

The Saplings

Prospectus



**2 The Square
Martlesham Heath
Ipswich
IP5 3SL**

**01473 614753
news@thesaplings.org.uk
thesaplings.org.uk**

Affiliated to the Pre-School Learning Alliance

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The Saplings Mission Statement

We believe at The Saplings that each individual child should have the opportunity to develop in a safe, stimulating, fun and friendly environment. We aim to provide a happy, warm and stimulating environment where children can grow in confidence and independence and learn through play. We appreciate that each child is unique with varying aptitudes and interests and we seek to engage with every child. We aim to provide for parents / carers an affordable, high-quality provision where they can communicate with staff and be assured that their child is safe and well-cared for.

Introduction

The Saplings is situated in its own building on The Square, Martlesham Heath, with ample car parking and is managed by experienced childcare practitioners: Jo Gadsden and Rachel Lockwood.

The Saplings is Ofsted registered and is inspected regularly by OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) to assess the quality of its provision. A few extracts from the last Preschool inspection (Dec 2011) are included throughout this prospectus. A full copy of the report is available in the entrance at The Saplings, or online at: thesaplings.org.uk/ofsted.php. The Saplings has a full range of Policies and these are available for viewing at The Saplings or online at: thesaplings.org.uk/policy_statements.php.

The Saplings is overseen by a board of Trustees with the support of a voluntary Fundraising Committee of parents and / or members of the local community. The Saplings Fundraising Committee welcomes your involvement and support with its activities. If you would like to attend Committee meetings or join the Committee please speak to Manager Rachel Lockwood.

The Saplings welcomes children from the local community as well as further afield and communicates with local primary schools. It has particularly strong links with and is the main feeder to Birchwood County Primary School. To find out more about Birchwood Primary School visit the school's website: birchwood.suffolk.dbprimary.com/suffolk/primary/birchwood/arenas/birchwoodprimaryschool.

The Saplings welcomes fathers, mothers, other relations and carers, including childminders / nannies and people from all cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups, with and without disabilities.

More information about The Saplings, including session times, term dates and prices can be found on our website: thesaplings.org.uk. Our Managers Jo Gadsden and Rachel Lockwood are always happy to talk to present, or prospective parents / carers and help with any queries you may have.

Session Times & Fees

We have sessions for children aged 3 months to 11 years. Our current session schedule is as follows:

Baby Room 'The Seedlings' (3 months – 2 years)

Full Day <i>Includes breakfast, snacks, lunch and a light tea</i>	7.30am – 6.00pm	£44.00
Morning Session <i>Includes breakfast, snack and lunch</i>	7.30am – 12.30pm	£23.50
Afternoon Session <i>Includes snack and a light tea</i>	1.00pm – 6.00pm	£23.50
Playtime Day <i>Includes snack and lunch</i>	9.15am – 3.15pm	£28.80
Playtime Morning <i>Includes snack</i>	9.00am – 12.00pm	£14.40
Playtime Afternoon <i>Includes snack</i>	1.00pm – 4.00pm	£14.40

All of the above prices include: nappies, wipes and nappy rash creme. Formula milk is not included.

Preschool (2-5 years)

Morning Session	9.15am – 12.15pm	£13.50
Afternoon Session	12.15pm – 3.15pm	£13.50
Full Day	9.15am – 3.15pm	£27.00
Additional hour rate		£4.50

A drink of milk or water and a healthy snack is provided during morning and afternoon sessions. Children must bring their own packed lunch.

Breakfast Club and After School Club (2-11 years)

Breakfast Club <i>Includes breakfast</i>	7.30am – 9.15am	£4.75
After School Club until 4pm	3.15pm – 4.00pm	£4.50
After School Club until 5pm <i>Includes snack</i>	3.15pm – 5.00pm	£7.50
After School Club until 6pm <i>Includes a light tea</i>	3.15pm – 6.00pm	£10.00

Holiday Club (2-11 years)

3 hours (minimum booking)		£10.00
Each additional hour		£3.00
Daily rate	7.30am – 6.00pm	£25.00

Fees for Preschool, Breakfast Club and After School Club are invoiced for the next half-term in advance. Fees for our Baby Room 'The Seedlings' are invoiced monthly in advance. Holiday Club bookings must be paid for in advance at the time of booking. All invoices must be paid within the next 14 days.

We are registered to accept a number different childcare voucher schemes: All Save, Apple, Busy Bees, Care-4, Computershare, Early Years Vouchers, Edenred, Sodexo.

Changes to sessions

There are no refunds for periods of absenteeism. Once your child is booked in for a session we will require 4 weeks notice in writing if your child is leaving the preschool or if you wish to decrease your sessions; holidays will be invoiced unless 4 weeks notice is given. Please note that the specified notice periods are not applicable to children solely accessing funded sessions. However, please refer to the guidance on p.15 regarding absence. Extra sessions can be added if staffing allows and these will be additionally invoiced.

Funded sessions

If your child is eligible for two or three year-old funding, the funded hours can be used at any time during our opening hours of 7.30am – 6.00pm. Please refer to p.10 for further information on funded sessions.

Baby Room 'The Seedlings'

The Seedlings Baby Room offers both term-time and year-round care for babies aged 3 months to 2 years. We offer places for up to 9 children per session, with a small and consistent team of staff led by Manager Jo Gadsden.

Facilities

Our calm and cosy baby room has been carefully designed to excite and interest little learners, while following the individual needs of each child.

The Seedlings provides a wide range of activities for children to enjoy. The homely carpeted area provides a plethora of toys, books and puzzles enabling children to explore different objects, textures, colours and sounds.



The craft area has child-sized tables and chairs and children can explore mark-making, crafts and messy play, including: painting, sticking, dough, sand and water.

We make daily use (weather permitting) of The Saplings outdoor space, where children enjoy playing in the sand pit, playing in the play house and pushing and scooting our ride-on toys.

We have an area for nappy changing and potties for training.

Curriculum

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage 2012 Curriculum, concentrating on the three prime areas: Communication and Language, Personal Social and Emotional and Physical Development.

Sleeping

The cosy sleep area has 3 cots and we follow your child's daily sleep pattern. Sleeping or resting children are carefully and regularly monitored.

Key person

We operate a key person system, where each child is allocated to a member of staff who plans activities for the child's individual needs, learning and development. A Daily Communication Diary is provided for each child, where we record sleeps,

meals, drinks, nappy changes and activities enjoyed at each session. This provides a detailed record of your child's time at The Saplings and his / her development.
childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/pre-school/eat-better-start-better

Meals and snacks

Our menus are planned following the Eat Better, Start Better Guidelines (website: childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/pre-school/eat-better-start-better), emphasising healthy, balanced and nutritious food and drink. All meals and snacks are included in the session prices as outlined on page 4, with the exclusion of formula milk, which parents / carers must provide.

Clothing

We ask that all children have at least one complete and named change of clothes with them every day. Children should wear comfortable clothes appropriate for active play and outdoor weather conditions. We also ask that parents / carers supply sunscreen and a sunhat for their child as necessary.

New starters and settling in

Once your registration pack is complete, we will arrange a convenient time for you to attend with your child for a free 1.5 hour trial session.

Younger children and babies may take longer to settle and parents are encouraged to stay should they wish. Parents can then leave their child for short periods of time, gradually increasing the period of time away as necessary. Parents are welcome to contact The Saplings at any time for an update during their child's session.

You will be asked to complete an 'All About Me' booklet which allows us to find out as much as possible about your child's likes, dislikes, interests etc. We would also like you to provide 6-8 photos for your child's Key Person to make up a photo book for your child. The photos should include parents, siblings, grandparents and other significant people, pets, places (house, bedroom, garden), toys etc. The 'All About Me' booklet is also available to download from our website: thesaplings.org.uk/registration.php.

Moving up to Preschool

To ensure a smooth transition from The Seedlings Baby Room to Preschool, your child's Key Person will liaise with his / her designated Preschool Key Person. Your child will have the opportunity to play in the Preschool room accompanied by his / her Seedlings Key Person, on different days and times to introduce the new setting and any routine changes. In addition, your child's new Key Person will visit your child in The Seedlings room.

Preschool

The Saplings Preschool sessions provide Early Years Foundation Stage Education in a safe, stimulating, fun and friendly environment. Preschool sessions are for children aged 2-5 years old and we offer places for up to 30 children per session. Preschool sessions are term-time only; Holiday Club enables our care to be provided for your child all year-round if required (see page 13).



Facilities

The large, open Preschool space has plenty of room for a wide range of activities for children to enjoy, from mark-making and sorting, to puppet shows and dressing up! The comfortable, carpeted room affords child-sized tables and chairs, activity tables for children to feel and explore different objects and textures and a home corner to encourage role-play.

There is an area for crafts, messy or wet play and children enjoy activities exploring sticking, painting, cooking, gardening, sand and water. Our quiet room provides a comfortable, quiet area for story-time. There is a wide range of books children can look at and lots of puzzles too!

We have three small toilets for Preschool children and small wash hand basins to encourage independence. There are nappy changing facilities and potties available for training.



We have a secured outdoor space around the building for free-flow, outdoor play and received a Lottery Grant to help with the construction of our outdoor space. The children enjoy exploring sand and water, how things grow, drawing with outdoor chalks and playing in the play house and on ride-on toys. Our outdoor mud kitchen is also a very popular place to play!

The Preschool also makes use of the local area for activities. These include: Martlesham Heath Village Green and Harry Higgins Play Area (adjacent to

Martlesham Heath Pavilion) which includes swings, a slide and climbing frame. The children also enjoy nature walks through the Martlesham Heath woods.

We also use the spacious upstairs room, where children can play with a wide range of toys and equipment, including an indoor climbing frame, balance beams and hoops. It also provides a space for “circle time”, smaller group activities with your child’s Key Person.

Curriculum

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum updated in 2012. We provide a rich play environment in which children can engage in spontaneous play. Children have the opportunity to experience various activities including: water play, painting, sand, dough, cooking, woodwork, music and physical exercise.

Our role in extending play is by observing children, interacting with them, giving further information, adding or changing materials as appropriate and in some instances, providing a sense of direction. We aim to achieve children with a degree of self-confidence, appropriate social skills and self-direction, who are ready for the kind of sustained play which enables significant growth in knowledge and understanding.

Our curriculum fully prepares children to enter the Foundation Stage at Primary School by covering the following six areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Literacy
- Physical Development
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Arts and Design

“Children and their parents are made to feel welcome at the preschool. Staff have positive working relationships with parents and provide verbal feedback each day on children’s welfare and their activities.” (Ofsted 2011)

Key Person

We operate a Key Person system where each child is allocated to a member of staff, who observes and records, enabling us to plan for the child’s individual needs and recording in each child’s individual ‘My Learning Journey’. These ‘My Learning Journey’ files are sent home each term for you to look at and contribute to and are available for parents / carers to view and discuss with their child’s Key Person at any time.

In addition we hold a Parent’s Consultation Week each term, where you have an opportunity to talk to your child’s Key Person about your child’s progress and development.

“Children’s learning and development is effectively supported by qualified staff. The staff know the children’s individual needs well.”(Ofsted Dec 2011)

We ask parents also to become involved with their child’s development by completing ‘jigsaw pages’ and ‘Magic Moment’ My Learning Journey pages. These allow two-way communication between parents / carers and the child’s Key Person, helping us to learn more about your child’s interests and development at home.

Your child’s Key Person, Session Leader or Preschool Managers will be pleased to answer any queries you may have.

Funding for 2 and 3 year olds

We are registered to accept government funding in the term following your child’s 3rd birthday, providing your child up to 15 hours per week of funded sessions. You will automatically receive the relevant forms when your child becomes eligible. Funded hours can be used at any time during our opening hours of 7.30am – 6.00pm and can be used across all our sessions; this includes: Preschool sessions, Breakfast Club and Afterschool Club. You can also ‘stretch’ your child’s funded sessions across term-time sessions and Holiday Club. Our usual sessions rates apply if your child’s sessions exceed his / her funded entitlement.

If your child’s birthday is between	You can claim funding from
1 st September and 31 st December	Spring Term (starts in January)
1 st January and 30 th April	1 st May (Summer Term)
1 st May and 31 st August	Autumn Term (starts in September)

Some two year-olds are also eligible for 15 hours per week of funded sessions, which can be used across our opening hours of 7.30am – 6.00pm and ‘stretched’ to Holiday Club. To find out if you are eligible, please contact your local Children’s Centre.

Kesgrave Children’s Centre
22 Bell Lane
Kesgrave
IP5 2BY

Phone: 01473 265833
Email: kesgrave@suffolk.gov.uk

Caterpillar Children’s Centre
7 Cumberland Street
Woodbridge
IP12 4AH

Phone: 01394 388276
Email: caterpillar@suffolk.gov.uk

Snacks

The children have a healthy snack each morning and afternoon. The children are offered a choice of water or semi-skimmed milk to drink and a variety of fruit and multi-cultural snacks such as pitta bread, naan bread, bagels etc.

Lunch Club

We have a 'rolling Lunch Club' to enable children at morning and afternoon preschool sessions to have lunch at preschool if they wish. Lunch Club starts at 11.45 am for children attending our morning session. Children attending afternoon sessions can also bring a packed lunch to eat when they arrive.

If you would like your child to participate in Lunch Club please supply your child with their own packed lunch in a suitable lunchbox or container. An insulated lunchbox is ideal. It is important that children are given healthy food and therefore we ask you to follow our lunchbox guidelines which follow the Government recommendations and can be viewed on our website: thesaplings.org.uk/preschool.php.

Clothing

We ask that all children have at least one complete change of clothes with them every day. All clothes should be clearly named. Children should wear comfortable clothes appropriate for active play and the weather conditions.

Children must have suitable outside shoes and coat as well as hat / gloves / mittens. We also ask that children bring in indoor shoes or slippers and sunscreen and a sun hat during the Summer Term.

We encourage parents to purchase The Saplings Preschool uniform for their children which comprises of a polo-shirt and sweatshirt. An order form is available from staff or on our website: thesaplings.org.uk/preschool.php



If your child is in nappies you must supply an adequate number of nappies for them. We have a supply of nappies in an emergency and these will be charged at 50p each.

New-starters and settling in

Once your registration pack is complete, we will arrange a convenient time for you to attend with your child for a free 1.5 hour trial session.

You will be asked to complete an 'All About Me' booklet which allows us to find out as much as possible about your child's likes, dislikes, interests etc. We would also like you to provide 6-8 photos for your child's Key Person to make up a photo book for your child. The photos should include parents, siblings, grandparents and other significant people, pets, places (house, bedroom, garden), toys etc. The 'All About Me' booklet is also available to download from our website: thesaplings.org.uk/registration.php.

Each child starting Preschool for the first time will settle at a different rate. Some children take to Preschool immediately; others spend a long time watching before beginning to join in. It may take a few sessions before the time is right to leave your child, however, in our experience most children do settle in well in a reasonably short

time. Our staff are very experienced at gently introducing the children to Preschool life in a fun and friendly way.

Rising 5's

For those children that will be going onto Birchwood primary school after the summer term (Rising 5's), we offer an additional session on Friday afternoons in the summer term which includes spending part of the session at Birchwood Primary School.

For children who will be attending other local schools, including Gorseland, Cedarwood and Beacon Hill County Primary Schools, we invite their prospective teacher(s) to come into the preschool setting to get to know the children and for the children to meet them.

Your Involvement with Preschool

We welcome your involvement with Preschool. Parents are welcome to 'stay and play' with their child any time – please speak to a member of staff if you wish to join in one of our Preschool sessions. We also have numerous opportunities for you to join us at Preschool throughout the academic year, including our Christmas Play and Graduation Ceremony.

Breakfast Club, After School Club & Holiday Club

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club sessions are for children aged 2-11 years old and we offer places for up to 30 children per session with 24 Walking Bus spaces.

A healthy breakfast is provided for all children, consisting of cereals, breads such as bagels and brioche and a selection of fruit. The session offers free play, supervised teeth cleaning and a Walking Bus to Birchwood Primary School.

After School Club

After School Club sessions are for children aged 2-11 years old and we offer places for up to 30 children per session with 24 Walking Bus spaces.



Children who stay until 5pm are offered a healthy snack and drink during the session and a light, healthy tea is provided for children who stay until 6pm. We have a 5-week rolling tea menu, updated seasonally, which is available for parents to view in at The Saplings. We are happy to adapt our menus at no extra charge for children who are vegetarian or have food allergies.

For each half of the school term, our After School Club has a subject focus, chosen by the children, such as science, all about me, geography etc. and children can explore the topic through a wide range of activities. A wide range of leisure time activities are also provided, including: crafts, cooking, dressing up, role play and Wii.

Holiday Club

The Saplings Holiday Club sessions run during the school holidays Monday – Friday 7.30am – 6.00pm. Holiday Club sessions are for children aged 2-11 years old and we offer places for up to 30 children per session. Children can attend anytime during our opening hours (booked in advance) with a minimum booking of 3 hours per child.

A wide range of leisure time activities are provided, led by each individual child's interests. Activities include: crafts, cooking and outdoor activities, such as scavenger hunts and den-building.

We also run special themed days, where children can dress up, explore a specially designed play area and enjoy party games. Themed days have included: castle day, space and pirate school.



Admissions

After your initial enquiry we will invite you to visit The Saplings. We hope you will be impressed by our facilities and dedicated staff.

If you would like to register your child with us you will be given a Registration form. This must be returned to Rachel Lockwood, Karen Baker or Jo Gadsden with the Registration Fee of £30 (cheques should be made payable to The Saplings (Martlesham Heath)).

Waiting List

Our waiting list is arranged in order of application and we will endeavour to meet your requirements, but unfortunately cannot guarantee this. We strongly advise you to add your child's name to our waiting list at the earliest opportunity.

Drop Off and Collection Routine

We ask that children are dropped off and collected promptly at the time of their booked session. Late drop offs and collections can interrupt the activities for the day. If you are more than 15 minutes late collecting your child there will be an additional charge, as outlined in our Terms and Conditions (available from The Saplings and on our website: thesaplings.org.uk/terms_and_conditions.php). If you are aware that you may be early or late collecting your child then please let a manager know in advance so that we can ensure staffing levels are appropriate.

We ask that all parents / carers sign the children in and out in the diary in the entrance. Children will only be allowed home with an authorised person and you should write in on dropping off who will collect your child. If you are unable to collect your child on a particular day and you need someone else to collect your child you must call and speak with a manager or the session leader and provide the name of the person collecting your child and a password for them to tell us on arrival. Your child's safety is of paramount importance to us.

Accidents

Our staff are very experienced and vigilant to try to reduce accidents and incidents at The Saplings. We always have a qualified Paediatric First Aider present at each session. Any accidents that occur whilst your child is in our care are recorded and you will be asked to sign an 'Accident Form' which details the circumstances of the accident and the first aid given. You are given a copy for your records.

We also have a similar form for 'Home Accidents' that we require you to complete and sign if your child arrives at preschool with a noticeable injury. Once again you

will receive a copy of this form to take home. We also have an 'Incident Form' which we use when a child has been involved in a non-accidental incident with another child. Both parties to the incident receive this form.

All Accident, Incident and Home Accident forms are filed with your child's records.

Absence, Illness and Medicine

Absence

If your child is unable to attend due to illness, or any other reason, you must advise a member of staff at The Saplings by phone: 01473 614753, email: news@thesaplings.org.uk, or personal visit, prior to the start of the session they are due to attend.

Illness

If your child has vomited or has diarrhoea then we ask that your child does not attend for at least 48 hours after their last episode. If your child is unwell please do not bring them to The Saplings. If you have given your child paracetamol syrup before attending preschool it is very important that we are informed.

If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness such as chickenpox, measles, mumps etc please advise staff as soon as possible. Please follow our guidelines and the advice of your doctor regarding the safe and correct time to bring your child back to The Saplings, so that they are no longer infectious to other children.

Medicine

Prescribed medicines can only be administered by the session leader if a Parent has signed a consent form and provided clear instructions regarding dosage etc for staff to follow.

Staffing

We employ 17 dedicated, experienced staff at The Saplings and three apprentices. All staff are trained or working towards a Childcare Qualification. Each session is run by two or more members of staff, at least one of whom is Level 3 qualified or above. Our staffing ratios are 1:3 for babies and children under 2, 1:4 for 2 year-old children and 1:8 for children 3 years and over.

All staff have completed an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service – formally known as CRB) check and these are routinely repeated every 5 years or sooner if their name or address changes. All staff sign a self-disclosure form annually. Staff are required to attend a 'Safeguarding Course' and undertake Food

Hygiene training. There is a member of staff on duty at all times with a current Paediatric First Aid Certificate.

Staff are rigorously interviewed and have a genuine interest in each child's social and emotional welfare. All staff have experience working with a variety of children, including those with special needs. Photos of our staff are displayed in the entrance and more information about them can be found on our website: thesaplings.org.uk/staff_profiles.php.

"All staff have input with planning activities each week around the individual needs of their Key children." (Ofsted 2011)

Inclement Weather

In certain bad weather conditions, it may be necessary to close The Saplings. Please contact The Saplings on: 01473 614753.

SHARING OF INFORMATION

This setting is here to serve children and their families. We will listen, and keep private what you say to us. However, we have to inform the appropriate agencies if we are concerned about the care a child is receiving.

(From the 'Introduction to Safeguarding Children and Young People' from Suffolk safeguarding Children Board).

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Trustees: Alice Ashley, Sarah Tait, Helen Upchurch

Registered Office: 2 The Square, Martlesham Heath, Ipswich, IP5 3SL

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