

Welcome to

RIVERBANKS



NURSERY SCHOOL

**OUTSTANDING
OFSTED***

17 out of 17 Grade Ones!



*In January 2010, Riverbanks Nursery School was awarded an **outstanding** judgement by Ofsted, based on their inspection criteria.

Welcome!

How we learn, play and socialise

Children are invited, encouraged and helped to participate in our carefully planned curriculum consisting of six main areas of learning (sub-divided into more specific activities).

- 1. Personal, social and emotional development**
Choosing time, free flow playing time, taking turns, manners, developing relationships & snack time
- 2. Communication, language and literacy**
Talking (in both small and large groups), listening, show and tell sessions, story times, early writing



and reading, using puppets and Jolly Phonics activities. We also try our best to identify each child's schema, (patterns of thought for learning)

- 3. Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy**
Practical maths, mathematical language, counting activities, problems to solve, rhymes and sums
- 4. Knowledge and understanding of the world**
French and Mandarin language and culture lessons,



environmental education, history, geography and science. Also Focus Days on our – and others' – religions, countries and traditions

- 5. Physical development**
Malleable materials play, P/E, balancing beams, early writing opportunities, cooking, dance and outdoor play times.
- 6. Creative development**
Art, singing, dance and music activities.

Four times a week, at different times each week, we offer the children a specialist music session with a peripatetic music and singing specialist.



The structure of a half-day session is attached for your information. But the best way to find out what we do is to come and see us at play and work and get a feel for the environment. Prospective parents often remark on how relaxed the school feels and how the children appear to be purposefully engaged and happy in their play.

Early literacy and reading experiences

When children are ready, they are allocated a literacy key person, who,



using 'phonic decoding strategies', 'look-and-say style books' and 'real books' as well as the 'large book shared reading experience', will help individual pupils develop their early reading skills. We also use a method of teaching the sounds in our alphabet, called Jolly Phonics. The language and literacy and mathematical activities work is, where appropriate, implemented in conjunction with the aid of specific Montessori Apparatus, Ten Town Mathematical Resources and Jolly Phonics Reading and Writing Materials. Riverbanks also provides many opportunities for children to develop practical skills for life and to become



Shirley-Anne Hayman, B. Ed (hons) / EYP, born 1964, spent 1989 setting up this nursery school. It opened on 20th October 1990, with the aim of gently preparing the pre-school child for infant school in a stimulating, caring, safe, fun and structured environment.



Twenty years on, the overall aim remains and the school has a team of 15 committed adults, including Shirley and excellent staff, some of whom have been at Riverbanks over a decade!



more independent beings in the school environment. For example, polishing their shoes, developing balancing skills, giving out snacks and helping other children find their way to their individual activities. Every session includes a 'Free-Flow' play-time where (weather permitting) the children can choose to select activities and experiences and move freely from indoors to outdoors, as they choose. This session is carefully planned, observed and supervised by all our teachers.

There will be a maximum of 40 pupils in a class with a minimum of 10 teachers.

Staffing

We work on a minimum ratio of one adult to four children. Our teaching staff are appropriately qualified, having successfully

completed a minimum of two years training. Currently there are three graduates, one EYP and two staff working towards gaining the EYP status. Other staff have gained or are working towards the NVQ in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 3. Staff interests and experience are also carefully taken into account, to ensure that the team has a great deal to offer. Key staff turnover continues to be very low.

Our teachers are friendly and happy

The Deputy Manager has worked at Riverbanks for 17 years and works closely with Shirley Hayman. We also have a friendly and approachable secretary who works 22 hours across the week. Shirley Hayman, the founder and teacher in charge of Riverbanks Nursery School, has an honours degree in Primary Education and French from the Roehampton

Institute of Higher Education and a Diplome d'Etudes Françaises from the Université de Pau, France. Shirley taught in state primary schools in London and Bedfordshire before starting Riverbanks in 1990 and continues to teach the children as well as manage Riverbanks. She also has the newest postgraduate qualification for early years practitioners called the Early Years Professional Status. She lectures once a month on this postgraduate course and has recently trained as an assessor for EYPS candidates.

Parental involvement

Parents are invited to bring their child into the large classroom at the beginning of each session for five minutes. We also operate a 'kiss and drop' scheme at 8.50am for our more confident pupils. Staff recognise the importance of working alongside the parents and strive to develop good working relationships with parents and carers. Shirley Hayman is always willing to make an appointment to listen to

and give feedback to parents. Each child has their own 'teacher' (key person) to whom the parent/carer is strongly encouraged to talk to three times a year; at consultation evening. Those children who take books home have a 'reading record book' which allows school and home to communicate. Parents are invited to come on trips. We welcome any expertise or parental input especially where cultures and faiths are concerned.

Children's accessories

Options from water, sweet or savoury snacks and organic fruit and vegetables are provided at each session. Shoe-bags, aprons,



cooking ingredients and all art and craft materials are included in the school fees. Participation in school trips and visiting theatre groups are offered at an extra charge.

Official information

Riverbanks Nursery School is registered by the Government's Office For Standards In Education (Ofsted), which is based at Ofsted, 2nd & 3rd Floors, The Frontage, Queen Street, Nottingham, NG1 2AR. Tel 0845 601 4771.

Riverbanks is fully insured through the Pre School Learning Alliance and is a member of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

Riverbanks can claim what used to be



termed 'the Government's Nursery Education Grant' for its 3 and 4-year-olds. However, this is now referred to as 'the free place scheme'.

When you visit the nursery school, we can explain to you how this system works.

Kindly note that the fees you will have to agree to pay, over and above the Government's free place scheme money, if you choose Riverbanks for your son or daughter, are reviewed at the end of each spring term and any rises come into force from the following September.

All staff are offered the opportunity to regularly attend a wide variety of Early Years Education courses. We all recognise and embrace this vital part of our role at Riverbanks.

Furthermore, because Shirley strives





Do you speak MANDARIN?
你会说普通话吗?

to offer a unique service to pre-school parents, we also have a 'Registered and Experienced Speech and Language Therapist' who provides a termly screening service, free of charge for Riverbanks pupils. The following fees scale applies from April 2010 until September 2010. (Riverbanks offers a minimum of 34 weeks of schooling per academic year,

spread over the 3 terms in a year) On Registering: £80 (An administration fee, which also includes your child's name card and shoe-bag.) £50 will be refunded to you when your son or daughter leaves the Nursery School with the required written notice (10 weeks). Please note that you will be told how the fees scale works for the three to five-year-old children when you visit – in particular, how the government funding is applied to your bill. The fees are not more than those quoted below. We accept Accor vouchers and

other work place voucher schemes. There are arrangements for paying in instalments. Please ask for details. Bank Holiday closures and absences due to holidays or snowy weather are not refundable. There are no hard and fast rules about how many sessions a child must attend. However, we suggest that they start on a minimum of two half-days a week and request that parents give an indication of the number of sessions they would like to reserve and for how long.

Riverbanks sessions allocation criteria

Spaces for each academic year will be allocated to pupils based on the following criteria, in the order shown. This process takes place during June each year:

1. Any available morning sessions will be offered to current pupils who have been attending Riverbanks for at least three consecutive terms.

2. Any available afternoon sessions will be offered to current pupils, who have been attending Riverbanks for at least one term.
3. Shirley Hayman, as the owner and teacher in charge of Riverbanks, will make a decision on certain session applications at her discretion (e.g. offering a place to a family where a last-minute adoption placement has arisen).
4. The order of 'registration forms' having been received and processed. (The registration fee must have been paid at the time of registration).
5. To a prospective pupil with siblings already in the school or having attended the school.

6. Because of a health visitor's referral.
7. From time to time, if afternoon spaces are available, these will be offered to late applications for places.

Where to find us:

Riverbanks Nursery School is situated on the Lower Luton Road, where the countryside starts to open up. We are opposite St Martin's Close and next to Riverbanks Close. The building is the headquarters of the 4th Harpenden Scout troop. However, Riverbanks has sole use on weekdays and you may not even

realise that it is a scout hut in the evening!
IMPORTANT: Please enter through the large green gates on the Lower Luton Road and not via Riverbanks Close, for your own safety. We operate a one-way system around the site.

If you like the sound of our individual nursery school, do please arrange to visit us. We look forward to meeting you!

Mrs Shirley Hayman
B.Ed (hons) / EYP

FEES
We have a very easy charging scale of £9.50 per hour
3 terms make up an academic year

Flexible opening times!

Morning sessions	8:45am-12:15pm
Afternoon sessions	1:15pm-4pm
Extended sessions	8:45am until 3:00pm or 3.30pm or 4pm
Extended mornings	8:45am -1:15pm
Extended afternoons	12.15pm-4pm

Outside term times, the 'Riverbanks Holiday Club' will be open at a cost of: £7.50 per hour