

Minster Lovell Playgroup

Where every child discovers the joy of learning



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“Learning through play — every single day.”

At Minster Lovell Playgroup, we believe that childhood is a magical time of discovery — and we are here to make every moment count. From the first curious question to the biggest creative adventure, we nurture each child’s natural love of learning in a warm, safe and inspiring environment.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, but what brings it alive is the laughter, the muddy wellies, the paint-covered fingers and the wonder in a child’s eyes when they discover something by themselves or with the help of a trusted adult.

Every child who walks through our door is unique, and we celebrate that. We welcome children of all abilities and backgrounds, and we work closely with families — because you know your child best, and together we can help them flourish.

“Parents are children’s first and most enduring educators” — and we are proud to be your partners on that journey.

Welcome to Minster Lovell Playgroup

Minster Lovell Playgroup has been part of this community since 1974 — and we are as passionate as ever about giving children the very best start. We are a registered charity (No. 1133956), managed by a committee of dedicated volunteer parents, and we are proud members of the Early Years Alliance, supported by the Oxfordshire County Council Early Years team.

Our setting is a portable building nestled in the beautiful grounds of St. Kenelm's School — a bright, stimulating space where big imaginations can run free.

Our Team

Our small, committed team brings warmth, experience and genuine passion for early childhood. Every member of staff holds current Paediatric First Aid certificates, has completed Safeguarding Children training and is cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Please feel free to approach staff with any questions or comments. We pride ourselves in making Playgroup a happy community for both you and your child.

Vicki Wright — Manager

Vicki holds a B.A. Honours Degree in Education (with Teaching Practice) and a Montessori Nursery Foundation Teacher training Diploma. She ran a nursery in Oxford for ten years and has led our setting since 2006. Vicki is our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Danielle Edmunds — Deputy Manager

Dani holds a Cache Level 3 NVQ in Playwork and is our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Claire Hipkin — Playgroup Assistant

Claire brings years of experience to our team and holds the vital roles of SENCO and Language Lead.

Emma Toner — Playgroup Assistant

Emma is NNEB trained and a valued member of our team.

All staff are committed to continuous professional development, regularly attending training to bring fresh ideas and best practice to your children.

Our staff-to-children ratios are: 1:8 for children aged 3–5 and 1:5 for children aged 2–3.

Our Parent Committee

Playgroup is run by a volunteer parent committee who act as our Trustees. Their enthusiasm and commitment keep Playgroup alive and thriving. The committee is elected at our Annual General Meeting (AGM), which is open to all families. If you'd like to get more involved, please chat with Vicki — every pair of hands makes a real difference.

Learning Through Play

Play is not just fun — it is how young children make sense of their world. Through exploring, creating, building, moving and talking, children develop the thinking skills, confidence and curiosity that will carry them through life.

Our planning is rooted in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which gives every child the chance to grow across all areas of learning and development. We blend child-led discovery with gently guided activities, so children can follow their interests and also experience new challenges.

The EYFS is built on four guiding themes:

- A Unique Child
- Positive Relationships
- Enabling Environments
- Learning and Development

It aims to ensure every child:

- Enjoys good health
- Feels happy and secure
- Grows in confidence and independence
- Achieves their potential

To find out more about the EYFS, visit the Department for Education website: www.education.gov.uk and explore 'Early learning and childcare'.

Our latest Ofsted report is available on our website (minsterlovellplaygroup.co.uk) or at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

A Day Full of Adventure

No two days at Playgroup are quite the same — and that is exactly the point. Here is a taste of what a typical session could look like:

9.00am — A Warm Welcome

Children arrive and gather for circle time — stories, weather chat, songs or news from home. Every voice matters here. The child of the day gives out the children's names to hang on our the tree.

9.15am – 10.35am — Explore and Create

Children choose freely from a rich range of activities covering all seven areas of learning — from early maths and literacy to role play, construction, science and the arts. When the weather allows, we open up for free-flow outdoor play.

From 10.00am — Healthy Snack Time

Children wash their hands and enjoy a variety of fresh fruit (always including apple and banana) with milk or water. Fresh water is always available. Please let us know of any allergies or dietary needs.

10.35am — Tidy Up Together

Tidying up is part of learning too — responsibility, teamwork and a sense of pride in our space.

10.45am — Story Time

We gather on the rug for stories that spark imagination and grow a love of books.

11.15am – 11.45am — Outdoors!

Outside is where some of the best learning happens. Our outdoor space includes a playhouse, scooters, trikes, prams, sand, balls, a climbing frame with slide and a wonderful tepee. We grow plants together, tend our 'bug hotel', and explore the natural world with real curiosity.

11.45am — Circle Time to Close

We end with ring games, songs, calendar activities and a chance to reflect on the day's discoveries.

12 noon — Home Time (morning sessions)

Children collect their work and are safely handed to their parent or carer. A member of staff makes sure that every child leaves with the right person.

12 noon – 12.45pm — Lunchtime (full-day sessions)

Children bring a packed lunch and sit together with staff — a lovely social time.

12.45pm – 2.45pm — Afternoon Adventures

Afternoons bring free indoor and outdoor play, 'awe and wonder' walks around our village, and trips to the park.

2.45pm – 3.00pm — Story, Chat and Home Time

We close the day with a story, a discussion, and a warm send-off.

Joining Our Playgroup

Opening Times

We are open during school term times:

- Monday and Friday: 9.00am – 12 noon
- Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 9.00am – 3.00pm

Each child must attend a minimum of two sessions per week. The Playgroup cannot accept responsibility for children's safety outside these hours.

Who Can Join

We welcome children between 2½ and 5 years old, from the start of the September, January or April term, until the end of the school year before their fifth birthday.

From the term after their third birthday, children are eligible for up to 15 hours of funded early education per week (or up to 30 hours depending on family circumstances). Funding is also available for some 2-year-olds.

For full details, speak to Vicki or visit our [News & Events page](#).

Fees

Where funding does not apply, fees are billed half-termly. A child's place is secured for the full term — absences cannot be refunded. At least one month's notice is required before leaving.

Full details are in our fees policy on our [Documents page](#). If you need a payment plan, please speak to Vicki — this is considered at the committee's discretion and we are always happy to help.

How to Apply

We warmly encourage families to come and see us. If we feel like the right fit for your child, simply complete an application form and secure your place with a refundable deposit of £20. Vicki will be in touch the term before your child starts to arrange a settling-in visit for you both.

Settling In

Starting somewhere new is a big moment — for children and parents alike. Our staff will work with you to create a settling-in plan that is right for your child. We take it gently, at your child's own pace.

Once your child has settled (usually after half a term), we love to have parents join us in sessions. If you have a skill, hobby or interesting job to share — whether that's playing a musical instrument, speaking another language, gardening, baking, or even driving a fire engine — please do let us know. Our children are endlessly curious!

Your Child's Progress

We observe children closely as they play, using what we see and hear to understand each child's growing skills and next steps. Photographs, notes and conversations with you all help to build a rich picture.

Each child has a dedicated Key Person — the member of staff who knows your child best and who partners with you to ensure our provision truly fits your child's needs and interests. Your child's Key Person will also complete the statutory 2-year-old progress check as your child approaches their third birthday.

You will receive a Communication Notebook so we can share observations, ideas and news between home and Playgroup. We also hold parent consultations and send home questionnaires, because your views genuinely shape how we work.

We believe parents know their children best — and your partnership with us makes all the difference.

If you have any concerns at any time, please talk to us. Our door is always open. We also have a formal complaints procedure — details are on our website.

If you wish to contact Ofsted directly: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk or call 0300 123 4666.

Moving on to School

When the time comes, we help children make a confident, happy move to school. We have close links with St. Kenelm's and children visit regularly — getting to know the building, the staff and their future classmates well before September arrives. For children moving to other schools, we do our best to welcome visitors from those settings too.

Important Information

Safeguarding

The safety of every child in our care is our absolute priority. We have a comprehensive safeguarding policy and robust employment practices to ensure children are protected at all times. All concerns are taken seriously and acted on promptly.

Our full Safeguarding Policy is available on our [Documents page](#).

Useful contacts:

- Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH): 0345 050 7666
 - Out of hours: 0800 833 408
 - NSPCC: 0800 028 0285
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Security and Collection

Your child's safety when leaving Playgroup is paramount. A pick-up permission form must be completed before your child starts. If someone different will be collecting your child, please let us know in advance and provide a password — we will not release any child without it.

Staff members ensure every handover is safe and calm.

Attendance

Good attendance gives children the best chance to build friendships, develop routines and make progress. Please let us know by email on any day your child is absent. We follow up unexplained absences with a friendly call.

Find out more: [Why Good Attendance Matters](#).

Health and Illness

If your child is unwell, please keep them at home until they are fully recovered. Children must have 48 hours clear of vomiting and/or diarrhoea before returning. Please notify us so we can alert other families if needed.

We are happy to administer prescribed medication by a doctor with your written consent as long as your child is fully recovered to return to us. Any bumps or grazes are recorded in our accident book and discussed with you at collection time.

Behaviour

We create an environment where everyone feels safe, respected and free to learn. We support positive behaviour through warmth, clear boundaries and consistent encouragement. Our Behaviour Management policy is on our website and we are always happy to discuss any concerns with you.

Equal Opportunities

Minster Lovell Playgroup is a place for every child and every family. We celebrate diversity, welcome difference and ensure all children receive the same quality of care and attention regardless of ability, background, religion, culture, language or gender. We have a no smoking policy throughout.

What to Wear

Children learn best when they are free to get stuck in — so please save the best outfits for weekends! We do provide protective clothing for messy activities, but paint and mud do have a way of finding their way everywhere. Easy-to-manage clothing helps children to build independence in getting dressed and undressed.

We encourage independence and request that the children wear clothing and shoes which are easy for them to manage. Please encourage your child to hang their own coat and bag on a lower peg when they arrive.

Please name all coats and sweatshirts. Slippers or plimsolls are welcome indoors. Please avoid flip-flops — they are a trip hazard for outdoor play.

Jewellery is not recommended, with the exception of small stud earrings. We cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage.

Toys from Home

We ask that children leave toys at home, as they can get lost and cause upset. If a special comforter helps your child to settle, that is absolutely fine — it will go safely in the Home Box during the session and be returned at home time. Occasionally we may ask children to bring in items linked to a topic.

Personal Care

We encourage children to grow in independence — managing their own clothing and following good hygiene habits. We are happy to support toilet training routines you are using at home. If your child is in nappies or pull-ups, please let their Key Person know and send in a bag with everything needed.

Staying in Touch

We love staying connected with our families! You can keep up with Playgroup news, events and photos via:

- Our website: minsterlovellplaygroup.co.uk
- [Minster Lovell Playgroup | Facebook](#)
- Email updates and end-of-term newsletters

We also run a summer outing and a range of fundraising events throughout the year — these are wonderful occasions for the whole community and your support makes them possible.

Playgroup depends on its community. Whether it's joining the committee, helping at events or simply spreading the word — every contribution counts and is hugely appreciated.

Our Policies

All our policies and procedures are available to view in the setting or on our [Documents page](#). We review these annually with parents and staff to make sure our setting remains the very best it can be.

We hope that Minster Lovell Playgroup becomes a place your child loves — and that you feel truly at home here too.

Thank you for choosing us. We can't wait to go on this adventure with you and your child.

Minster Lovell Playgroup Committee and Staff