



Our Curriculum

INTENT

Aim of our curriculum:

- To encourage in all children a love of learning through exciting discovery.
- To prepare children for their futures by starting them on a path of being lifelong learners.
- To teach children about themselves and others, giving them the foundation skills they will need to thrive at school and beyond.

What our curriculum teaches

Carousel's curriculum gives children knowledge and skills that cover the seven areas of learning as set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- Children enjoy daily stories, singing, nursery rhymes and interactions with practitioners, which helps them develop their **communication and language** skills.
- Children have the opportunity to play outdoors multiple times a day, exploring resources like the climbing frame, scooters and bikes to develop their **physical** skills. They also have the opportunity to explore activities like dancing, yoga and sensory play.
- Children have unrestricted access to artistic, creative and role play resources to allow them to explore **expressive art and design**.
- Our practitioners plan daily activities and have regular interactions with the children to widen their **understanding of the world**. Such activities and interactions will cover scientific and cultural ideas, the natural world and technological innovations, including through the use of our real woodwork bench.
- Participating in group activities, playing with peers, interacting with practitioners, adapting to the structure of the nursery day and sitting down for mealtimes all help children to develop their **personal, social and emotional skills**.
- Children are surrounded by opportunities to learn **maths** and **literacy** skills at Carousel. Our reading corners have an ever-changing supply of books and mark-making activities form a regular part of the nursery day. Alongside specifically planned maths activities, we ensure that maths is everywhere, with fun activities such as filling and pouring in the water tray, colour hunts and cooking to name just a few.



IMPLEMENTATION

How we teach

We employ a balance of child-led free play and adult-led teaching experiences to deliver the curriculum, plus extras to enrich it.

- Child-led free play allows children to explore the indoor and outdoor resources as they wish, while enjoying interactions with practitioners who use the children's play choices to develop their knowledge, abilities and thinking skills.
- Daily, adult-led experiences are planned by practitioners to be structured sessions where children can build up specific skills and work on areas necessary for their learning journey.
- We deliver special opportunities to enrich the children's learning experience. These include trips within the local community and further beyond, Portuguese lessons and Cultural Celebration weeks designed to celebrate the heritage of some of the children in our care.

Our curriculum's IMPACT

Children are assessed in a formative way through weekly observations, which form their Learning Journey, a document that aids practitioners in tracking their development over time and which is shared with parents every term.

Children are assessed in a summative format each term when data is inputted into a spreadsheet based on these observations. This data is analysed by the manager and helps us to identify any children, rooms or areas of learning that require attention.

Children's progress is shared with parents via an annual report (November) and a Parents' Evening (June), in addition to regular conversations.

We believe that when children leave our setting, the positive impact of our curriculum is clear to see. Our children enjoy learning, have excellent language skills and have developed knowledge across the seven areas of learning. Children thrive and develop whilst in our care, having made friends, built relationships with their carers and developed positive behaviours, alongside all the knowledge and skills they have learned. Children are ready for school in an emotional and educational sense, and have gained the necessary confidence and ability to be independent, lifelong learners.



A Parent's Guide to The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage was created by the Department for Education and sets out the standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5. Focussing on babies through to five years, the framework looks at young children's development through a range of themes (principles) and their respective commitments.

A Unique Child	Positive Relationships	Enabling Environments	Learning and Development
<p>Child Development</p> <p>Babies and children develop in individual ways and at varying rates. Every area of development – physical, cognitive, linguistic, spiritual, social and emotional – is equally important.</p>	<p>Respecting Each Other</p> <p>Every interaction is based on caring professional relationships and respectful acknowledgement of the feelings of children and their families.</p>	<p>Observation, Assessment and Planning</p> <p>Babies and young children are individuals first, each with a unique profile of abilities. Schedules and routines should flow with the child's needs. All planning starts with observing children in order to understand and consider their current interests, development and learning</p>	<p>Play and Exploration</p> <p>Children's play reflects their wide ranging and varied interests and preoccupations. In their play children learn at their highest level. Play with peers is important for children's development.</p>
<p>Inclusive Practice</p> <p>The diversity of individuals and communities is valued and respected. No child or family is discriminated against.</p>	<p>Parents as Partners</p> <p>Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together in early years settings, the results have a positive impact on children's development and learning.</p>	<p>Supporting Every Child</p> <p>The environment supports every child's learning through planned experiences and activities that are challenging but achievable.</p>	<p>Active Learning</p> <p>Children learn best through physical and mental challenges. Active learning involves other people, objects, ideas and events that engage and involve children for sustained periods.</p>
<p>Keeping Safe</p> <p>Young children are vulnerable. They develop resilience when their physical and psychological wellbeing is protected by adults.</p>	<p>Supporting Learning</p> <p>Warm, trusting relationships with knowledgeable adults support children's learning more effectively than any amount of resources.</p>	<p>The Learning Environment</p> <p>A rich and varied environment supports children's learning and development. It gives them the confidence to explore and learn in secure and safe, yet challenging, indoor and outdoor spaces.</p>	<p>Creativity and Critical Thinking</p> <p>When children have opportunities to play with ideas in different situations and with a variety of resources, they discover connections and come to new and better understandings and ways of doing things. Adult support in this process enhances their ability to think critically and ask questions.</p>



Health & Wellbeing	Key Person	The Wider Context	Areas of Development
Children’s health is an integral part of their emotional, mental, social, environmental and spiritual wellbeing and is supported by attention to these aspects.	A key person has special responsibilities for working with a small number of children, giving them the reassurance to feel safe and cared for and building relationships with their parents.	Working in partnership with other settings, other professionals and with individuals and groups in the community supports children’s development and progress towards the outcomes of Every Child Matters	The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is made up of seven areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are connected to one another and are equally important. All areas of learning and developing are underpinned by the principles of EYFS

Through observation of the children’s development by key staff, their progress will be recorded and ‘next steps’ planned for. Observation is divided into 6 age groups, which take into consideration the range within which young children develop:

Birth to 12 mths; 12-18 mths; 18-24 mths; 24 to 36 mths; 36 to 48 mths; 48 to 60 mths

Using the Early Years Foundation Stage as a guide and the seven areas of learning and development and their respective aspects, key staff are able to plan play activities to offer the children experiences and challenges across the whole spectrum of their development as they head towards primary school. The aim is that by the time they reach this age they are fulfilling their potential, thus making the transition to school a very positive experience.

Areas of Learning & Development	
Prime Areas	Specific Areas
Physical Development	Literacy
Communication & Language	Maths
Personal, Social & Emotional	Understanding the World Expressive Art & Design

We hope this brief explanation of how we plan play activities, monitor progress and reach our aims for your children gives you a clearer insight into our nursery and its ethos – *Early Learning for a Brighter Future.*



Key Person Approach

What is it?

We believe the key person approach (KPA) to nursery care needs greater recognition because of its importance for the children we look after at Carousel Day Nursery. The aim of the KPA is to enable and support close attachments between individual children and their families, and nursery staff. We organise and focus all of our work at Carousel around the KPA. The close attachment between children and staff can be very helpful when settling a new child into nursery, and can also provide a vital contact for those parents/carers who want their child to feel special to someone at nursery. Parents/carers are kept closely informed about their child's day; if they cannot be present during that time the key person can make them feel as if they were, so they do not have to be excluded from the details and intimacies of their child's day away from them.

Key Person Approach at Carousel

At Carousel each nursery practitioner has 7-8 children in her key person group (*2-3 each day*). It is that key person's responsibility to write the daily diary forms each day for each of the children in their group. It is also their responsibility to compile the Learning Journeys for each child in their group. Learning Journeys are an illustration of a child's progress through nursery, based on the themes and principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) learning goals, which can be discussed with parents at any time.

At Carousel we believe that the best interests of the child are served by them having a variety of relationships, so when the child has formed a confident and trusting relationship with their key person, they will be encouraged to relate to a wider group of adults. This is also very helpful when it is time for the child to move up into the next area of the nursery as they will be confident and secure in forming a new key person relationship.

Your child will be assigned a key person once a place has been reserved for them at Carousel and a start date agreed upon. Settling in will be co-ordinated by the manager, and will include a home visit. This involves a member of the management team and the Key Person visiting the child and parents at their home to meet them in a familiar environment and find out about their care needs before they start with us.



Quality Childcare at Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school

Settling In / Key Person Approach

We have a settling in policy/procedure that helps a child get used to a new environment and group of people. This involves a home visit and two settling sessions. Children will also be designated a nursery practitioner who will be their Key Person. This person is your contact if you want to discuss anything about your child and who is responsible for tracking your child's development. This person will ensure your wishes are considered and your individual child's needs are met within the group. They should be available for you to talk to either in person or on the phone whenever you need to.

Parental Involvement

Parents' knowledge of their own child is invaluable and will help to influence the work the nursery practitioners do with your child. We monitor a child's development through weekly observations, which build up to create a child's Learning Journey. This document is shared with parents every term. Children are always working towards next steps and their development is assessed termly using our development framework. We issue termly newsletters and update you on your child's progress through an annual report (November) and a Parents' Evening (June/July).

Ratios

The minimum staffing ratios required by Ofsted are: 1:3 children under 2 years 1:4 children aged 2 years 1:8 children aged 3-7 years. We have higher staffing ratios than these, to cover lunch periods, holidays and other absences. 50% of all staff working in the nursery should hold a level 3 NVQ qualification or the equivalent. There should never be fewer than 2 adults on duty at any time, regardless of how few children are in the nursery. All of our room leaders hold at least a level 3 early years qualification.

Observation

Our practitioners observe their key children regularly - once a week for formative assessment, but all of the time during play and interactions. Observations are important as they allow practitioners to see what stage your child is at and what opportunities they need to be given to help them progress. When carrying out observations practitioners may stand back and allow children to play, or may be actively engaged in the child's play with them. Experienced staff will be aware of a child needing support or a child needing an additional piece of equipment during any observation.

Outdoor Play

Playing outside is really important for children. We had our garden completely redesigned in the summer of 2021 and now have a fantastic outdoor space designed to cater to young children's needs. This includes a water wall, woodwork bench, planters, sandpit and climbing frame, all within a space large enough to give children plenty of room to run around or use the bikes and scooters. Our children spend time outdoors at least twice a day and we operate a garden rota for all rooms, so that the younger and older children are not using the garden at the same time. The children are regularly taken for walks in the local area and on some visits throughout the year.



Toys & Equipment

The toys and equipment in our nursery are of very high quality, reflect diversity and support children with special needs. The majority of toys are placed at a low level so that the children can choose their own activities. All rooms have a role play, small world and book corner, which is also a cosy area where children can spend some quieter time. Also available to the children are drawing and colouring equipment, painting, Play-Doh, creative resources, construction materials, games and equipment for problem solving including weighing and measuring. Children need access to natural materials to help them understand the world around them and develop all of their senses, which is why we have lots of wooden toys and natural resources for them to explore

Food and drink

At Carousel we pride ourselves on the quality of the food that our children enjoy. We offer healthy, tasty, balanced menus that change on a five week rota, and we change them to reflect the availability of seasonal produce. We provide breakfast, lunch, tea and two snacks every day. We encourage children to try all foods and want them to enjoy mealtimes as a social event with their friends. We cater for special dietary needs and have a policy for allergies and intolerances. We offer water throughout the day and cows' milk with snack, plus provide babies with the breast or formula milk they need.

Health & Safety

We have a number of policies relating to health and safety, some of which are available on our website - please contact us if you would like information on a specific one. If your child becomes ill at nursery we will follow our policy for sick children.

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

If your child has special educational needs or a disability, please speak to our nursery management team as they will be able to explain our specific policy for SEND and our Inclusion Policy.

Disclosure and Barring Service

All of our staff have an up to date DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check to ensure their suitability to work with children. You can ask to see their records if you wish.



Easing Your Baby Into Nursery

For many parents, especially those putting their baby into a nursery for the first time, it can be a daunting prospect and you may have lots of questions.

Below is some advice on how we believe parents can help ease their baby into nursery. We have focussed on three areas that we have identified as being very important for our babies and their parents; milk, sleeping and food.

It is important to remember that starting nursery is a time of great change for your baby. There is no set time that it takes a baby to settle, but they all do eventually.

We are here to support you as parents when your baby begins at Carousel. We know that it can be very difficult leaving your baby so we have a 'nursery mobile' that allows easy contact between our staff and parents throughout the day. We regularly take photos of the children during activities so that you can see what they have been up to, and we keep a daily diary for all children. Our nursery nurses are very happy to chat at drop-off or pick-up time, or you can email us if there is anything you would like to discuss.

Milk

Most babies in our Ducklings room will still be drinking breast, formula or cow's milk throughout the day. You are welcome to provide expressed breast milk for your baby, or we ask that you bring in their formula milk. If your baby is drinking cow's milk you do not need to provide this.

If your baby is breastfed, then you will need to wean them onto a bottle or cup before they start at Carousel. There is lots of helpful advice in books and on the internet about how to do this.

Some babies struggle with drinking their milk when they first start at nursery, possibly because being given a bottle is an intimate thing and they are used to receiving it from their main caregiver. However, we find that once babies are settled and form a bond with our staff, they quickly get back to guzzling their milk again!

Sleep

At Carousel, we are very flexible about when your baby can have their daytime naps. They can stick to their regular routine, but please bear in mind that if other babies and children in the nursery are awake then we cannot make the environment as dark or quiet as your baby may be used to.

We do have our own routine at Carousel that we will encourage you and your child into once they are ready. The children have lunch at 11.30am, after which around half of our children will go to sleep for an hour or two. The older children who do not sleep go outside to play at this time so that the nursery is as quiet as possible.

Carousel's Sleep Environment

- The sleep rooms are darkened and made as quiet as possible.
- You can provide us with anything your baby might use to get to sleep, such as a comforter, a dummy, a sleeping bag etc.



- We use travel cots that our younger babies sleep in, but as children get older they sleep on mats.
- If your baby has to be cuddled or breastfed to sleep, this can be difficult when they start nursery. Whilst we love cuddles with the babies, we cannot realistically cuddle or rock six babies to sleep. Babies who are still breastfed to sleep when they start nursery will find the transition very difficult and possibly stressful. We therefore encourage parents to get their babies out of these habits before they start nursery.
- We find that as children reach the age of about 1, they begin to drop their morning nap and have just one sleep after lunch. Of course, we will not force a baby into our routine until they seem ready and if you want us to keep trying with morning or afternoon naps then we will do so.

Food

We find that most babies start with us at Carousel when they are around 9-12 months old, and are therefore usually weaned onto solid food already.

At Carousel we can let babies feed themselves with their hands or we can spoon feed them. We help babies to start spoon feeding themselves when they show signs of being ready for this. We do recommend that a mixed approach to weaning is best, as babies who accept a spoon, but don't need their food completely pureed, and can eat things like fruit by themselves, will get on best with eating whilst they are at nursery.

Babies who are spoon fed should be introduced to more lumpy textures before they reach 9/10 months old because they are more likely to reject new textures if they are introduced later. We would suggest that once your baby seems to be accepting pureed foods readily and easily, you begin to introduce thicker ingredients, puree the food less and eventually make the transition to cut up food.

At Carousel we find that our babies eat the best of all of our children, because they do not 'eat with their eyes' as older children do. We would therefore recommend that you take the opportunity of introducing your baby to lots of different textures and flavours when they are still young. We offer a very varied menu at Carousel to ensure we are doing this too.



Fee Structure Sept 2023-24

Number of days each week	Under 2 Years £pcm	2-3 years £pcm	3+ Years with Funded Entitlement	
			15hrs £pcm	30hrs £pcm
1	£363.55	£336.50	£118.10	£118.10
2	£727.10	£672.95	£433.55	£236.20
3	£1090.70	£1009.50	£770.05	£530.65
4	£1454.25	£1345.90	£1106.50	£867.10
5	£1767.90	£1632.40	£1443.00	£1203.60

Nursery fees are charged on an annual basis, payable in twelve equal monthly instalments (52/12) in advance on the 1st of each month.

Funded Early Education Entitlement

All children are entitled to either 570 or 1140 hours of funded entitlement per year (15 or 30 for each term-time week of the year) from the beginning of the term after their third birthday. The fees above include 30 hours of free entitlement stretched equally over each day of the year. In order to synchronise this funding with regular monthly payments, the terms are deemed to start on the 1st September, 1st January, and 1st May. The funded hours are provided entirely free, any balance due is for additional hours. If you choose to split your entitlement across two settings please speak to the nursery manager as your fees will fall outside of the structure detailed above and will depend on how many hours you are claiming at our setting.

Tax Free Childcare

Visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk for more information about eligibility for Government support with the cost of early education and childcare.

The Government's Tax free childcare scheme reduces fees for eligible parents by 20% up to £2,000 per child, per year. Parents are responsible for the full fee until payment is received from their Tax-Free Childcare account. To ensure payment reaches the nursery in time, please ensure payments are made to HMRC no later than the 25th of the month before fees are due on the 1st.



Application Form

Full Name of Child:

Date of Birth:

Name(s) and address(es) of parent(s) making the application

Name(s):

Address(es):

Tels:

Mobiles:

Emails:

I/we would like my child to start attending Carousel Day Nursery from (date):

I/we would like my/our child to attend on the following days / sessions (please tick).

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning					
Afternoon					

Signature (parent/carer):

Date:

Signature (parent/carer):

Date:

For our future reference, would you please indicate how you heard about Carousel Day Nursery:

This Application Form should be completed and returned via email to info@carouselnursery.net. A non-refundable registration fee of £15.00 will be required to join our waiting list. You can pay this via our website using the link on the 'Contact Us' page, or you can pay by bank transfer. **Bank details: Carousel Day Nursery, Sort Code 20-25-19, Account Number 83527727.** You can alternatively print the form and return by post to **Nursery Manager, Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-School Ltd, 32 Thynne Road, Billericay, Essex CM11 2HH**, enclosing a cheque for the registration fee. Many thanks.