

AUTMNN NEWSLETTER

TERM 1& 2

WELCOME

It has been a lovely and exciting start to the new academic year at pre-school. We have thoroughly enjoyed welcoming our returning children back and a warm welcome to all of our new starters as they begin their pre-school journey with us.

September is a special time of settling in, getting to know one another, and building trusting relationships. We are supporting the children as they become familiar with their new surroundings, learn the routines and expectations of the setting, and develop confidence in separating from their family and engaging in their new environment.

Our approach is getting to know each child as an individual and responding to their unique interests, needs and starting points.

We are giving the children time and space to explore at their own pace, build friendships, communicate their ideas, and develop a growing sense of belonging. Through play, exploration and positive relationships, the children are beginning to feel safe, secure and confident within their new environment.

Each week, we carefully plan focused adult-led activities known as Invitations to Learn & Play. At this time of year, these experiences are thoughtfully designed to support the children's transition and help them become familiar with our routines, spaces and resources.

Alongside this, we follow their emerging interests and fascinations, providing playful opportunities to explore, discover, communicate and learn together, as they begin to find their place within our pre-school community.

SNACK



A warm welcome to all of our new families joining us this September, and a big thank you to our returning families for your continued support with snack donations. We are very grateful for your generosity, which helps us provide a varied, healthy and enjoyable snack time for the children.

As the children settle into their new routines, snack time is a lovely opportunity to sit together, make choices, try new foods and develop independence.

We kindly ask for snack donations for the setting rather than individual snacks from home, helping us to provide consistency for all children and avoid additional charges.

As a Food Champion setting, we encourage healthy eating and reducing sugary snacks. Donations of fruit, bread, crackers, crumpets, cheese, butter, cereals, sugar-free jam, Marmite or honey are always greatly appreciated.

Please remember that we are a nut-free setting due to a severe allergy, so please do not donate products containing nuts, including peanut butter or hazelnut spreads.

Thank you again for your continued kindness and support!

MEDICATION

Please do not leave any medication in your child's bag. On arrival, please hand all medication directly to Carol, Nic, or Maria. We will then complete a medication consent form with you.

We are only able to administer medication that has been prescribed by a GP, and we must be able to see the original prescription label.

Unfortunately, we are not able to administer over-the-counter medications, including Calpol.

Thank you for your cooperation.

SAFETY REMINDER

We would like to kindly remind everyone to ensure that **only essential items** are placed in your child's bag when attending the setting. These should include nappies, wipes, nappy sacks, and a spare set of clothing if needed.

Please also hand any letters directly to Carol or Nic at the door, rather than leaving them in bags. We kindly ask that no medication or adult items are placed in children's bags.

We also ask that food items such as sweets, raisins, small toys from home that have not been safety checked, or other small objects (such as coins) are not sent in, as these can present choking or safety risks.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep all children safe.

DUMMIES AND COMFORTERS

You're welcome to bring a dummy or small comforter for your child. Please avoid large items such as blankets, as they can cause a trip hazard.

We ask that toys from home stay at home, as they are not safety checked and may get lost or damaged. We do not encourage tablets during settling, and dummies will be used only when needed. If you are unsure, please speak to your child's key person.



SAFETY AROUND THE PRESCHOOL AND SCHOOL PREMISES

For the safety of all children and families, please ensure you hold your child's hand at all times when around the preschool and school premises. Vehicles regularly enter and leave the car park, so it is important that children are kept close and supervised. Once you have collected your child from preschool and they have left the building, they are your responsibility. We kindly ask that you keep your child close to you and supervise them at all times while on the premises. Please use the designated footpaths provided when walking to and from the preschool, to help ensure the safety of both yourself and your child.

Please be aware that the car park is for staff use only. Some members of staff have allocated parking spaces, and these spaces must remain available for them. This applies to all drivers, including disabled drivers, unless specific permission or an agreed reasonable adjustment has been arranged with the preschool in advance. Please do not use the car park for drop-offs or pick-ups.

For the safety of everyone, please also do not park or wait outside the gates on the yellow lines. These areas must remain clear to allow safe access and to ensure vehicles and pedestrians can move safely around the entrance. This applies to all drivers, including disabled drivers, as the yellow lines must remain clear at all times.

Thank you for your cooperation and for helping us to keep all our children, families and staff safe.

FAMILY PHOTO BOARD

Please could we kindly ask if you would provide or send via email a family photo. Each key group has a family board to celebrate each child's uniqueness and build the importance of family. These will be displayed in your child's key group room.

Please speak to your key person for more information.

If you would like to send via email please send to:
briarypreschool@btconnect.com

PREPARING FOR AUTUMN: CLOTHING & OUTDOOR PLAY

As we move into the Autumn Term, please remember that the weather can become cooler, wetter, and more changeable. We kindly ask that your child comes to nursery dressed appropriately for the season, with layers that can be added or removed as needed.

As outdoor and messy play remain an important part of learning, please ensure your child has suitable clothing for all weather conditions. We recommend that children bring:

- A waterproof coat or jacket
- Wellies for wet and muddy outdoor play
- A full change of clothes in their bag each day, including spare socks and underwear

Outdoor and messy play support creativity, sensory exploration, confidence, and motor skills, so we want to ensure the children can continue to enjoy these experiences comfortably, whatever the weather. Please check your child's bag regularly and replace any wet or muddy clothing so they are ready for the following day.

Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep the children comfortable, happy, and ready to learn throughout the Autumn Term.



BOOK LOANING

Each week your child will bring home a book to share with you at home.

Please ensure it is returned each week in the zippy wallet before another book can be issued.

A small charge will be made for any lost or damaged books.

BEHAVIOUR CODE OF CONDUCT

Please take a moment to read our Behaviour Code of Conduct, which also includes expectations regarding behaviour towards our staff.

This document is available on our website.

It outlines how we support positive behaviour and helps us maintain a safe, respectful, and consistent environment for all children, staff, and families.

BELONGINGS & NAPPIES

Please label all lunchboxes, water bottles, and personal items (coats, hats, gloves, spare clothes) with your child's name. Grapes and cocktail sausages must be cut lengthways to reduce choking risk. We are a nut-free preschool, so lunches must not contain nuts, peanut butter, hazelnut spread, or nut-based bars, as we have a child with a severe allergy. Please avoid marshmallows, popcorn, and only include raisins if your child can chew them well.

Each day, please pack plenty of spare clothes, nappies or pull-ups (if needed), wipes, and nappy sacks. **A small charge will apply if these are not provided.**

Thank you for your cooperation.

TAPESTRY

We use an online learning journal called Tapestry, where you can view your child's progress, photos, and videos from their time at Briary Pre-School. Log in at <http://eyli.org/login/> with your secure details. If you don't yet have an account, please speak to Maria so you don't miss out on your child's journey with us.

Our invoice system is now online and available through Tapestry. Invoices and receipts will be generated automatically, making the process quicker and more efficient for everyone.

If you have any questions or need support using the new system, please feel free to get in touch.



TAPESTRY
ONLINE LEARNING JOURNAL

FESTIVALS AND CULTURES

At preschool, we celebrate diversity and inclusion by recognizing a variety of festivals from Christian, Muslim, Chinese, Vietnamese, Indian, and other faiths.

If your family celebrates a special event, please let us know so we can include it. Learning about different cultures helps children appreciate one another and builds a strong sense of community.



ALDI & LIDL DONATIONS

Since September 2022, we've been registered with Neighbourly, who kindly connect us with surplus food donations from local stores.

Every Monday, Maria and Lucia collect bakery items from Lidl Herne Bay, and every Tuesday, they collect a variety of food from Aldi Whitstable.

Please supervise your child when choosing bakery items to avoid them handling food, and do not allow children or siblings to enter preschool while eating, as we have children with severe food allergies.

We also place donations outside our entrance—please feel free to help yourself. We're very grateful to Aldi and Lidl for their continued support.



FEES

A quick reminder that fees **must** be paid **weekly, monthly** or **termly** in advance of your child attending sessions.

As a charity-run preschool, fees are our main source of income. You can pay by cash, cheque, or bank transfer:

Lloyds Bank
Sort Code: 30-99-50
Account No: 17809463

If you have any questions or are facing financial difficulties, please speak to Carol or contact Lucia Wells,

Please note: Unpaid fees may result in your child's place being withdrawn, as stated in your parent agreement.

KEY GROUP TIME

Each morning and afternoon, your child's key person leads a 20-minute Group Time—a valuable part of our routine where children build bonds, enjoy stories, share experiences, and develop listening and social skills.

Group Time starts at 11am and 3pm, so please be mindful when collecting your child at 3pm, as they may miss this important session.



MOBILE PHONES

Please ensure that **mobile phones** are put **away** when entering the preschool. This is a safeguarding requirement to keep children safe. **Mobile devices** should **not** be answered in the setting or **photographs taken**.



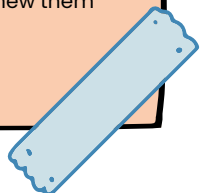
LUNCH CHOICES

Did you know Briary Pre-School has the **NHS 'Food Champion Accreditation'**? If you would like ideas and guidance on healthy lunch boxes, please visit our website and go to the pull-down menu 'About' then 'Food Champion'.

We **do not** allow sweets, chocolate bars, or nuts in lunch boxes. Chocolate-covered biscuits or wafers are okay. Please be mindful that a child's stomach is approximately the size of the palm of their hand, so smaller portion sizes are recommended. We encourage healthy choices such as fruit and dairy products, such as yoghurt.

We do not recommend potato crisps, as they can be a choking risk, so breadsticks, crackers, or similar alternatives are better. We do not allow popcorn or marshmallows in lunch boxes. If you provide raisins, please ensure your child is able to chew them properly, as they can be a choking risk and are not recommended for children under two.

Please refer to our choking guidance on our website for further information.



UNIFORM

Uniform is available year-round, including both new and nearly new (washed and donated) items. We currently have stock of polo shirts, sweatshirts, jumpers and fleeces.

Prices – New:

Polo Shirt £8.50 | Sweatshirt £11.50 | Zipped Fleece £14.00
Jumper (Hoody) £15.00

Prices – Nearly New:

Polo Shirt £5.00 | Sweatshirt £6.50 | Zipped Fleece £7.50

If transferring, please reference “UNI” with initials of your child’s name.

Please note: Some sizes may be unavailable. New items may need to be pre-ordered, and nearly new stock depends on donations.

OPENING TIMES

Briary Pre-School is open during term time only (38 weeks per year). Please refer to our Term Dates page at www.briarypreschool.co.uk under Information for details on holiday periods, bank holidays, and staff development day closures.

Opening Hours:

Monday to Friday – (8:00–8:30am early risers)
8:30am to 3:30pm

Entitlement Hours:

15 hours Free for Two & Universal 3/4: 8:30am–11:30am or 12:30pm–3:30pm (Mon–Fri)

Working Families Entitlement: 8:30am–3:30pm
(7-hour day; 6 funded hours + 1 non-funded hour)

Children attending full days will need a packed lunch in line with our healthy eating guidance.

For more information, please see the Funding and Fees page under Information.

ON ARRIVAL & PICK UP

Sometimes children can arrive at pre-school eating a snack or breakfast. At the time of arrival staff are busy greeting and settling children and are not able to supervise your child eating, which is part of our eat safe policy. Please can we kindly ask you to reassure your child that they will be able to have snack when the snack bar opens at 9am and 1pm which is properly supervised.

We kindly ask that when dropping off your child, you do so during our morning opening time of 8:30am – 9:00am.

We have noticed that some children are arriving between 9:00am and 10:00am, which can significantly delay our morning routine. Late arrivals require us to repeatedly update our whiteboards to ensure we remain within staff-to-child ratios, and this can be particularly challenging as staff may also be in meetings during this time.

If you are running late or need to arrive outside of these hours, please contact the setting by phone to let us know, and we will be happy to accommodate where possible.

On arrival for collecting your child, we kindly ask that siblings do not play with the toys. This is because staff have already completed tidying before collection, and additional play means the area must be tidied again, which is very time-consuming.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

SHOE BOXES

For our new starters, we ask that you bring in a special shoebox from home. This is a lovely opportunity for you and your child to decorate the box together with Mummy, Daddy, or another special grown-up before bringing it into pre-school.

Your child can then fill their shoebox with a few special and familiar items from home, such as family photographs, a favourite small toy, a comforter, or anything else that helps them feel happy, safe, and settled.

The shoebox will become a little piece of home at pre-school, helping your child to feel connected to their family while they settle into their new environment. It can also be a lovely way for your child to talk to us about the people and things that are special to them.

Please make sure all items are clearly labelled with your child’s name.

We can’t wait to see all your wonderful creations!

HALF TERM DATES

Half Term– Monday 26th October 2026 – Friday 30th October 2026

Preschool Back Open – Monday 2nd November 2026

Christmas Half Term– Friday 18th December 2026 – Friday 1st January 2027

Preschool Back Open – Monday 4th January 2027

Please visit the Term Dates section on our website for information on the September 2026–27 term dates.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Here are some key dates for your diary over the coming months. We have a range of exciting events planned and hope you can join us where possible.

October

- World Healthy Food Day – Friday 16th October 2026

We will be exploring healthy eating with fun food-themed activities.

- Grandparent Week – Monday 19th October 2026 10–11am, Wednesday 21st October 2026 2–3pm and Thursday 22nd October 2026 10–11am.

A chance for grandparents to visit and join in with the fun!

- Spooky Disco – Thursday 22nd October 2026, 4:15pm – 5:15pm

Dress up and dance – a fun halloween celebration for all!

November

- Bonfire Night – Thursday 5 November 2026

Themed activities to celebrate safety around fire and sparkles.

- Remembrance Day – Wednesday 11 November 2026

Talk gently about remembering and showing respect. Children could make poppy pictures or take part in a quiet moment.

- Nursery Rhyme Week – Dress up all week, Monday 9th November 2026 – Friday 13th November 2026. (Staff will dress up thursday)

- Road Safety Week – Monday 16th November 2026– Friday 22nd November 2026

Learning how to stay safe with fun, age appropriate activities.

- World Children's Day – Friday 20 November 2026

Celebrate children and talk about what makes every child special. Explore simple ideas around children's rights, belonging and being cared for.

December

- Stay and Play (Younger Children) – Monday 7th December 2026, 10–11am. Wednesday 9th December 2026, 10–11am & 2–3pm.

- Christmas Concert at St Peters Church (Greenhill) (Older Children)– Thursday 10th December 2026

- Christmas Jumper Day – Thursday 10th December 2026

Wear your festive jumper and spread some cheer!

- Reg E Mental (Children's Entertainer), Party Day – Wednesday 16th December 2026, 9:30am–10:15am & 1:30pm–2:15pm.