



ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

PRESCHOOL AND NURSERY POLICY

MISSION STATEMENT

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full - John 10:10

As a Catholic school, God is at the heart of all we do. We believe that each person is made in His image, deserving to be treated with respect and dignity.

Showing respect, love and care for everyone and everything, we aim to develop harmony between pupils, parents, the school and Parish and grow as a Christian community.

We aim to embed the virtues in every child to believe in themselves to be the best that they can be and leave school as well-rounded individuals who care about themselves, others, and the world.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the Early Years Foundation Stage Nutrition Guidance, Medical Needs Policy, First Aid Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Fire Procedures Policy.

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Date ratified by the Governing Body: September 2026

Date for review by Staff and Governors: June 2026

St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Lewis Road | Cheltenham | Gloucestershire | GL51 0HZ

Head Teacher: Mrs K Turner

Tel: 01242 513339 | Fax: 01242 257402 | Email: admin@st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk

www.st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk

The term parent is used to denote all those who have responsibility for a child. This may include foster parents, step parents, grandparents or other carers.

Opening times:

The Preschool/Nursery is open Monday to Friday, term time only from 9am to 3pm and excluding all bank holidays. We follow the term dates set out by Gloucestershire County Council and we endeavour to ensure that Inset days are in line with St Thomas More Catholic Primary School. We reserve the right to either open or close on any additional Public Holidays.

In the event of unexpected closure due to bad weather, or other unplanned event, alternative pre-funded sessions will not be offered.

Waiting List:

We operate a waiting list and priority of place will be offered based on the criteria below:

- Availability of spaces taking into account the staff/child ratios, the age of the child and the registration requirements.
- When the application is received priority is given to those who have been on the waiting list longest
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- The Preschool/Nursery's ability to provide the facilities for the welfare of the child.
- Extenuating circumstances affecting the child's welfare or his/her family.

3 and 4 year old free entitlement:

All 3 and 4 year old children following their child's 3rd birthday are entitled to 15 hours free childcare per week, term time only. Funding will begin the term after the child turns three years old. If parents work more than 16 hours per week they may be entitled to 30 hours free childcare per week. Parents will be expected to complete a funding form, detailing sessions required along with their National Insurance Number as some children might be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium in addition. This will need to be completed each term.

30 hours free entitlement for working parent(s) (3 and 4 year olds)

Working parents may be entitled to an additional 15 hours per week for if they expect to earn on average the equivalent of working 16 hours a week at national minimum wage (£120 at the National Living Wage, less if you are on the National Minimum Wage) If you or your partner are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or if you're unable to work because you are disabled or having caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible.

You must expect to earn less than £100,000 per year per parent. Please find link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/free-childcare-if-working/check-youre-eligible>

Children can benefit from this entitlement in the term after they turn 3 years old.

Paid sessions:

We offer a number of paid sessions as follows:

- Full time day from 9am to 3pm at a cost of £39.00 per day
- £19.50 per session am or pm (9-12pm and 12-3pm) £6.50 per hr
- Parents will receive an invoice the term before.
- Fees must be paid a term in advance using online ParentPay or cash to main office.

Admission process

1. Parents will be invited to visit the Preschool/Nursey, meet the staff, discuss their child's needs and ask any questions they may have.
2. Parents must complete a registration form, permission slips, funding form, medication/immunisation form prior to their child starting.
3. Parents must show proof of date of birth, via birth certificate or passport. For children that are entitled to 30 hour funding; eligibility 30 hour code must be given and checked.
4. All families will be offered a home visit prior to the child's start date.
5. We will ask the parent to stay for the 'settling in' sessions for 2-3 visits, depending on the needs of the individual child. They must remain on the premises for at least 1-2 visits.

Settling In:

For some children, starting Preschool/Nursery it may be their first separation from their main carer and we recognise that starting in a new setting is a major event in a child's life and this time of transition can be stressful for both children and parents. We seek to ensure a smooth transition by working in close partnership with home and school, so that both child and parent feel supported as they work towards feeling comfortable and at ease in the new setting. We believe that it is important for staff to take time to get to know the children and their home environment.

We aim for children to feel safe, stimulated, and happy in the preschool/Nursery and to feel secure and comfortable with staff. We also want parents/carers to have confidence in both their children's well-being and their role as active partners, with the child being able to benefit from what the setting has to offer.

Our intention is to:

- Make children feel happy and secure in their new environment in the absence of their parent/carers
- Make the children feel confident to explore and experiment in the physical environment
- Help the children to develop independence in the new environment and freely access all the resources

- Support the children to develop positive relationships with both adults and other children in the setting
- Help children to communicate their needs to others in an appropriate way
- Work in partnership with parents in their children's learning
- Support and build upon children's prior experiences and knowledge gained in their home environment
- Encourage and welcome open and honest communication between staff and parents
- Be responsive and flexible by taking into account the individual needs of children and parents
- Take time and space to get to know new children and their parents/carers whilst they are settling in.
- Prepare children for starting school; ensuring smooth transitions.

Guidelines and procedures:

- Arrange a home visit to parents, so staff can get to know the child and parents in familiar surroundings
- Children and parents are always welcomed warmly and invitingly into preschool/Nursery
- Children and their parents to be aware of who their child's individual key person is
- Invite you and your child to visit the setting prior to your child's official start date
- Providing parents/carers with relevant information regarding the policies and procedures of the setting
- Plan settling in visits and introductory sessions (lasting approximately 1-2 hours). These will be provided free of charge over a one or two week period dependent on individual needs, age and stage of development.
- Welcome parents/carers to stay with their child during the first few sessions until the child feels settled and the parents/carers feel comfortable about leaving him/her. Encourage parents to bring any form of comforter to aid the settling process.
- Encourage parents/carers, where appropriate, to separate themselves from their children for brief periods at first, gradually building up to longer absences
- If a child is unduly upset, parents will be contacted to come back to stay with them or collect them early
- Respect the circumstances of all families, including those who are unable to stay for long periods of time in the setting and reassure them of their child's progress towards settling in
- Reassure parents/carers whose children seem to be taking a long time to settle into pre-school
- Offer informal discussions with parents to enable us to build a picture of their child and how each day is progressing and how their child is settling in

Key Person:

What is a key person?

In order to ensure every child in Preschool/Nursery is given the appropriate level of attention and care, a key person is appointed for each child. A key person is a named

member of staff assigned to an individual child to support their development and act as the key point of contact with that child's parent/carer. The key person has special responsibilities for working with small number of children and helps build and develop positive relationships with children and between parents/carers and staff.

On starting Preschool/Nursery, each child will have a settling in period, after which they will be allocated a key person.

This will be done by looking at the following criteria:

- Peer relationships
- Staff relationships
- Siblings
- Any specific developmental need

Once a child has been allocated to a Key person, any changes to the grouping can be made by staff if it is deemed necessary and parents will be informed accordingly.

The commitment of the key person includes:

- Ensure a smooth settling in procedure for all key children both into preschool/Nursery and then their transition into school.
- Ensuring that each child's needs are met and that they are given the reassurance to feel safe and cared for at Preschool/Nursery
- Be the initial point of contact for parents/carers at the settling in time
- Being fully aware of the differentiation of children's starting points and needs
- To plan and provide a range of stimulating and age appropriate activities for key children to assist with their learning and progression
- To complete reports and transition documentation
- To ensure that parents/carers are kept informed of the child's day to day experiences
- Working alongside children in a balance of adult-led, chosen and child initiated activities through indoor and outdoor play
- Making observations, assessments and intervening early if there is an area of development which needs supporting.
- Exchanging information and knowledge with parent/carers, other staff members and should the need arise with other professionals
- A close relationship with a key person does not undermine children's ties with their own parents
- A named second key person 'buddy' in case of their absence will be allocated and as far as possible there is consistency and continuity of care to ensure stability for the child

Parents as Partners:

We believe that children benefit the most when parents and staff work together in partnership to ensure quality care and learning for the children. The preschool/Nursery team welcomes parents as partners and this relationship needs to be built on trust and

understanding. It is important that we, as carers, are able to support parents in an open and sensitive manner. A two way sharing of information is key to this.

Children's emotional health has an effect on how well they do in education and later life. Where children face particular challenges it is important that parents make us aware of these, so we can offer appropriate support to the child and help them to deal with the effects in a way which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Such challenges may include financial difficulties, disruptions with the family or children experiencing loss

Our policy is to:

- Recognise and support parents as their child's first and most important educators, and to welcome them into the life of the preschool.
- Generate confidence and encourage parents to trust their own instincts and judgement regarding their own child.
- Welcome all parents into the setting.
- Ensure that all new parents are aware of the preschool/Nursery's policies and procedures. A prospectus of the school will be provided and our full policy documents will be available to parents at all times as they will be kept in an easily accessible place on the school website.
- Maintain regular contact with parents to help us to build a secure and beneficial working relationship for their children.
- Support parents in their own continuing education and personal development and inform them of relevant conferences, workshops and training.
- Create opportunities for parents to talk to other adults in a secure and supportive environment through such activities as 'Open Days' and 'Stay and Play Sessions', 'Messy Mondays' and 'Welcoming Wednesday'.
- Invite parents into private consultation at least termly with their Key Worker in order to discuss progress against the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Invite parents to view their child's observations undertaken by staff, through an individual log in via Tapestry, our online journal.
- Inform parents about preschool/Nursery activities and events through regularly distributed newsletters.
- Ensure that parents are aware of the setting policies and procedures and that they are available to view at all times.
- Operate a key person system involving parents for open discussions and information sharing regarding preschool/Nursery and home circumstances, and individual needs
- Inform parents on a regular basis about their children's progress and involve them in the shared record keeping about their children.
- Consider and discuss fully all suggestions from parents concerning the care and education of their child and the running of the setting.
- Provide opportunities for parents to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the setting in ways which are accessible to parents with basic skills needs, or those for whom English is an additional language.
- Inform all parents of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions, and to check that parents understand these systems. All parents have access to our written complaints' procedure via the school website.

- Provide opportunities for parents to learn about the Early Years Foundation Stage and about young children's learning in the preschool/Nursery and at home
- Respect the family's religious and cultural backgrounds, individual needs, and to accommodate any special requirements wherever possible and practical to do so.
- Find out the needs and expectations of parents. These will be obtained through feedback via questionnaires and discussion with parents.
- Information about activities and events is regularly distributed.
- Our website is regularly updated with news, events, photos and policies.
- Information available to parents before their child starts at the setting. Including a tour of the setting and a chance to discuss any issues in detail with the appropriate room staff, usually during settling in visits.
- All parents will be offered a home visit in order for staff to get to know the family and the child's interests and starting point prior to starting their sessions at preschool/Nursery.

Use of Mobile Phones:

It is our intention to provide an environment in which children, parents and staff are safe from images being recorded and inappropriately used.

The safeguarding of children in our care is paramount and we believe our staff should be completely attentive during their hours of working, to ensure all children in the preschool/Nursery receive good quality care and education.

This is why the use of mobile phones is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** during working hours. In the event of an emergency or personal circumstances, staff may receive and make calls on the setting landline.

Arrivals and Departures:

Staff will ensure that all children are greeted warmly and made to feel welcome upon arrival and staff will ensure that they depart safely at the end of every session.

Arrivals

- A register will be kept; arrival and departure times of the children will be recorded, supplemented by regular head counts throughout the day. The register will be kept on the premises at all times. A copy of the register will be taken on trips and outings.
- A member of staff will immediately record a child's arrival at the setting.
- Familiar staff will greet children and parents.
- Parents/carers are requested to pass the care of their child to a specific member of staff who will ensure his/her safety. Any specific information provided by the parents should be recorded at this time.

Departures

- Parents may collect children at any time during the session, however we would ask that we are informed of this so we can ensure your child is ready for you and to avoid disruption to the sessions.

- Children will only be released to their parent/carer or the person on the permission form unless the setting has been informed of changes beforehand.
- In the event of someone other than parent/carer collecting, the agreed procedure must be followed to identify the nominated adult.
- During the end of session time, staff will assist with coats and shoes and any medication given to staff for a child will be recovered from the medicine box/fridge only when the parent/carer has arrived and should be handed over personally, with appropriate forms completed and signed.
- Staff reserve the right to refuse a child from our care if there is any doubt as to the authenticity of the person collecting the child.
- If a parent/carer is deemed to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol which could impede their ability to care for the child, staff can refuse to allow the parent/carer to collect the child and alternate arrangements from other named nominated person on the emergency contact list will be contacted. The police or Social Care will also be informed.
- All children must be signed out by a member of staff.
- Departure times will be recorded by staff immediately upon departure.
- Parents are responsible for the children as soon as they leave the main playroom or cloakroom and cannot be held responsible for any child who runs through the main gate without a parent, so therefore parents are reminded of the need to be vigilant and supervise their child at all times.

Late Collection and Non-Collection:

All parents agree to collect their child from preschool/Nursery at the allotted times, either 12pm or 3pm. Of course parents can collect their child earlier, but we would need to know in advance so we can ensure that the child is ready. If on occasions you know that you are going to be late, please telephone us immediately, leaving a message or giving an approximate time that you expect to arrive. We do appreciate that sometimes unexpected circumstances occur which are beyond your control. The teachers will use their discretion if late collection of a child is a rare incident, however, if parents/carers are consistently late collecting their children a charge of £5 for every 10 minutes will be added to their account for the follow term.

Non-collection of children

In the event of a child not being collected from the Preschool/Nursery after a reasonable amount of time (30 minutes) the following procedure will apply:

- Staff members will remain with the child and give reassurance.
- If the late collection of child falls within normal operating times, staff ratios must be met and planned accordingly.
- The teachers must stay behind with the child with another member of staff (ideally the Key Person) if it falls outside normal operating hours.
- Attempts will be made to contact the parent/carers.
- In the event that the parent/carers cannot be contacted, attempts will be made to contact those persons named as emergency contacts on the child's registration form.

- If contact is unsuccessful, the staff will telephone all contact numbers every 10 minutes until contact is made.
- It is important not to cause any undue stress to the child at any time. When the parent/carer arrives staff will expect an explanation, however this should be dealt with in a courteous manner.
- In the event of no contact being made after **one hour** has lapsed, the staff will ring the Social Services on 01452 426565.
- The senior Teaching Team will remain in the building until suitable arrangements have been made for the collection of the child. The child's welfare and needs will be met at all times.

Accidents, Illness and First Aid (In conjunction with main school policy)

We promote the good health of all children attending. To help keep children healthy and minimise infection, we do not expect children to attend if they are unwell. First aid provision will be available at all times when children are on the premises and also whilst on visits.

Training

All staff are Paediatric First Aid trained. A record of training is kept in the office. The staff are responsible for ensuring that all first aid equipment is checked and within date with no items missing on a monthly basis.

Children should not be left at Preschool/Nursery if they are unwell. If a child is unwell then they will prefer to be at home with their parents rather than at Preschool/Nursery. We will follow these procedures to ensure the welfare of all children within the Preschool/Nursery.

- If a child becomes ill whilst at Preschool/Nursery, the parent/carer will be contacted and asked to collect their child as soon as possible. During this time, the child will be cared for in a quiet, calm area with their key person.
- Should a child have an infectious disease such as sickness and diarrhoea they must not return to the setting until they have been clear of symptoms for at least 48 hours.
- We inform all parents if there is a contagious infection identified in Preschool/Nursery, to enable them to spot the early signs of this illness.
- We exclude all children on antibiotics for the first 24 hours of the course to ensure that they do not have an adverse reaction to them.
- We have the right to refuse admission to a child who is unwell. The decision will be taken by the Headteacher or SLT and is non-negotiable.
- In the event of a child being ill, Calpol can be administered with written consent. This is logged in the Preschool/Nursery medication log.

Hygiene/infection control

- All staff are level 2 Food Hygiene trained.
- All staff take precautions to avoid infection and follow basic hygiene procedures.
- Urine, faeces, blood and vomit will be cleaned up immediately, double bagged and disposed of safely.

- When dealing with body fluids, staff will wear protective clothing (disposable plastic gloves and aprons) and wash themselves thoroughly afterwards.
- Soiled children's clothing will be bagged to go home.
- Bioguard or any other similar anti-bacterial absorbent powder will be used if necessary to support the cleaning of fluids. The member of staff using the powder will wear protective clothing.

Immunisations:

We recognise, where possible, that children are vaccinated in accordance with their age. If children are not vaccinated, it is the responsibility of the parents to inform the preschool/Nursery to ensure that children/staff/parents are not exposed to any unnecessary risks of any sort. The Head teacher must be aware of any children who are not vaccinated within the setting in accordance with their age. Information regarding immunisations should be recorded on children's registration documents and updated as and when necessary.

It is the responsibility of all staff for their own health to consider and they keep up to date with their vaccinations for:

Tetanus	Tuberculosis	Rubella	Hepatitis	Polio
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If a member of staff is unsure as to whether they are up to date, then we recommend that they visit their GP or practice nurse for their own good health.

Sun Protection:

We want all staff and children to enjoy the sun safely. Very young children have sensitive skin that can be easily damaged by the sun's dangerous UV RAYS. Children spend a lot of their time outdoors and at this young age; they are unable to take responsibility for their own sun protection.

- Children will wear hats that protect the face, neck, ears and crown of the head for outdoor activities in the summer. Parents will be asked to provide a hat. Spare hats will be available for children whose hat has been misplaced; these will be laundered regularly by the setting. Staff will be encouraged to wear a sun hat whilst outside at preschool.
- Parents will be asked to dress their children in clothing that gives protection from the sun. Staff will be advised to dress appropriately as well.
- Parents will be asked to provide sunscreen for their child. This should be a high factor (SPF 30+ minimum) and should be labelled with the child's name. Staff will apply this regularly before outside play in sunny weather.
- During very sunny weather outdoor play will be restricted between the hours of 11am and 3pm. Play outdoors will be in shaded areas wherever possible. Use of sun gazebo to ensure extra shade outdoors.
- Staff will consider sun protection when planning excursions at all times.
- Sun safety messages will be displayed and reminders given regularly.

Tapestry

We use an online Learning Journal system called Tapestry. Tapestry is the name of the product that was developed and is owned by The Foundation Stage Forum Ltd., an Early Years organisation that provides resources and support for the Early Years workforce. The company is based and registered in the UK.

We use Tapestry to record our observations and assessments of your child.

This allows staff and parents to access the information from a computer via personal password that is a protected login. This is a safe and secure system and one that enables parents/carers to access their child's Learning Journal at any time. They can share it with their child, family and friends at home and also post any comments and photographs of their own, helping to create a fully holistic view of the child and strengthen the parent partnership.

Parent access allows parents to view the observations and assessments, but do not have the necessary permission to edit the existing material.

- Observations input into the Tapestry system are moderated by the preschool/Nursery teachers.
- Parents logging into the system are only able to see their own child's Learning Journal.
- The Learning Journal is started once the child starts preschool/Nursery and can continue with them into their school journey. Parents will be sent an email to make their own personal password or one will be allocated to them.
- Staff are provided with tablets to access Tapestry whilst working. These tablets are for work use only and are only allowed to be taken home for a specific reason and with permission from the Head teacher.
- Tapestry is not used as a communication tool between and home. A child's learning journal is a document recording their learning and development and experiences. Parents are asked to contact us through the usual channels for any day-to-day business.
- Photos are deleted off the tablet once uploaded on the child's Learning Journal
- All parents will sign a Tapestry permission form in their admissions pack.

Personal Care:

Personal care can be defined as care tasks of an intimate nature, associated with bodily functions which demand direct or indirect contact with, or exposure of the genitals. Children's dignity will be preserved and a high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them.

If a member of staff has any concerns about physical changes in a child's presentation, e.g., marks, bruises, soreness etc., the Preschool/Nursery staff will be immediately informed

in their roles as Designated Safeguarding Leaders and procedures will be followed as outlined in the Child Protection Policy.

Children and their families should not be excluded, or treated less favourably, because they have personal care needs - for example, wearing nappies, having occasional 'accidents' or needing ongoing support with personal care. We will work to ensure that every child can easily access care, play and learning experiences in our Nursery/Preschool.

Nappy changing procedure

- Parents will be requested to give permission to apply any barrier cream for staff to apply to their child, in the case of child suffering from nappy rash.
- Parents will supply their child's nappies and wipes to cater for individual needs.
- Parents will supply a change of clothes for their child, especially for children who are being 'toilet trained'.
- All staff must observe the following procedures when changing children.
- Wash hands thoroughly before commencing routine.
- Before changing a nappy ensure that PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is worn.
- Ensure that all changing materials are at hand prior the child being changed.
- Never leave a child unattended whilst they are on the changing equipment.
- All soiled nappies to be placed in a nappy sack prior to being placed into the nappy bin.
- Following every nappy change, discard PPE into nappy bin and wash hands thoroughly.
- Changing mat must be wiped before changing another child.

Toilet training

Staff are experienced in helping parents to decide if their child is ready for toilet training. The toilets at the Preschool/Nursery are child sized. All children will wash their hands after using the toilet and will be supported to do this as required. Staff will use this opportunity to support the child's understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe through regular hand washing procedures.

Staffing Levels

St Thomas More Nursery/Preschool views the safety and well-being of the child as paramount, so we provide an environment where the staffing arrangements are organised to ensure the safety and needs of the children are met. The children are supervised at all times and we adhere to the following ratios:

- Children aged 2 to 3 years of age – 1 member of staff for every 5 children
- Children aged 3-4 years of age – 1 member of staff for every 8 children or 1 teacher to every 13 children

The children and staff move freely around the playroom and the garden and the layout is open-planned and on one level and we have a free flow routine.

In line with the Children Act, we are legally bound to maintain these strict adult to child

ratios to maintain the safety of the children. In the event of unexpected low staffing levels, perhaps because of staff sickness, the Preschool/Nursery will carry out the following procedure to ensure the safety of the children and staff:

- Contact our list of established cover staff
- Contact an early years supply agency
- If unable to meet staff/child ratios then parents will be contacted to collect their child, until safe staffing levels are returned.
- Children will be pooled together to free a staff member to contact parents and carers.
- Children arriving will either not be accepted in, or parents will be required to remain with their child on site, until safe staffing levels have returned
- We will endeavour to resume normal service as soon as possible.

Visitors

We pride ourselves by welcoming visitors warmly. However, to minimise any risk to the staff and children, we operate a simple access system to limit access to the Preschool/ Nursery and therefore:

All visitors are required to come to the school main reception where ID and DBS (if applicable) will be collected and logged on the Single Central Records. Visitors will be given a visitor lanyard and escorted through the school to the Preschool/Nursery room.

A member of staff must accompany visitors in the Preschool/ Nursery at all times whilst in the building. No visitor will be allowed to move freely around the setting unaccompanied unless that person is DBS checked and added to the school Single Central Records.

The staff must ensure all contractors accessing the Preschool/ Nursery whilst children are present are not left alone in any area that children may use.

All external doors and gates must be kept locked at all times.

Staff will be expected to wear their staff lanyards at all times during working hours.

Parent code of conduct

We recognise that to make children feel valued and to enhance their learning and development of those who attend our setting, a positive and effective partnership with parents/carers is essential and will be encouraged at all times.

We are committed to ensuring that all children are safeguarded whilst in our care and we require parents/carers to help us maintain our responsibilities in the following ways:

- Refrain from negative verbal or physical interactions whilst on the Preschool/ Nursery site. We promote positive language and interaction in all aspects of the Preschool/

Nursery, so we ask all parents to be aware of this

- Refrain from using inappropriate language or displaying aggressive or threatening behaviour towards staff, children or other parents either in person, on the phone or in writing. Under no circumstances will this be tolerated
- If you collect your child and staff are concerned that you have consumed alcohol, medication or other substances that have affected your judgement or responses, staff may refuse you to collection of your child and the emergency contact person will be requested to collect your child
- Comply by the health and safety policies and procedures
- Respect others and celebrate diversity. We are an inclusive setting which means we respect others and ourselves
- Parents are expected to keep any grievances they have with the Preschool/ Nursery discussed only within the setting