

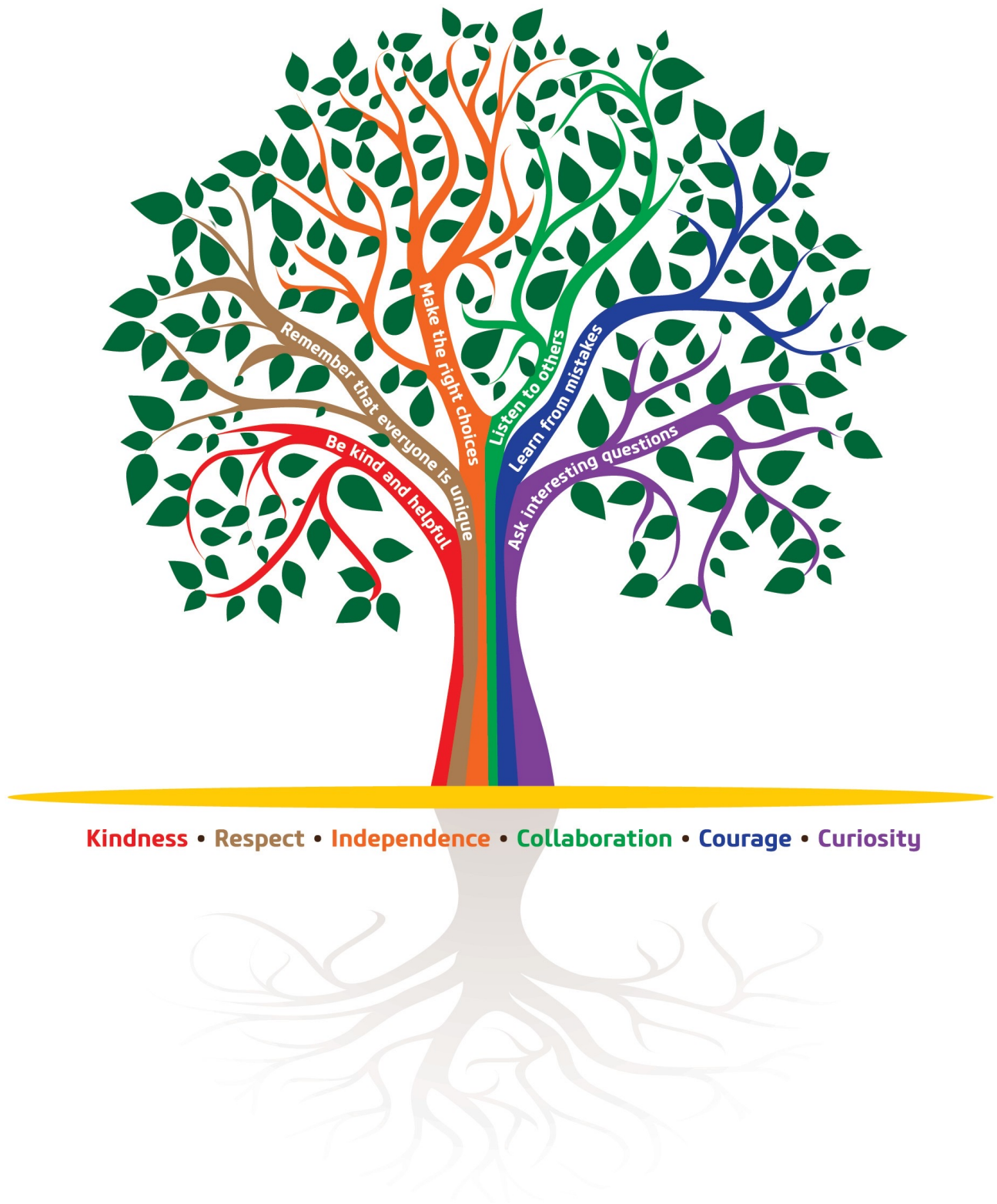


# THE COTTAGE NURSERY HANDBOOK



2023-2024

# Pre-Prep Values Tree



**Kindness** • **Respect** • **Independence** • **Collaboration** • **Courage** • **Curiosity**



## Welcome to the Cottage Nursery at St Hugh's

We hope that you will find this handbook useful during your child's time at the Cottage Nursery. Its purpose is to give you a flavour of nursery life and to help answer any questions you may have during this time.

### **In Preparation:**

To help your child's confidence in day to day nursery life, please encourage:

- Independent dressing and undressing
- Putting on and fastening of outdoor clothing
- Putting shoes on the correct feet
- Correct use of a knife and fork
- Using a handkerchief or tissue efficiently
- Sharing toys and being able to take turns fairly
- Helping with tidying up after activities

In the term before your child starts at the Cottage Nursery, they will receive a greeting card through the post from the nursery team to welcome them to St Hugh's, as well as a short 'All about Me' questionnaire. Please spend a few minutes filling this in with your child, ready for the start of his or her first term.



## Booking Nursery Sessions

Before your child starts, you will be asked to complete a booking form to indicate your preferred sessions for each term (please note that we require a minimum of 4 sessions per week). If you would like to make any changes to your booking, please contact the Registrar, Mrs Rich, by email to [registrar@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:registrar@st-hughs.co.uk).



## Our Aims during the First Few Weeks

During the first few weeks of nursery, our aim is to provide a smooth transition between home and school so that your child can settle happily and quickly into their new environment. Attending a new nursery for the first time can be a daunting experience and the nursery staff are very aware of this. With this in mind, we have created a warm and homely atmosphere to which the children can easily adapt.

Every morning the nursery team will welcome each child into the Cottage and help them to settle into a simple activity, for example, some colouring in, a piece of construction or having fun in the role-play area. It is always best to say a cheerful but quick goodbye to your child before you leave and most children, once occupied, will quickly settle into the nursery day.

If your child is upset when you leave them one of the nursery staff will telephone you when convenient to let you know how your child has settled and that all is fine.

Alternatively, please feel free to telephone us any time on the Cottage Nursery extension number 01367 870718.

## Parking

Parents are welcome to park on the tennis courts beside Pre-Prep before and at the end of the day. For lunchtime pick-ups and on the occasional afternoons when the courts are in use for games, please use the Manor House or Pavilion car parks.

## Visiting the School

Please note that only pupils and members of staff may enter school buildings during the school day (with the exception of the Manor House reception), unless for pre-arranged meetings or events to which parents have been invited. All visitors, including parents attending for a meeting, must report to the Manor House reception to sign-in and sign-out.

## Dogs on site

Whilst we welcome well-behaved dogs within the school grounds, please note that dogs must not be brought into any indoor spaces at any time, and dogs are required to be kept on a lead at all times. Please refer to the school's Dog Policy for further information.

## Bridle Path - Public Access

Please note that there is a public bridle path which runs through the school grounds. Members of the public must not deviate from this path and enter the school grounds. If you are on site and have any concerns about unauthorised access, we ask that you report these immediately by calling the school or alerting the receptionist or any other member of staff.

## Security

At the start of term, you will be asked to fill in a form with the names of the adults who may collect your child from the Cottage Nursery. Should you wish to change these arrangements or add a name to the list, please email Mrs Lings and send a photograph if we have not met the adult before. It is important to note that we do not allow children to leave the nursery with a non-designated adult or with another child. Should a parent, in an emergency, be unable to collect their child at the appointed time, the child will be taken to the main entrance hall of the Manor House where they will be supervised until collected.

## Uniform

A comprehensive nursery uniform list can be found at the back of this handbook. Please label all clothing, including underwear and footwear, so that items can be found and quickly returned.

## Our Daily Routine

**Larks:** If you need to drop off your child at nursery before 8.15am, we offer a Larks session from 8am. This is held in the Pre-Prep hall and there is no charge for your child to attend. Places in Larks need to be booked by 4pm on the Friday of the preceding week, by emailing [blythej@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:blythej@st-hughs.co.uk). One of the nursery team will be in the hall to supervise the session before the nursery day starts.

The nursery day starts between 8.15– 8.30am (enabling you to drop off any older siblings first). There will be activities for the children to settle into straight away.

At 8.30am the register is taken and then morning activities begin. These vary each day so that if your child is attending different sessions in the week, they will experience all the seven EYFS areas of learning.

At 9.30am the children will sit down for a snack. Milk or water is also offered at this time. At 9.45am it is morning break outside (although the outdoor classroom is accessible all day) and at 10.15am the children return inside to have Focus Time with the nursery teacher.

At 11.20am the children will have lunch in the dining hall. They will sit in small groups and one of the nursery team will serve the food and host a table. This is also a great opportunity to encourage good table manners!



The morning session finishes at 12.15pm and children should be collected from the nursery classroom at this time. Children staying all day, and those attending the afternoon session, will then have a rest-time. This could be a story or listening to some music. At 12.45pm there is a lunchtime play.

At 1.15pm afternoon activities will be set up: these will vary from day to day to meet all areas of the curriculum. The afternoon snack is served at 2.30pm and the nursery day finishes at 3.30pm. (3.25pm pick-up is available for parents with other children in Pre-Prep).

**Robins:** If you require wrap-around childcare until 4.40pm this can be booked at an additional cost of £8 per session. Termly bookings can be made at the end of the preceding term and are allocated on a first-come-first served basis. Ad hoc bookings are also accepted though are dependent on places being available.



## Lunches and Snacks

We are very aware of the need to promote healthy eating. Therefore, nutritious lunches and snacks are made each day by the catering staff and the children are encouraged to try new tastes and textures.

Where possible, the children will be involved in preparing their own snacks and, of course - the best bit - tasting them!

If your child has any special dietary needs, please inform the school nurse, in writing, and ensure that the Head of Nursery is also aware. The catering staff will then provide appropriate, alternative meals.

Before your child starts in the Cottage Nursery you will be asked to fill in some forms. One of these asks if you would like your child to have milk during morning snack-time - your response will allow us to pre-order the correct amount of milk, or provide an alternative to meet any notified dietary requirements.

In addition to this, we ask that every child has a named water bottle in nursery so we can encourage our motto 'Drink to Think' throughout the day. The nursery staff will wash and refill these every day so the bottle may stay all year.

## Absences

If your child is unable to attend school, please telephone reception (01367 870700) or email [reception@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:reception@st-hughs.co.uk) by 8.15am, explaining the reason for the absence. The school is bound by government regulations concerning school registers and every unauthorised absence has to be recorded.

If your child arrives after 8.45am, when registers are closed, please inform the school receptionist that your child is in school so that the record can be updated.

A letter to the Head is expected if a prolonged absence is required.







## Medicines

When children are ill, they are much better off at home, not only to reduce the risk of infecting others, but because no child can do their best when feeling poorly. If your child has been ill during the night, has a high temperature or has experienced vomiting or diarrhoea, please keep them at home for 48 hours. If your child is fit enough for school but needs to continue medication, please deliver this in person to the Medical Centre in its original packaging. A consent form must be signed so that medication can be administered during the day - this can be found on the school website or can be provided by the nurse on duty. Long term medication or monitoring, such as for asthma or diabetes, should be discussed with one of the Nurses. A medical form is completed as part of the admissions process but it is essential to report any changes regarding health issues.

## Home/Nursery Liaison

The school website can be found at [www.st-hughs.co.uk](http://www.st-hughs.co.uk) and provides a wealth of information about the nursery and the school. The school calendar, nursery's curriculum planning, lunch menus and contact details are all easily accessible here. The school calendar is published every term and contains the key dates and staff contact details for your reference.

The Cygnet weekly news is sent out to parents via email every Friday. This reports all our week's fun events and notes any forthcoming activities. There is also a section of weekly nursery photographs to enjoy with your child. The Swan newsletter is produced annually. This publication features many photographs of activities and gives a flavour of school life from Nursery to Year 8. The school has three Instagram accounts: @sthughsgcommunity and @sthughssport (private - accessible to current and former parents and staff); and @sthughsschooloxfordshire (public).

Our Home/Nursery Diary is also a useful means of communication as it will include information about activities enjoyed by your child that day and reminders of any forthcoming events. Therefore, it would be most helpful if you would check the diary each day. The diary will be sent home in your child's book bag, which will need to come to nursery each session your child attends.





## Stay and Play Sessions

A Stay and Play session will be held each term. This is a wonderful opportunity for the children to show you around the nursery and for you to enjoy spending time together in the nursery environment. Nursery's Stay and Play sessions run from 8.15 - 9.00am and the day on which they are held will change each term in order to enable as many parents as possible to attend. Younger siblings are most welcome to attend at this time too.

## Children's Profiles

Regular observations and daily records of your child's learning and development are kept, including your child's Development Matters stages, as these closely inform our nursery planning and children's current interests. These are all contained in your child's on-line Tapestry Learning Journey and will be discussed at Parent/Teacher meetings. This document is kept by the Head of Nursery and you may have access to it at anytime.

## THE NURSERY CURRICULUM

There are four principles in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. These four guiding themes underpin effective practice in the EYFS:

- Every child is a **unique child** who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Children** learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents/carers.
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. All areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected.





The EYFS also sets out provision for learning and educational programmes. These are broken down into three Prime Areas and four Specific Areas of learning. These areas of development are in line with the Department for Education (DFE) guidelines and include:

### The Prime Areas

**-Personal, Social and Emotional Development:** self-regulation; managing self; building relationships

**-Communication and Language:** listening, attention and understanding; speaking

**-Physical Development:** gross motor skills; fine motor skills

### The Specific Areas

**-Literacy:** comprehension; word reading; writing

**-Mathematics:** number; numerical patterns

**-Understanding the World:** past and present; people, culture and communities; the natural world

**-Expressive Arts and Design:** creating with materials; being imaginative and expressive

We plan a daily programme of fun and exciting activities following the curriculum. It is very important at the Cottage Nursery that all children are carefully taught, supported and challenged in each of these seven areas of their development.

Every effort is made to provide stimulating and interesting resources which will ensure that all children are confident and motivated to reach their full learning potential and that they meet their Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year.

**Key Workers:** A team of experienced teachers and teaching assistants staff the EYFS department. Every child has a 'key person' who, in this setting, is Mrs Netty Lings (Head of Nursery). She is the first point of contact for each child, and for parents, and is supported

by the Nursery Teaching Assistants, who also contribute towards the children's care and learning. The key worker role is to ensure that every child's learning is tailored to meet their individual needs and to provide specialist support where appropriate.



## OUR WEEKLY OVERVIEW

Throughout the week, specific sessions are run to meet the requirements of the EYFS and to promote the children's experiences and interests. These include:

**Let's Share, Let's Imagine..:** The children report their weekend news in small groups and then record this through drawing and mark making in their news book. This is also a time for telling and acting out stories, with the children being authors and directors. There is a section in the Home/Nursery Diary for parents to fill in over the weekend with their child. This helps us support children as they feed back to the group. **Library:** Your child will have the opportunity to visit the Pre-Prep Library each week and choose a book which they can bring home and share with you. Please return the library book in your child's book bag on Fridays so that a new one can be selected.



**Dance, Music and Movement Sessions:** Music is a large part of nursery life. The children have access to musical instruments throughout the week and we find many opportunities to sing together. The children are encouraged to 'find their voice' using different tones and expression and we explore rhythm using instruments and body percussion. We regularly join Pre-Prep for hymn practices. Dance promotes creativity and provides a positive way for the children to express themselves. The session requires focus, co-ordination and co-operation, which are skills that naturally transfer to other areas of learning.

**Focus Time:** Focus time runs daily throughout the week (see the nursery timetable) and covers the learning objectives for the Early Years. For example, phonics and numeracy concepts are covered, topic discussions are explored and the children join together for Circle Time sessions (following the Jigsaw Scheme).

**Messy Workshop:** In this session, the children will experience all things messy - from shaving gel to cornflakes and tea leaves!



**Forest School:** Forest School aims to encourage and inspire children through positive outdoor experiences. Nursery children visit a designated Forest School area weekly with our Forest School Leader, to enjoy the beautiful woodland and learn about the natural environment. The children are taught to handle risks, to use their own initiative, to solve problems and to cooperate with others.

**Wonder Woodland:** This is an enchanting outside area full of opportunities to discover and learn. There is a shed packed with resources to create a stimulating 'pop-up' environment as well as log seats for everyone to sit and listen to stories, sing and enjoy a welcome snack. We have running water for our reclaimed wood waterfall and bark-chip kitchen, as well as large tractor tyres to play in and balance beams to navigate. When the weather allows, we don our waterproof trousers and wellies, fill our wagon with any essentials and off we go!



**Squiggle Disco:** This fun and energetic activity uses dance and large movements to help children develop the prerequisite physical skills and coordination needed for writing. Throughout the week, we use ribbon sticks, hoops, flags, scarves and pom-poms to improve strength in the shoulder and arm muscles, as well as Play-Doh for helping fingers to get a work-out. We also experiment with various mark-making tools, moving them to the music to create patterns, letters and numbers.

**Let's Make, Let's Create:** We run regular cooking sessions using our nursery kitchen. Cooking can help young children learn and practice some basic maths concepts and build on language skills. The experience of creating meals can help develop their self-confidence and lay the foundations for healthy eating habits. We also use other construction materials to promote critical thinking skills and encourage creativity.



**Let's Talk:** This is a lovely opportunity for children to listen to one another and share their own experiences. Each week the children can bring in an item of interest to discuss with the rest of the nursery. The weekly newsletter informs you of the theme of the week, which is usually linked with our topic of interest for the week.

**French Conversation:** The children enjoy sharing 'un croissant avec chocolat chaud' for snack time followed by songs and games with a specialist French teacher.



**Wellbeing:** The children's emotional and physical wellbeing is at the heart of all our planning provision. We regularly take time to 'pause', with the emphasis on the 'breath in' to focus on the present moment. During rest time we adopt wellbeing techniques for relaxation. The children also participate in half-termly wellbeing sessions. These explore movement, yoga, breathing, and meditation.

Our weekly Circle Time sessions, which follow the Family Links Programme, offer the children opportunities to discuss topics such as respect, managing feelings and choices and consequences.

We have an 'open door' policy and ask parents to keep staff (and if appropriate, the school nurses) informed of any matters arising.





**PE:** This is a prime area of the EYFS and is considered an essential part of the nursery curriculum. As well as a weekly swimming lesson in our new indoor pool and a weekly PE session in the Sports Hall, every nursery session includes activities to enhance physical development. Your child will need to wear or have a pair of trainers in their boot box into which they can change for PE and they should come to nursery wearing trousers/ leggings or shorts on the days when these activities are timetabled. At the start of term, you will be advised which day to bring swimming kit.

**ICT:** A weekly ICT lesson is held in the nursery, however the skills taught are revisited throughout the week and the resources made readily available. The children

learn to operate different computer software and technological equipment, for example, programmable toys to introduce coding, digital microscopes, walkie talkies, remote controlled cars and iPads for recording their work.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Busy Bee

At the beginning of each morning session a Busy Bee is selected to help with simple jobs around the nursery for that day. For example, helping to hand out snacks and being the leader of the line up to lunch. The Busy Bee is selected on a rota basis and every child will have their turn.

### Shining Star Awards

Every child will receive a Shining Star Award each term for a special achievement. These are displayed for all to see and are handed out in class time to a large round of applause!



### Birthdays

Celebrating a birthday is an exciting time and we are happy for children to bring in a cake or cupcakes to share at snack-time. Parents should note that the school operates a strict no nut policy and all cakes - along with with a full list of ingredients - should be handed to a member of the Nursery team.

### Trips

Nursery trips are organised throughout the year to enhance our nursery topics. You will be asked to complete a consent form in advance. The children will travel in the school mini-buses or a designated coach. All transport has fitted seat-belts and we operate a staff ratio of 1:3.



## FOSH (Friends of St Hugh's) & Social Events

FOSH organises a number of events each year, some purely social and some with an element of fund-raising to benefit local charities supporting children, and the school. The work of FOSH is hugely important to school life and is much appreciated by all.

Each year group has parent representatives who coordinate regular get-togethers for the group, giving parents the opportunity to meet over coffee, lunches or suppers. New reps are recruited each year and current reps are always delighted to hear from those who would like to take on the role or be involved in an event.

## OUR YEARLY OVERVIEW

### Autumn Term:

October – Parent/Teacher meetings and Stay & Play, Nursery trip, or Wow event

November – Mummy story week

December – Nativity play, Christmas lunch and party

### Spring Term:

February – Parent/Teacher meetings and Stay & Play

March – Nursery Wow event or Visitor

### Summer Term:

May – Stay & Play

June – Daddy story week, Nursery trip or Visitor, and Sports Day

July – Singsong concert



## UNIFORM AND CLOTHING

- \*Regulation navy jumper (with crest)
- \*Regulation polo shirt (with crest)
- \*Regulation Nursery book bag
- House t-shirt (available from the Manor House receptionists)
- Children can wear any trousers/skirt and shoes suitable to get messy in!

### Outdoors/ Forest School:

- A warm and waterproof coat with a hood
- A scarf, hat and mittens for cold day
- Elasticated waterproof trousers (School will wash and dry these ready for the next session).
- A pair of wellingtons
- A sun hat

### Physical activities:

- A pair of trainers (with velcro fastening)
- On PE days, it would be helpful for all children to wear shorts or trousers
- Swimming costume (own or \*Regulation), towel and hat (in your child's House colour available to purchase from the Manor House receptionists)

### Rest-time:

- A cosy blanket and cuddly (if staying all day)

### Additional:

- Named water bottle – we will clean and fill these with water each session
- A bag with a complete set of spare clothing – to hang on your child's peg just in case of any little accidents

Please ensure all clothing items are clearly named and have a hanging loop where appropriate.

\* Regulation uniform is only available from Stevensons, 245 Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 7HN. Tel: 01865 554559. [www.stevensons.co.uk](http://www.stevensons.co.uk).





We are very much looking forward to welcoming you and your child into the Cottage Nursery at St Hugh's. If you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Mrs Netty Lings**

*Head of Nursery*

Telephone: 01367 870718

Email: [lingsn@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:lingsn@st-hughs.co.uk)

## USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

**Head of Pre-Prep & EYFS:** Mrs Jessica Blythe

Telephone: 01367 870710 Email: [blythej@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:blythej@st-hughs.co.uk)

**Manor House Receptionists:**

Telephone: 01367 870700 Email: [reception@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:reception@st-hughs.co.uk)

**School Secretary:** Mrs Louise Allen

Email: [office@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:office@st-hughs.co.uk)

**Head's PA:** Mrs Kaye Everatt

Email: [headspa@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:headspa@st-hughs.co.uk)

**Headmaster:** Mr David Griffiths

Email: [headmaster@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:headmaster@st-hughs.co.uk)

**Bursar:** Mr Alistair Hamilton

Telephone: 01367 870706 Email: [bursar@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:bursar@st-hughs.co.uk)

**School Nurse:** Mrs Fiona Lines (Head Nurse)

Telephone: 01367 870715 Email: [nurse@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:nurse@st-hughs.co.uk)

**Director of Marketing & Admissions:** Mrs Clare Rich

Email: [registrar@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:registrar@st-hughs.co.uk)

**Chair of Governors:** Mr Neill Lawson-Smith

Email: [chair@st-hughs.co.uk](mailto:chair@st-hughs.co.uk)

## SCHOOL POLICIES

The following policies are available on the St Hugh's website or from the School Office:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Curriculum Policy
- EAL Policy (English as an Additional Language)
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Exclusion Policy
- EYFS Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Privacy Notice
- Recruitment Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- RSE Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Storage and Retention of Data Policy



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THE COTTAGE NURSERY  
ST HUGH'S

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[www.st-hughs.co.uk](http://www.st-hughs.co.uk)

Instagram:  
[@sthughsschooloxfordshire](https://www.instagram.com/sthughsschooloxfordshire)  
[@sthughscommunity](https://www.instagram.com/sthughscommunity)