



Wild Things - Droitwich

Families' Handbook



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Signing up

Our signing up process consists of several important steps:

- Initial enquiry
- Setting visit (including your child)
- Confirmation of requirements
- Provisional offer of a space
- Issue, signing and return of contract documents including policies
- Issue, signing and return of NEF Parent Declaration Form
- Payment of deposit
- Formal confirmation of space allocated to your child
- Sight of original birth certificate for your child

After your initial enquiry you will be given an opportunity to visit our setting. Where you are unable to visit in person, we may offer a remote viewing of the setting through video call, however it is important that we get the opportunity to meet you and your child in person before moving on to the next step of the signing-up process.

If it is not possible to confirm provisional offer of a space straight after your confirmation of requirements, we will let you know when we would expect to be able to make provisional confirmation by. This is particularly likely when looking for a space several months in advance of it being needed.

Please note – your child's space is not secure until all of the contract documents and parent declaration forms have been completed, signed and returned and the deposit paid.

Preparing your child to become a Wild Thing

If your child has not previously attended a childcare setting, it is helpful if you can introduce them to being left in the care of another trusted adult for gradually increasing periods of time. It is especially helpful if they can sleep, eat and drink in the care of another trusted adult.

We are a breastfeeding-friendly setting, and will help to support you and your child as they start to attend our setting. If you need a safe space to breastfeed your child upon collection, please discuss this with us so that we can support you. You do not need to take any additional steps to prepare your child to attend, however it is helpful if you can attempt to introduce your child to an alternative source of fluids. This may be in the form of a bottle, free-flow lidded cup or small open beaker. Your child may take this best from someone other than the breastfeeding parent. Before the age of 12 months, the alternative fluids may be expressed milk, infant formula, or water. After the age of 12 months, the alternative fluids can also include cow's milk or suitable alternative milks.

We must follow the 'Safer Sleep' requirements of the EYFS within our setting. We are not permitted to use a pushchair or car as your baby's or child's main sleep space, though they may occasionally nap in these while we are out and about. It is helpful for you to prepare

your child by getting them used to falling asleep on a flat, stationary surface rather than a moving pushchair or car seat. For babies under 12 months, we must put them to sleep in a cot, travel cot, carry cot or moses basket (depending on their age, length and mobility). It is helpful if you can introduce a cot at home for daytime naps, as it can be a lot for a baby to get used to being in a different place away from family and having to adjust to sleeping in a cot if they have not done this at home.

It is helpful if you can introduce your child to the natural environment before they start to attend our setting. In particular, helping your child to become familiar and comfortable with being directly on grass and mud is particularly beneficial. Regardless of prior experiences, however, we will work with you and your child to nurture a familiarity and love of the great outdoors.

Settling sessions

We encourage you to bring your child for two initial settling sessions before they start their usual contracted hours with us. These may be covered by the government's funded hours (NEF), or you may pay our normal private hourly rate. We will discuss the payment method and timing of the sessions with you in detail once we have formally confirmed that a space has been allocated to your child.

Each initial settling session is anticipated to last for two hours. During the first settling session, you are welcome to attend for up to the first hour, and then leave your child in my care for the remaining duration of the settling session. For the second settling session, we will aim for a doorstep drop-off and collection, following the same format as our usual contracted sessions in order to build a 'normal routine' expectation in your child's memory.

Where we both agree that it is necessary, we may schedule further settling sessions before the usual contracted hours begin, or we may agree to a phased start to the contract where your child initially does shorter hours with us and builds up to their usual contracted hours. Usually, we find that two settling sessions are sufficient and we would then aim to move directly to the usual contracted hours in order to support and establish your child's new routine.

Working together

Daily communication

We communicate each day with you via WhatsApp. We will send you a summary of our day's activities, highlight any particular areas of learning or enjoyment that your child has experienced, and update you on anything out of the ordinary, for example if they have eaten, drunk or slept more or less than usual, or if they have had

Absences and health/wellbeing updates

It is essential that we are made aware of any changes to your child's health or wellbeing at the earliest opportunity. This will mean we can work in partnership with you to provide your child with the best support and experiences. You may message us through WhatsApp at any time, though we may not respond straight away if it is out of our working hours.

If your child is going to be absent from our setting for any reason, including illness or family holiday, please let us know as soon as you are able. This is so that we can plan our day and activities accordingly. Please give us as much information as possible if your child is off due to illness.

We are an Operation Encompass setting, which means that we are registered with Worcestershire Children First and West Mercia Police in order to receive automatic notifications that may be helpful in keeping the children in our care safe. It is important to know that all information received by us through this channel is treated with utmost confidentiality. We hope that you will feel confident to talk to us about any home situation that may affect your child's wellbeing, but we will never expect this. We may not directly bring up any notification with you that we receive, however we will always seek to give you private opportunities to discuss anything you feel you need to with us.

Monitoring your child's learning and development

We use our in-depth understanding of child development in order to monitor your child's progress during their time with us, and to inform our planning for their development and learning.

Where a child is developing along typical timescales, we do not use paper tracking methods, but will keep you updated on their progress through our daily WhatsApp messages, photographs and verbal handovers.

Where we identify that a child is progressing differently in one or more areas, we will initially discuss this with you verbally and through our daily messages, and will usually adopt a 'watch and wait' position. Many progression differences are within the wide range of 'typical' and resolve themselves over time, and the huge majority of children will then continue to progress as expected.

Where it becomes apparent that the expected progress is not being made, or progress is being made but not at the expected rate, we will discuss this with you in an informative and supportive way, and consider formal development tracking. This will enable us to best support you and your child, and to involve any additional professionals and services at the most appropriate point.

30 month health visitor check/Statutory progress check at between two and three years

Please let us know the date of your child's 2 year wellbeing check with the health visitor as soon as you know it. This is because our only statutory written progress check for your child

should be completed shortly ahead of the 2 year wellbeing check with the health visitor, and you should take a copy along with you to the appointment to discuss with your health visitor.

If you have chosen not to remain involved with the health visiting service, please let us know so that we can schedule in your child's statutory progress check at the relevant time and provide you with a copy.

It is important that you complete the 'parent feedback' section of the statutory progress check and return this to us for our records. We may need to provide Ofsted with proof that we are meeting our obligations in this area.

Sharing suggestions for enjoyed activities

It is a requirement of the Early Years Statutory Framework (EYFS) that we share learning opportunities for you to carry out with your child at home, in order to extend and build on their learning and to work in partnership with you to support your child's development.

In practice, we will let you know, either verbally or through WhatsApp, which activities your child has enjoyed the most with us, any special interests we have noticed, and any toys, games, books or activities that we think your child may enjoy at home.

We love when you share with us what your child has enjoyed at home. We will look for ways to bring your child's interests and personality into the setting and to give them familiar opportunities in order to develop their confidence and self-esteem. We love hearing which books your child is enjoying sharing with you, and any special places that you visit. We may, from time to time, make you aware of any events or opportunities that we feel may interest your child.

Safety around the setting

When you arrive at or leave my setting, please hold your child's hand and do not allow them to go on my neighbour's lawn, or to damage my plants or car. Please **do** park across **my** drive, or in any available space on the road but making sure not to block in any of my neighbours' drives, no matter how briefly you plan on parking.

Unless otherwise advised, for example if I have notified you that collection will be from my back garden, the side of my house past the bins is out of bounds. Please keep your child on my main drive or path at all times.

Nursery Education Funded (NEF) hours

We are registered to accept all ages of Nursery Education Funding (NEF). If your child is eligible for NEF, you need to apply for a code, which you will then have to renew online every three months. If you do not renew your code every three months, you may lose your eligibility for NEF.

Providing you meet the eligibility criteria, your child will be eligible for NEF from the start of the term after they turn nine months. You will need to complete the Local Authority's Parent Declaration Form and return it to us in order for us to apply for your child's funding to be allocated to us.

NEF is granted on a whole-term basis. This means that if we have been granted the funding for a term, it cannot be transferred to another provider or setting unless there are specific, exceptional circumstances and the Local Authority agree to the transfer.

From September 2025, NEF provides your child with up to 30 hours of funded care for 38 weeks of the year, or for the equivalent number of funded hours over a longer period of time.

Our NEF Parent Information Leaflet contains all of the information relating to our funding offers.

Privately funded hours

If you are not eligible for NEF, or if you want your child to be with us for more than your maximum number of NEF hours, you will need to pay our private hourly rate for all hours not covered by NEF. Our Fees Policy contains all of the information relating to our privately funded hours.

Invoicing and payments

Invoices are issued termly, with a breakdown of the monthly payments due for that term, and their due dates. The due date is the date by which I should receive the payment, so please take account of how long the payment will take to reach me when planning your payments.

Payment can be made via direct bank transfer, Tax Free Childcare, the older style Childcare Vouchers, government funded hours, and if you are eligible for Universal Credit, you may claim up to 85% of your childcare costs back through their processes.

Payments must be made by the due date stated in your invoice, otherwise late payment charges may apply. Continued non-payment may result in care being temporarily withdrawn until your account is brought up to date. Persistent late or non-payment may result in termination of your contract. Please see our Fees Policy for more details.

About Wild Things – Droitwich

All about Meg

I am a qualified teacher, qualified early years Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), qualified early years Physical Activity and Nutrition Coordinator (PANCo)

and am extremely passionate about child development and the benefits that being outdoors and surrounded by nature can bring.

Before taking a break to have my own family, I taught across the full range of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and spent time working in wraparound care and playwork. After having an extended break from childcare, where I worked in an office whilst supporting my family, Covid Lockdown made me re-evaluate my choices again, and I have returned to where I am happiest – caring for children and sharing my love of the natural world with them.

Age ranges

I am registered with Ofsted and the Local Authority to provide care from birth. As a small setting, I find that by the age of 3 years the children in my care are typically very ready to explore a larger setting and be amongst a group of their peers rather than a small, mixed age group. Some children do need a more intimate setting beyond the age of 3 years, and I am happy to continue to provide this for as long as my setting remains a good fit for them, and the mix of children work well together.

Teaching and learning

My teaching style has been developed through putting into practice my understanding of child development theories, and has been enhanced by exploring different pedagogies such as Montessori, Forest School Ethos, Reggio Emilia and Waldorf Steiner. Each child is unique and different, and so I adapt my approach to meet the needs of the individual. One size definitely does not fit all in childcare.

Our Wild Things learn through play, and will have many opportunities throughout the day to choose their own direction and activities. They will be supported and scaffolded to enhance their experiences and understanding, and to help them develop and grow without even realising it.

Even everyday activities such as taking a short local walk become a fun learning activity, with children chatting about their observations, spontaneously counting bollards or naming the colours of cars, listening carefully to birdsong, learning how to cross a road safely through many repeated experiences, and spotting letters on road signs and numbers on doors.

I am conscious of giving each child the opportunity to develop their three prime and four specific learning areas each day. This focusses initially on their communication and language, physical, and personal, social and emotional development. As the children grow, they learn more about literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design. This is not a linear path for the children but a fluid, playful exploration of the world.

To keep things interesting and varied, we have a loose theme each half term on which we base our invitations to play and learning experiences. We will also follow the direction of the children's interests, which may mean departing into the world of dinosaurs for a couple of weeks, or taking a deep dive under the ocean, wherever our Wild Things take us!

Animals and pets

Our pets are an important and integral part of our setting. Children learn so much from them, including empathy, respect, and caring for others. Our Wild Things are involved in a safe, supervised way with our animals and learn about the different ways in which different animals need to be cared for. They love to interact with the animals, and soon become experts at identifying dandelion leaves, which so many of our pets adore!

We also love to visit local farms and see other animals such as goats, lambs, donkeys and pigs. We are lucky to have so many opportunities on our doorstep to share with our Wild Things.

If there are allergies within your family that may be affected by the animals in our setting, please talk to us.

Nature and the great outdoors

A big part of our daily life at Wild Things – Droitwich is being outside in all weathers, discovering our local area, watching how fruit bushes and trees respond to the season changes at the community orchard, and developing our understanding of where we belong in the world.

We love identifying wildlife when we're out and about, and encourage care and understanding of all creatures, from minibeasts to the deer that occasionally cross our paths in the woods. We use technology to learn about the animals we see, and to help us identify and learn about the birds we hear.

We often take our activities and games out into the local woods and meadows, and encourage imaginative play with loose parts collected from the woodland floor.

All-weather fun

Staying sun-safe

We keep a close eye on the UV index, and will help the children to stay sun-safe throughout the year. We apply a minimum of factor 30 suncream to the children's exposed skin when the UV levels are medium or high. We provide sun hats for all of the children in our care, or alternative UV-blocking sunshades for young babies. We strongly encourage you to dress your child in lightweight, long-sleeved tops during the summer to help to protect their skin further. We support our youngest Wild Things with the provision of UV rash vests to further protect their skin from sun damage.

We strive to be outdoors all year round, and have particular favourite shady spots when the summer is at its hottest. We use natural shade from trees, as well as having a UV-blocking sun sail set up in the garden. We understand the need to keep

hydrated in the hot weather, and encourage all our children to drink water throughout the day, and serve plenty of fruit and vegetables with a high water content.

Wet weather

Waterproofs and wellies are an essential part of life at Wild Things – Droitwich. You can't beat a good puddle jump, and we use mud for drawing, painting, imaginative play and modelling. For our not-quite-walkers, we have waterproof booties so that they can join in the fun. So that little hands are free to explore and play, we use hoods rather than umbrellas. Layers will help your Wild Thing to stay warm in wet weather – please pack spares so that we can keep your child dry and comfortable even in the rain.

Cold weather

We love the feeling of wrapping up warm against the cold, and exploring all the winter world has to offer. Layers are important for keeping your Wild Thing comfortable – warm but not too hot, free to move, and plenty of changes in case they become wet or muddy. Extra socks mean we can size up on the wellies, keeping tiny toes toasty.

Risk assessment decisions

We risk assess on a daily basis and stay informed of the local weather forecasts, UV index, wind speeds and temperatures. We walk in the local area every day, and believe in 'no bad weather', as long as we are in appropriate clothing. However, some weather is unsafe for our outdoor activities, such as high winds, widespread ice, or excessively hot temperatures. We will check all of these factors each day before finalising our plans, and may adapt our day to take place indoors or in alternative locations in order to stay safe.

Collaborations, activities and outings

We are proud to offer a wide range of activities and outings to our Wild Things. We choose our collaborations and activities carefully, based on the ages and stages of our Wild Things, what they enjoy, and what they will most benefit from.

Examples of activities and outings we have previously provided include:

- Baby/toddler signing
- Nature Makers
- Debutots
- Play groups
- Library stay and play sessions
- West Midlands Safari Park
- Top Barn Farm Park
- Wyre Forest visits
- Community Orchard
- Trips to various local parks, woodlands and meadows

We travel on foot, using the pushchair and buggy board as necessary, by car, or by public transport.

Our ethical setting

Running our setting in an ethical and sustainable way is part of our core values here at Wild Things – Droitwich. Here are some of the ways that this is embedded in our day to day life:

- our seasonal and sustainable menus
- choosing to walk as much as possible
- minimising our waste and recycling everything we can
- making our own compost
- growing our own fruit and vegetables
- providing our animals with housing that encourages natural movement and behaviours, and far exceeds the minimum requirements.

Dropping off and collecting your child

Our morning drop-off window is from 7.30am to 8.30am. We are unable to accept children before 7.30am, and ask that if you arrive early you wait until our opening time before ringing the bell.

Our afternoon collection window is from 4.00pm to 5.00pm. We must close promptly at 5.00pm due to our own family commitments. We are happy to provide brief verbal feedback on your child's day at handover, but if you need a longer chat then please arrange a mutually convenient time so that we are able to give you the time and attention that you need.

We have found that brief, bright doorstep handovers help your child to settle quickly into their day at our setting. On rare occasions that your child may be unsettled during the handover transition, we will aim to send you photographs of your child playing happily as soon as we are able. You can help to support your child's positive transition into our care by:

- talking positively about your child's day on their way to us
- letting your child walk up our path, once they are able to walk, rather than carrying them
- encouraging your child to step into the setting themselves after a last hug/cuddle/kiss
- Not calling your child back for an extra goodbye once your child is happily playing

Eating and drinking

Our six weekly rolling menu keeps things fresh and interesting for our Wild Things, whilst expanding their taste buds and making great use of seasonal fruit and vegetables.

We love to all eat together, each sat at the table in age-appropriate seating so that we can all see and chat to each other. Mealtimes are very social affairs here! We all eat the same meal, adapted to suit individuals as needed based on age, stage and preferences.

We follow the principles of the Division of Responsibility – it is our responsibility to provide high quality, delicious, nutritious food and the time and space to enjoy it. It is each child's responsibility to decide what, and how much, to eat. We find this encourages a positive relationship with food and our Wild Things, without exception, eat very well here. We operate on a zero pressure basis, and encourage our Wild Things to self-feed solids from the earliest stage (around six months, once showing the signs of readiness, unless medically advised to wean sooner).

We serve only naturally sweetened foods such as natural yoghurt with berries. This helps our Wild Things to develop their savoury tastes more completely, and also puts you fully in charge of any sweet treats your child may have.

We are experienced in supporting children with challenges relating to eating, such as ARFID and food restrictions. We understand the importance of routine, consistency and safe foods. We will always work with you, whatever challenges your child may have with food, to achieve a successful outcome.

We support dietary sensitivities, intolerances and allergies to the best of our ability. Please note, however, that we are not able to guarantee that the setting is fully free from traces of nuts. This is because it is also my family home, and nuts are an important source of nutrition for my family members.

Keeping the setting healthy

We are required by the EYFS to reduce and minimise the spread of illnesses and infections. Coughs and colds unfortunately form a normal part of childhood, but there are times when your child will need to stay at home.

We will share our Illness and Infection Policy with you before your child starts with us, and will periodically send you an updated version, or a fresh copy for reference when illnesses and bugs are particularly troublesome within the setting.

It is essential that we – families and the setting – work in partnership to reduce the risk of illnesses and infection spreading and to keep our Wild Things and wider families healthy. We also need to bear in mind the risks to individuals with compromised immunity who are attached to the setting.

Please keep us informed of any medication that your child has been given in the previous 48 hours before they attend the setting. This includes calpol, calprofen and similar. Please also keep us informed of any illnesses within your family, even if your child is not displaying symptoms. This will help us to manage the risk we may pose to others when attending some of our activities such as Debutots, where we are in close contact with elderly and vulnerable residents in a care home environment.

Inclusion, additional needs and special educational needs

We are experienced in supporting a range of additional and special educational needs. Our Owner/Manager is a qualified Early Years SENCo and we have successfully supported children through referrals to various services and through the EHCP process. We have a good working relationship with the Local Authority Early Years Inclusion Team, the Area SENCo and the Complex Communication Team, as well as having contacts in many other areas.

We are not just here for your child, but for your whole family. We understand firsthand the complexities of having additional or special educational needs within the family. We will support you to make applications, complete forms, be a listening ear, share information and resources, signpost you to available services, and will write supporting statements where needed.

Sleep and naps

We are trained to follow safe sleep guidance and regularly update our knowledge and understanding, keeping abreast of the latest guidance on the Lullaby Trust website.

We provide safe sleeping areas, based on age and stage of development. We have travel cots and sleep mats available for the children to use. We will discuss your child's normal sleeping arrangements with you, and where and how they will sleep here in the setting.

Children are fully supervised throughout their naps. If they need to sleep in a room away from children who are awake and playing, they will be physically checked on at least every 10 minutes.

We are led by your child as to when and how long they will sleep. Our research has taught us how important good quality sleep is for children's development. The majority of our Wild Things drop their morning nap between 12 and 15 months, moving towards a single longer afternoon nap which takes place after lunch.

To accommodate this, we pack our toys away before lunch and, after lunch, share a calming story before getting the sleep mats out. We then maintain a darkened, quiet room until all of our Wild Things are awake. Those who wake first will be guided towards a quiet activity such as looking at books or doing a puzzle.

As we have a range of ages in our setting at all times, the afternoon naptime is an important part of our routine. Those with less need for daytime sleep will still benefit from having a quiet period of downtime during the afternoon, when they can recharge their batteries.

Ofsted require me to put the needs of the child first, and to work in partnership with you to meet your child's sleep needs. We cannot prevent a tired child from falling asleep. As a child approaches their third birthday, if they have not already naturally shortened their afternoon nap we will work with you to see if your child is ready to have a shorter nap.

We are aware that many children experience sleep regressions periodically throughout their first year of life, then at around 18 months, 2 years and 2 and a half years of age. These sleep regressions tend to pass naturally within a few weeks. Sleep disturbances, later bedtimes, difficulties falling asleep or difficulties with night wakings at around these times are not generally reasons to consider artificially shortening a child's nap. Daytime sleep is important for children's emotional regulation, cognitive development and memory consolidation.

Toilet training

When your child is showing a number of signs of being ready to start using the potty or toilet, we are happy to support their transition out of nappies. We ask that they start when they have the chance to be at home with you for at least a week, and that they are fully out of nappies (except for naps), communicating their need to use the potty or toilet, and having minimal accidents – no more than two per day – before they come nappy-free to the setting.

Once your child has started the process of toilet training at our setting, please send them with a minimum of three full changes of clothes – including extra pairs of socks and a spare pair of shoes – every day, to cover all eventualities.

Whilst we would love to support you with Elimination Communication for younger children who are not yet showing signs of toilet readiness, unfortunately we are unable to provide this due to needing to care for up to three children at a time, and having an active, out-and-about schedule.

School readiness

Our curriculum is designed to support your child in all their areas of development. We particularly value emotional understanding, friendships, and a sense of connection to the environment and our local community.

We support your child in developing their self-care skills – eating, dressing, toileting, problem solving, conflict resolution and expressing their wants and needs.

We nurture your child's physical development so that they have a strong foundation ready for sitting, concentrating, writing and drawing. We place a strong emphasis on pre-writing skills such as games that encourage your child to 'cross the midline' with their arms, frequent opportunities to climb, grip, hang and pull, and develop their fine motor control – strengthening their core muscles for sitting, and their shoulder girdles, wrists and fingers for holding paint brushes and pencils. We take every opportunity to mark-make using our fingers, sticks, chalks, paint brushes and crayons. We make our art in mud, sand, dirt, water and of course on paper.

We work on pre-reading skills by sharing books together, bringing stories to life, and nurturing a love of books. We follow Stage 1 Letters and Sounds, which enhances your child's listening skills and the ability to discern the different sounds that make up words. We love to spot letters, numbers and writing whilst we are out and about. We trace the shape of letters on road signs, count door and wheelie bin numbers, make use of technology to identify bird songs that we can hear.

The EYFS requires us to develop your child in seven areas of learning:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal Social and Emotional Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We build our themes and activities plans carefully to make sure your child is ready for their next big adventure when they do finally leave us.

Birthdays and special days

We love to help your child celebrate their birthday and other days that are special to your family. If you have a particular event, festival or celebration coming up, please do let us know so that we can learn, grow and celebrate as a setting. We appreciate the celebrations from different cultures and countries that can bring us together.

Birthdays

We understand that often, with young children, it is sometimes easier to hold their birthday celebration at a time when it is convenient for family to get together, so birthday celebrations and parties may take place on a weekend rather than on your child's actual birthday. At other times, you may wish to celebrate on your child's actual birthday, regardless of which day it falls on. We will support your child's understanding of whichever approach you prefer to take.

We celebrate within the setting by making sure your child feels extra special, and by talking with them about the planned celebrations. We will give you a card to take home, which you can give to your child on the day of your choosing.

As an Ofsted registered setting governed by the Department for Education regulations and guidance, we regret that we are unable to accept birthday cake to share within the setting, however there are many other ways we will celebrate with your child through music, singing, games and activities.

Natural celebration days

Being a nature-based setting, we mark the natural occasions such as the summer and winter solstice and the two equinoxes each year. We celebrate the rhythm of the year and the cycle of the seasons.

We discuss and learn about traditional ways of celebrating the solstices and equinoxes, including traditional planting and harvest seasons, times to grow and times to rest.

Cultural celebration days

We value every Wild Thing for the ways in which we are the same, and the ways in which we are different. We want to hear about your cultural celebrations, and learn about what these mean to your culture and how you celebrate.

We may, throughout the year, mark occasions that are important to our Wild Things and our families. We will always aim to do so in a sensitive and appropriate way. We are always keen to learn more, and to celebrate your authenticity without appropriation.

Within the setting, our base cultures originate from Wales, the Republic of Ireland and Spain. Many elements of these cultures are brought into our setting's day, including food, songs, music and language. We may mark St David's Day (1 March), St Patrick's Day (17 March) and the National Day of Spain (12 October). Being based in the UK, we may also mark St George's Day (23 April), and St Andrew's Day (30 November).

National celebrations, anniversaries and commemorations

As well as the National Saints' Days for each of our nations, at Wild Things – Droitwich we also introduce children to the recurring celebrations and commemorations that take place within the UK each year.

Around 25 January, we love to dip into the wonderful poetry of the great Robert Burns and may try a vegetarian version of 'haggis, neeps and tatties'.

After our October half term break, we explore the incredible world of fireworks, adding to our knowledge and understanding of colour, shape and sound.

Our Wild Things will usually be seen at the War Memorial on Remembrance Day, listening to the bugle playing the Last Post and learning about the connection with the poppies that are widely worn in November.

Due to the high levels of excitement that Christmas and Easter bring, we tend to keep our marking of these events low-key so as not to add to the high emotions and sleep disturbances that often accompany these times of year.

Religious celebrations

As an Ofsted registered setting governed by the EYFS, we do not promote one religion over another but help our Wild Things to understand that the world is made up of many people who believe in many different things. Accepting these differences is a big part of belonging to a multicultural community and part of the British Values that we are required to promote – democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual tolerance and respect.

Whilst we may mark occasions from different religions within our setting, we aim to do so in a respectful way without appropriation. We may have activities that, for example, help our Wild Things to learn about Eid, Samhain, Diwali and Christmas from the perspective of ‘some people believe...’ and ‘some people celebrate this by...’ and encourage our Wild Things to be inclusive of all views and beliefs, whilst honouring those of your own family.

Your child as a Wild Thing

Clothing

We have created the table at the bottom of this section to help you to plan what your child will need during their time as a Wild Thing. Typically, unless we have discussed an alternative with you, we will provide everything for your child that has the word ‘**Setting**’ against it. We ask that, each day, you provide everything for your child that has the word ‘**Family**’ against it.

As an active, outdoors, nature-based setting who firmly believes in learning through experiences, we strongly recommend that your child’s clothes are ‘playwear’ rather than good quality that you would not want to be marked or damaged. We are unable to guarantee returning a clean child to you, in fact our dirtiest days are often our best.

We believe in giving your child the very best physical start in life. Children’s feet grow quickly and need room to move and bent naturally and flexibly. We recommend providing them with flexible soles of an appropriate length, and getting your child’s feet measured regularly. We will also measure your child’s feet regularly within the setting to make sure we are putting them in the correct-sized wellies.

Please provide shoes that are fully enclosed throughout the year – no sandals, please. This is due to the outdoor nature of our setting, as we spend a lot of time in areas where there may be stones, thorns, nettles and biting insects that we would want to protect your child from.

For the same reason, we ask that you provide long-legged trousers rather than shorts, skirts or dresses. This helps to protect your child’s legs from thorns, nettles and biting insects as well as from sun damage. They can move freely and focus on their physical movements without worrying about clothing getting caught.

During the colder months, layers will help to keep your child more comfortable than a single thick jumper. We will then be able to adjust their layers based on our activity levels and whether we are indoors or outdoors.

In the warmer months, layers are still important but even in the hottest weather we would ask you to provide a lightweight, long sleeved top for extra protection against the sun.

As the majority of children at the setting are below their preschool year, we regret that we are unable to provide a range of clothing and wellies for preschoolers (age 3-4 years) due to the cost, storage and minimal benefit that they would bring to the setting. We ask that any preschool Wild Things bring everything they need with them each day, or we may be able to store their items at our setting until they leave.

Food

We follow the Department for Education's nutritional guidance and provide a balanced, varied menu. We will work with you to increase the range of food that your child enjoys. Typically, unless we have agreed otherwise, we will provide all food, water and cow's milk whilst your child is in our care. We value your child's individuality and will work with you and your child to support and embed positive eating habits throughout their time with us.

If we agree that you will provide your child's food, please read our Packed Lunch Policy, available on our website, carefully. It is important that this policy is understood and that you discuss with us any challenges that you may have in following this policy.

Transition objects

We understand the importance to your child of having a familiar comfort object to help them settle in to a new environment. Once your child is settled, we recommend that they begin to leave their comfort object at home.

Whilst we always take the greatest care, we are unable to guarantee the safety of any objects or toys brought from home. We also cannot guarantee that another child might not want to play with the object or toy, which can cause upset. Our strong recommendation is to keep all toys and objects at home. We have a supply of soft toys, blankets and other comfort items at the setting to help support your child.

Summary

	Babies	Toddlers	Preschoolers
Nappies	Setting	Setting	Setting
Nappy sacks	Setting	Setting	Setting

Nappy cream	Setting	Setting	Setting
Infant formula	Family	N/A	N/A
Cow's milk	N/A	Setting	Setting
Food (other than puree/specialist diet)	Setting	Setting	Setting
Fully enclosed, flexible-soled shoes	N/A	Family	Family
Appropriate playwear (plus a full change)	Family	Family	Family
Weather-appropriate coat	Family	Family	Family
Waterproofs	Setting	Setting	Family
Snow suit	Setting	Setting	Family
Winter hat	Setting	Setting	Family
Mittens/gloves	Setting	Setting	Family
Wellies	Setting	Setting	Family
Sun hat	Setting	Setting	Family
Sun cream	Setting	Setting	Family
UV rash vest	Setting	Setting	Family

Leaving our setting

As you consider starting your child on their journey with Wild Things – Droitwich, it can be hard to imagine that the time will come when they will spread their wings and fly from our setting.

Your child will grow, learn and develop throughout their time with us, and they will be welcome to stay until they start their Reception year. It is important to remember, though, that our setting is small and has a mix of age ranges at any one time. Once your child reaches their preschool year they may start to crave the company of their peers – children at the same age and stage of development as themselves – so that they can play without interference from younger children who do not understand the more sophisticated unwritten rules of interaction that start to develop at around that age. Many of our Wild Things leave us for larger settings around the age of three years.

To help with your child's transition to their new setting, we will work with you and the new setting to create a positive experience for your child. We will share pictures of your child's new setting with your child, talk about your child's new teacher or key worker, and read social stories with your child about their new routine and the places and people they will see.

We will write a transition report to be passed on to the new setting, which will help them to best support your child from their first day with them. If your child has special educational needs we will contact the SENCo of your child's new setting and work with them to understand your child's needs and progress.

If your child is going to a preschool or other Early Years setting, we may agree to share care for up to one term to allow a soft transition for your child, where they attend both their new setting and ours each week. This may be particularly important if your child has any special

educational needs identified, and it enables us to work with the new setting to best support your child.

Getting in touch

Please send us a WhatsApp to 07715 627908 with any questions you may have.

You can see our latest adventures on our facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/WildThingsDroitwich/>

You can view more information about us on our website: <https://wildthingsdroitwich.com/>

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