

# What makes Buttercups Nursery so special?



**We've put together this leaflet which explains;**

- Why we are so unique?
- Why are we asking for voluntary consumables contributions?
- A list of what we believe we offer above the basic provision here at Buttercups
  - Consumables options from April 2025
  - Funding information

## Why do we feel Buttercups Nursery School is unique?

We offer;

1. **Qualified and Experienced Staff:** We employ staff who have specialized qualifications such as Early Childhood Degrees, Masters in Education and years of experience and additional training in specific fields (e.g., SEN, early childhood development, early help and safeguarding).
2. **Specialized Curriculum:** We offer additional areas to the curriculum, such as health and self, innovate and investigate, make and bake, move and groove and sew and grow. These are all additional to basic curriculum.
3. **Strong Focus on Outdoor Learning and Nature:** Each room has its own undercover outdoor classroom and their own designated play space. Alongside this we have three in-ground sandpits. We place a huge emphasis on outdoor learning and encouraging children to explore nature. We offers regular outdoor activities in a rural area set within a private estate.
4. **State-of-the-Art Facilities:** The nursery has modern facilities, such as well-equipped classrooms, sensory rooms and outdoor play areas. All of which are well resourced to a high standard to ensure the child's full potential is supported and their learning and development is scaffolded.
5. **Parental Involvement and Communication:** We prioritise keeping parents/carers informed through regular updates, using the online journal Tapestry and our nursery management system where we produce daily reports and personal feedback. We host several events such as graduation party, over the year to ensure parent participation which creates a stronger sense of community and trust.
6. **Inclusion and Diversity:** Buttercups Nursery stands out as we promote and include diversity and a welcoming environment for children of all backgrounds. This includes a focus on providing support for children with additional needs, ensuring they are integrated and supported.
7. **Healthy Meals:** We offering meals made with locally sourced ingredients with a strong focus on healthy eating.
8. **Focus on Emotional Wellbeing:** We places a special emphasis on developing emotional intelligence, mindfulness, and self-regulation skills from an early age, it could be a distinctive feature.

## **Why do we need to ask for voluntary contributions (consumables fees)?**

Nurseries in the UK are facing significant challenges due to recent government changes in funding, which have made it increasingly difficult for many to operate sustainably. Here are a few key reasons why:

### **1. Reduced Funding for Free Childcare Hours**

The UK government provides free childcare hours for children aged 9 months to 4 years (and some 2-year-olds from low-income families). While this is a great initiative for parents, the funding provided to nurseries for these hours has often been seen as inadequate. The amount nurseries receive per child doesn't always cover the actual costs of providing high-quality care. This mismatch between funding levels and operational costs can leave nurseries struggling to balance their books.

### **2. Rising Operational Costs**

The cost of running a nursery has been rising significantly in recent years. Staff wages, which typically make up a large portion of a nursery's expenses, have increased, especially with the introduction of higher minimum wage and national living wage levels. However, the government funding per child has not increased proportionally, creating a funding gap.

In addition, energy costs, rent, and food prices have all risen in line with inflation, but nurseries are often unable to raise fees sufficiently due to competition and the limits of what parents can afford to pay. As a result, many nurseries are finding it difficult to stay profitable.

### **3. Staff Shortages and Recruitment Issues**

There is an ongoing recruitment and retention crisis in early years education. Due to low wages and challenging working conditions, many staff members in nurseries leave the profession for better-paying roles in other sectors. This has been exacerbated by the funding cuts, as nurseries struggle to pay competitive wages or offer enough hours to attract and retain qualified staff.

To make matters worse, the government has not introduced sufficient measures to address the staffing crisis, and with increasing numbers of nurseries relying on less experienced staff or reducing staff numbers, the quality of care can suffer.

### **4. Delayed Funding Payments**

In some cases, the payments from the government for free hours are delayed, putting pressure on nurseries' cash flow. As many nurseries operate on tight budgets, delays in receiving payments can lead to issues with paying staff on time, purchasing necessary resources, or covering other operational costs.

### **5. Increased Regulatory and Compliance Costs**

The government has also introduced stricter regulations and inspection standards for early years providers. While these regulations are important for ensuring quality and safety, they come at an additional cost for nurseries. Implementing new policies, providing staff training, and maintaining

compliance with regulations can be financially burdensome, especially when funding is already insufficient.

## **6. Impact of COVID-19 and Recovery Challenges**

The pandemic further strained many nurseries in the UK. With lockdowns and restrictions in place, many nurseries experienced a significant drop in enrolment, which led to reduced income. Although there were some government support measures in place during the pandemic, the sector is still recovering. Many nurseries continue to face a backlog of financial losses and an ongoing struggle to rebuild their business models post-COVID-19.

## **7. Limited Support for Private and Independent Providers**

While many nurseries in the UK are privately run, the government's funding reforms often favour larger, state-supported providers. Smaller, independent nurseries have fewer resources to absorb the financial pressures and often find themselves under more strain than larger chains. The lack of tailored support for private providers has contributed to closures in many communities.

## **8. Impact on Quality of Care**

All of these financial pressures—underfunding, staffing shortages, and rising costs—ultimately impact the quality of care that nurseries can provide. With fewer resources available, nurseries may struggle to maintain a high standard of care, and children may not receive the full benefits of early years education, such as well-trained staff, stimulating environments, and personalized learning.

### **Consequences of these Struggles:**

- **Closure of Nurseries:** Some nurseries are being forced to close, which limits access to early years education, particularly in under-served areas. This could exacerbate inequalities in early childhood development and access to childcare.
- **Increased Costs for Parents:** To cover the financial shortfall, many nurseries raise their fees, making childcare less affordable for families. This is especially problematic for working parents who rely on affordable childcare to balance their professional and personal lives.
- **Lower Quality of Care:** As nurseries try to balance the books, they might have to cut back on staff, resources, or extracurricular activities, potentially compromising the quality of care and education children receive.
- **Yearly it costs Buttercups £146,730.00** to provide our bespoke nursery, sadly if we can't fund this these extras will have to disappear.

### **Buttercups Bespoke Extra Package –**

below are just some of the things that we feel sets us apart as an excellent childcare provider. All of the below are additional to the basic provision that we are required by the county council to provide.

- Additional training for staff in all areas from early help through to intermate care from Henry and Dingley's promise.
- Advice and support - extra support and guidance that we offer to all families
- Baking cakes and biscuits for special events and evenings
- Bespoke Lending library
- Birthday cards for children and staff
- Car Parking on site with accessible parking space
- Cards for special events Mother's Day, Father's Day etc
- CCTV
- Come and play sessions at different times of the year.
- Employee of the month
- Extra Education Programmes – extra to the standard education – health and self, innovate and investigate, make and bake, move and groove and sow and grow - Buttercups ensures that we offer programmes above the basic curriculum.
- Extra-Curricular activities run in house or off site.
- First day at nursery survival kit for parents/carers
- Five Sensory Rooms. Rooms always have them fully accessible.
- Four hours FREE for settling in
- Gifts – Easter eggs, Chocolate hearts, Christmas books
- Grab/ Support bags
- Healthy morning snack included
- Home learning always printed and accessible.
- Hospital grade sanitizer used daily onsite
- Large garden with all-weather surface in a rural area, with a separate garden for each room.
- Medals and reward charts for children
- Minibus onsite to use for trips/home visits
- MPLC licence – this allows us to access up to date media, play music and educational slides.
- Noddle Now (CPD) provide for all staff monthly.
- Nursery Management System that provides invoices /daily reports/request centre.
- Onsite Housekeeper to ensure the nursery is always clean and hygienic.
- Onsite Laundrette including sanitizing
- Onsite qualified cook ensuring the children have a fresh cook meal each day.
- Oral health kits for children
- Oral health officer on site to oversee our tooth brushing programme.
- Parent workshops
- Parents evening twice a year alongside open door to all families and carers.

- Party venue for families of Buttercups
- Pool car used by all staff for attending meetings
- Printing for parents and families and sending emails to other agencies not related to nursery at parent's requests.
- Quality meat from Pynes butchers used in all meals
- SASP Accreditation
- School readiness Evening and Bespoke Preschool programme with George the Monkey
- Senco on site every day
- Sing and Sign Accreditation
- Situated on a private estate
- SMS notifications on potty training, nappy changes etc
- Special Events (Graduation, Ramadam, Pancake Day, Mental health day, St David's day, Christmas lunch (santa))
- Staff wellbeing day
- Sun Safety Accreditation
- Suncream/ Sun hats Provided
- Tapestry (online learning journey)
- Translator for meetings with families from EAL if requested
- Waste services for Nappy waste provided on site
- Welcome to Buttercups info goodie bag
- Welcome Pack for parent/carer on child's first day.
- Wet weather all in one outfit provided
- Wet wipes provided

**If you would rather opt out of consumables, please let us know and please take note of the kit list below that will need to be paid for/provided:**

**Kit list:**

Items must remain on site or be replenished as required.

- Wet weather ALL IN ONE including wellies
- Provide woolly hat and gloves
- Suncream and Sun hat
- Clean change of clothes in a ruck sack
- Water bottle
- Cot sheet and blanket if required for sleep time to be taken home daily
- Flannels and a suitable bag to store them when used to send home.
- Prepared daily snack to include fruit and a savoury item.
- Wet wipes
- Purchase a book for a Christmas gift / Easter Egg

In addition to the above kit list, if you wish for your child to participate in any of the below, there will be additional charges as listed below;

- **£30 per** academic year for your child to attend the pre-school programme including parents bespoke evening (Grasshopper/Dragonfly children only)
- Parents evening 2 twice yearly **£20** per academic year.
- Parent workshops **£15** per workshop per parent.
- Trips out and about charged at **£7.50 per trip**, per child
- Tickets to events – Mother's Day treat, Father's Day treat, Graduation party, Christmas party all will be charged at **£10 per person** per event.
- First aid courses for parents/carers (currently offered for free) will be chargeable at **£15 per person**.
- Baking costs for special events – we will ask for **£3 per** session per child this is for things like St George's day baking, Pancake Day
- Morning snack **£1 per child, per day**
- Tapestry **£30 per child** per academic year
- Wet wipes **£1.50 per** pack if not provided

## Options for consumables

We now need you to opt in or out of paying the consumables fee for your child **each term**. Every April, September and January we will re-enrol your child into the voluntary consumables contributions.

### Food fee

Breakfast is £2, hot lunches is £3.50 and light tea is £3.

### Consumables

We have calculated a monthly fee based on how many hours funding are claimed for your child.

| CONSUMABLES CHARGES           |                    |                    |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| If your child claims for .... |                    |                    |                    |
| 0-13 hrs a week               | 14-26 hours a week | 0 -15 hours a week | 16-30 hours a week |
| You can expect to pay...      |                    |                    |                    |
| £25.52 a month                | £51.05 a month     | £25.90 a month     | £51.81 a month     |
| In consumables fees           |                    |                    |                    |
| Attending for 43 weeks (AY)   |                    |                    |                    |
| Attending for 38 weeks (TT)   |                    |                    |                    |

Please circle your chosen option below and return this form to us as soon as possible.

**Option 1:** I will be paying the consumables and food fee in full for my child (each month your child is a registered to attend)

**Option 2:** I will be paying the consumables fee for my child, but not the food fee. I understand that this means I **MUST** provide a healthy breakfast, lunch and tea (if at nursery over these meal times) for my child every day that they attend.

**Option 3:** I will be paying the food fee for my child, but not the consumables fee (for each day my child is registered to attend). I understand that this means I **MUST** provide all the 'extras' that the consumables fee covers (see kit list below)

**Option 4:** I will not be paying any consumables or food fees. I understand that this means I **MUST** provide all items listed in options 2 and 3 above.

If you opt out of paying this fee, you will be expected to provide the resources that the consumables fee would cover. You will also be expected to provide a healthy snack for your child each day - all of these would need to be discussed and agreed upon beforehand.

Please circle a option above and return to Nursey before the end of term.

**Signed:**

**Date:**