

Our journey to Under 2s



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Our Nursery Journey: From Vision to Reality

Back in September last year, we began exploring the possibility of expanding our nursery provision to include babies. With a growing nursery and increasing demand from local families, it felt like a natural next step in our development.

We began by contacting Devon County Council to express our interest and soon after had a series of supportive meetings with Katy Vallance, our Early Years Consultant. These conversations were vital in shaping our thinking and understanding the steps involved.

We then applied for a Nursery Capital Grant from Devon County Council and were absolutely thrilled to be awarded £47,000. Alongside this, we used our own capital funds and school fundraising efforts to support the purchase of new equipment and resources.

This funding enabled us to secure a brand-new, purpose-built cabin within our school grounds. Before installation, we spent a lot of time reviewing our current spaces and thinking creatively about how to best utilise them for all age groups. We consulted with staff, and ultimately decided that bringing our Early Years provision together in one area of the school would offer the best outcomes for our children.

Our Reception class was already based within the main school building, and this space offered fantastic outdoor access and natural light. It quickly became clear that this area would be the most suitable for the baby room, nursery, and Reception, allowing for greater continuity, collaboration, and shared access to high-quality outdoor learning.

To make this possible, we made the decision to move our Key Stage 1 classes into the new cabin and the current nursery pod—an exciting shift that allowed us to rethink and redesign each learning space with intention and care.

We submitted all the required forms to Ofsted, and while the process was more complex and time-consuming than we initially anticipated, we remained committed to our goal.

The cabin was installed during the summer term, and over the summer holidays, our team worked incredibly hard to transform our learning environments. Our baby room, nursery, and Reception spaces now reflect a shared vision rooted in natural materials, calm, sensory-rich settings, and bringing the outdoors in. You'll find wooden furniture, soft textiles, neutral tones, and lots of open-ended resources that promote curiosity and independence.

Our journey to Under 2s *continued*

Our Key Stage 1 area was also transformed during this time. We were fortunate to receive an additional grant of £5000 from Norman Charitable Trust, which allowed us to invest in brand-new equipment to support high-quality teaching and learning in the new space.

Outdoor learning continues to be a priority across the school.

Over the summer, we:

- Created a dedicated garden area just for babies.
- Enhanced the Reception garden, including the installation of an all-weather shelter.
- Removed fences to create a Forest School area for our Key Stage 1 pupils.
- Made numerous other improvements that all contribute to our commitment to outdoor, play-based learning.

It's now October, and we are delighted to see our vision in action. The children are thriving in their new spaces, and the feedback from families has been overwhelmingly positive. We are already looking at how we can continue to grow and develop our provision, as we now have waiting lists for some of our age groups—an encouraging sign of the demand for high-quality early years care in our community.

Thank you to everyone who has supported us on this journey. It's been a big project, but one we're incredibly proud of.

Under 2s' room



Under 2s' Grand Opening

Tuesday 30th September

Catch up on BBC Radio Devon here:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m002jrm0> (2hrs 10mins)

Thank you so much for a lovely afternoon. It was a privilege to see the new classrooms and outdoor space for the children. We are lucky to have this wonderful setting in our area. Congratulations to you all and thanks for all you do to make sure our children benefit from such a warm and nurturing environment.



Such a fantastic opening to an equally fantastic setting for all ages! Really loved the new layout and overall environment for the children, I just know it will help that transition from nursery to school so much easier for my little one. Fab afternoon, thank you to all involved.



Looks amazing. Well done team Winkleigh.

Well done all, such a wonderful school.

I love all the natural resources and the way the spaces are set up.



Extended EYFS area

