Welcome to the Pre-School ‘Explorers’ Room



In preparation for School

A Guide to the Explorers Room

Welcome to the Pre-School 'Explorers' Room. We would like to take this opportunity to tell you all about our room and give you an understanding of what we do as Pre-School practitioners to support your child in their learning and development. Through providing them with many thoughtful activities and experiences over their time with us, we help them become more independent and support them to achieve their best so that they are ready for 'big' school when the time comes.



The ratio of staff to children in Explorers is 1:8.



Explorers Staff



Eleni Roads – Senior Nursery Nurse and Deputy Manager– Monday to Friday – NNEB Level 3

Eleni joined the Nursery in October 2016 as a full time Senior in the Red Butterflies. Eleni then worked across both Butterflies rooms, leading the join-up of the two rooms and taking on the role of overseeing the unit as a whole. Eleni then moved to the Explorers room in December 2022. Prior to this, she has worked in various settings throughout the UK and has spent 11 years working in an International School in Cyprus. Eleni is also Deputy Manager and is one of our Nursery's Designated Child protection officers.

Ceri Smith – Nursery Nurse - Mondays to Wednesdays – Level 3 Diploma in Children and Young People's Workforce – Level 2 and 3 in Play work



Ceri started working at Babraham Nursery in October 2013 but has worked for Babraham Institute for 9 years. Previously she had been a child-minder for 12 years. In 2000 Ceri started working for Linton Out of School Club where she became the manager in 2005. She has 3 grown up children and 4 grandchildren.



Emily Montgomery – Nursery Assistant - Studying Level 6

Emily joined nursery in December 2025 as a rover, joining the Explorers Team Full time in September 2026. Prior to working at babraham Nursery Emily completed a degree in Zoology and worked part time as a playworker at Whittlesford out of school club for 5 Years. Emily enjoys spending time with the children in the woods and sharing animals facts with the children.



Erin-Claire Megson – Full-time Nursery Nurse – Level 2

Erin Joined the Babraham Nursery in May 2022, originally working in the Caterpillars room. Erin then transitioned down to the Butterflies room in November 2022, becoming a permanent member of the team in December of that year. Erin has previously worked in another nursery in Cambridge and holds her Level 2 qualification in Childcare and Education.



Hannah Pengelly – Nursery Apprentice - Studying Level 3

Hannah joined us from another nursery in April 2026 and is currently completing her Level 3 Apprenticeship at Nursery. Hannah also has experience of working within the Butterflies 1 and Caterpillars rooms. Hannah enjoys singing and dancing and encouraging the children to have fun!

A Guide to the Explorers Room

We know that starting Pre-School is an important milestone in your child's life. We want to make the transition as smooth as possible; offering a secure, happy and stimulating environment where independence, self-confidence and resilience are encouraged.

In the morning…

We say goodbye at the Explorers door, allowing the children to place their belongings on their named pegs. On occasion, some children may struggle with goodbyes, and there are lots of things that we can do to make things easier for them. If you do have any concerns around this, please do speak to your key person or to a member of the team so that we can help support both you and your child.

Our activities…

Throughout the day the children will explore, investigate and discover lots of different activities centred around your child's individual interests. Alongside this we continue to support each child's individual's learning through their Ovivio learning journey. Key people work closely with their key children to follow any interests they are showing and plan 'next steps' for their learning based on these interests and their individual development. We provide the children with adult led activities alongside thoughtful independent activities around the room to provide them with the opportunity to practice skills and learn new things. We provide a variety of activities each day in all areas, indoors and in the garden. The children will also be asked what they would like to do when they come in, in the morning. This is an important part of the day, as the room belongs to the children and enables them to take charge of their own learning by experimenting with familiar and new activities.

'Play is the highest form of research,'

Albert Einstein

Is my child ready for school?

School readiness is about being independent, confident and ready to take on the next challenge. There is often the misconception that children need to have already mastered skills such writing their name and recognising numbers and letters by the time they go to school. However, this will all come and is taught at school. It is much more important that your child has an eagerness to learn and has the skills to cope with new challenges.

We work very closely with schools to ensure a smooth and happy transition for your child. Local teachers are keen for us to continue to focus on the personal, social and emotional aspects of the children's development. This ensures happy and confident children can leave us ready to start their new adventures at school and be able to confidently interact and communicate with their new environment, adults and peers and enjoy a successful school experience.

We are building the basis from which children will be able to get involved in lessons with ease and learn to read and write. For instance, developing strong core muscles for sitting for longer periods, developing pencil grip and encouraging children to tune in to their 'listening ears' through a range of fun and interesting activities, following the children's interests.
All children develop at different rates and in different ways and it is our job as experienced early year's practitioners to build on the child's skills to enable them to do this when they are ready. If a child is showing a natural ability and desire to stretch themselves further, we will of course provide them with opportunities to do so.

After Christmas, we introduce our 'Sound of the week' - this is where we have a weekly focus of a particular sound and we encourage the children to find the most obscure and interesting objects that incorporate that sound at home and ask that they bring them in to put on our interactive display table for that week. You will receive a copy of the list of dates and sounds nearer the time, so that you and your child are fully prepared for this.

Our room expectations…

We want you and your child to be happy. We give all children a safe, caring and stimulating environment where friendship groups are formed, feelings and emotions are recognised, explored and supported, and lifelong skills are gained.

Within the Explorers room we develop 'Golden rules' with the children.



Watch this space!.....



We will let you know our Golden Rules once the children and the Explorers Team have discussed what these are going to be!

We would be very grateful if you could reinforce the rules at home and use the key phrases in your own behaviour management. We also practice sustained shared thinking with the children which supports their ability to independently problem solve and work with us to manage unwanted behaviour within the room. We take every opportunity to support the development of their vocabulary and understanding and to take their creativity to the next level, by encouraging the children to think for themselves; as this is an invaluable life skill for them to develop. We do this through using open questioning and encouraging them to think about things in a different way and from others' perspectives, determining their own solutions and compromises.

Outside and Mess…

We love getting messy at nursery – both inside and outside in the garden! Children are encouraged to play outside whatever the weather and they experience high levels of learning, engagement and wellbeing whilst in the woods and playing in the mud kitchen. Please provide your child with a change of clothes and footwear every day and a coat/splash suit/hat/wellington boots/sun cream as needed for the weather. Nursery sun cream is provided at a cost; however, you are welcome to provide your own. We do advise not to send your child to nursery in any items of clothing that are precious to you or your child as we cannot guarantee that they will stay clean.

Things your child will need whilst they are in the Explorers room

- Spare clothes and underwear (in case of toileting accidents or an over-indulgence in messy play!)
- A Splash suit and other appropriate outdoor clothing, including wellington boots that can be left at Nursery
- A sun/winter hat and gloves (weather/season dependent
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To help keep track of your child's clothes, shoes and belongings, please make sure that everything is clearly named..

Nursery and Parent Partnership

We love to celebrate our children! Explorers is all about making your child feel valued by us listening to their ideas and their beliefs and by them sharing experiences so that we can encourage them to have a sense of belonging.
We also love to know what goes on in your child's life and want to hear about any special moments at home and how they spend their time away from nursery. We encourage parents to let us know about any special moments, achievements or anything that your child is proud of and would like to share with nursery. Parents can do this via the Ovivio App.

We regularly hold events within the room for parents to join us and see first-hand what we get up to! From Disco Fridays…to Mardi Gras, Zoom bedtime stories and our annual Christmas Nativity held at Babraham Church. Finishing your child's nursery journey with a Graduation Ceremony and a heartfelt goodbye at the end of the year.

Eating

Mealtimes are very important to us at nursery. We recognise that this is a time when we can all sit down together and eat and discuss our day and what has been going on in our children's lives outside of nursery. It is a relaxed and informal time where the children can learn really beneficial skills.

We provide your child with a morning snack, lunch, an afternoon snack and a tea prepared and cooked on the premises by our cooks; Faye and Clare. Milk is also offered during snack times.

We encourage our children to serve up their lunches and tea themselves at the table, which involves using serving spoons from a dish at the centre.

Good hygiene practices are encouraged before each mealtime when children wash their hands in the bathroom and at the end of each meal have their own individual sustainable face cloth (provided by nursery) to clean their hands and faces with.

Menus are distributed to parents via Ovivio and are also displayed on the notice board in Reception and at the Explorers Room entrance. If your child has any vegetarian, medical or cultural dietary needs, please inform the nursery in writing (an accompanying doctor's letter is needed for allergies and medical needs) and our cook will be pleased to prepare a suitable alternative meal. Nursery follows Government guidance for the Early Years Foundation Stage and details of this can be found here

Each child has access to water at mealtimes which they pour themselves at the table. Throughout the day your child will have access to fresh water in their individual bottles.

Illness

If your child is unwell and unable to cope with the normal nursery day, we do ask that you please keep him/her at home. We follow guidance from the UK Health Protection Agency regarding nursery exclusions. Children will only be re-admitted to the Nursery after an illness at the discretion of the Nursery Manager.
If your child becomes unwell during the day, we will contact you to ask you to collect your child as soon as possible.