in our main room so we provide bouncy chairs and soft cushions as alternatives. When a child goes to sleep the time is recorded on our chart and a member of staff checks every 10 minutes to see that everything is fine, this is recorded. When a child wakes up the time is also recorded. This information is passed on to parents on the daily record.

■ Administration of Medication

On the Nursery registration form we ask parents to give the staff permission to administer medication eg Calpol when teething or Sudocrem for slight skin irritation. The staff will only administer prescribed medicine after parents have signed a special 'Administration of Medicine' form to ensure that all instructions have been given to the Nursery Nurses. We ask parents to inform the Nursery should their child's medical situation change after completing our initial registration form.



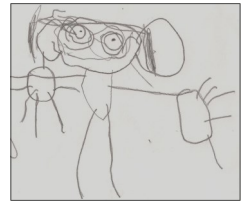
■ Ratios for Staff and Children

At all times we ensure that our staff/child ratios are above the Ofsted guidelines. To maintain this level of care we ask parents to inform us of any changes to their child's registered attendance before the 15th of each month for the following month in order that we can allocate staff their hours and provide the children with quality care at the highest level at all times. The Nursery is unable to swap days within a month once these hours have been booked.

Alison Slack
NVQ Level 3

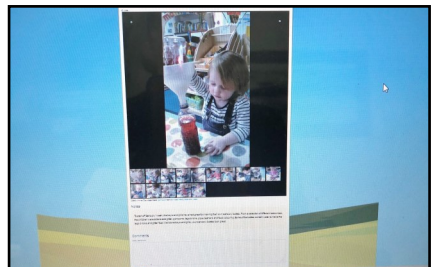


Rachel Newman
BA(Hons) Working
with children
and families



■ Key Person

Each child is given a 'Key Person' who is there to take special responsibility for their care, learning and well-being. The Key Person also compiles a special progress record for parents, to track their child's progress whilst in Nursery. Our Caterpillar Room staff will use the online Tapestry - Learning Journal (our online assessment app) to gather together daily information about our children. Essentially this enhances the feedback offered through our Facebook page. Parents are also encouraged to add contributions to their child's record using their login to upload videos, pictures and text.



■ Collection of Children and Password

The Nursery staff will only hand over a child to a known adult. If a member of staff does not know the person they will ask them to wait at the door until they have got confirmation that they have the authority to collect the child. In the case of an emergency and a parent is unable to collect their child, and they send an unknown person in their place, that person must know the special password, given to us by the parents during the registration process.

■ Website and Login

We have a comprehensive website which is designed to give parents detailed information about our Nursery. It also keeps parents up to date with nursery developments. Each family is given a parental login to give them access to our 'Parents Pages' which are not viewed by the general public.

■ Newsletters

We produce a newsletter for parents each month which is placed on the website. This newsletter gives parents information about activities which have taken place at the Nursery together with forthcoming events. There are lots of photographs of the play and learning activities which take place throughout the day. The newsletter is posted on our website and we have a number of previous issues for parents to download.

■ Facebook

We regularly post comment and photographs relating to activities that we've previously outlined in the thematic planning. This has proved to be a great success with grandparents around the world getting access. Our facebook page is a "secret" page which is the highest security setting.

Because we want to be absolutely professional we ask parents to refrain from including our staff as friends on their Facebook page.



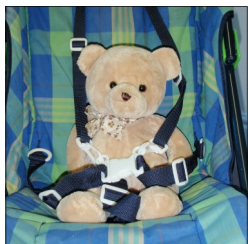
■ Online Learning Journals

The Caterpillar Room staff will use the online Tapestry - Learning Journal to gather together daily information about our children. This is made available to parents online.

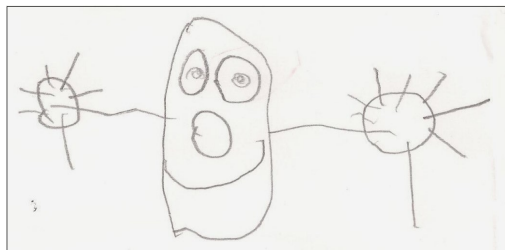


For the time being the daily paper record will still be used. The Tapestry online journal system continues throughout the Nursery.

■ Bobby Bear's Adventures



In the Caterpillar Room the children have their very own teddy bear called 'Bobby'. When a child goes on holiday, has a special event at the weekend or simply wants a friend to come over and play they can take Bobby home with them. Mums and Dads record all his adventures by taking photographs to show where Bobby has been and they put them in Bobby's special book. If you would like to take Bobby home with you please ask a Nursery Nurse to arrange a visit.



Amy Clifford
NVQ Level 3



Karen Nawrockyj
NNEB 3



All Year Wrap Around Quality Education and Care

**Strawberry How Nursery School
is open from 7.30am - 6.00pm
Monday to Friday
51 weeks of the year.**

**We are closed on Bank Holidays and for a
week between Christmas and the New Year.**

Ofsted Registration EY391884

