



BENSHAM GROVE COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL

SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER

BENSHAM GROVE COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL AT SIDNEY GROVE
BENSHAM GROVE COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL AT DECKHAM

Our children are confident, risk seeking, motivated learners.

THEY ARE ALL UNIQUE AND AMAZING!

 **Play to
Learn**



What a busy Spring Term at Bensham Grove Community Nursery School!



What a wonderful Spring term! January seems so long away but we have achieved so much! It has been a busy one with so much to celebrate! The learning that has taken place at both Sidney Grove and Deckham Nurseries has been so impactful! We cannot believe that another term is ending!

Both Nurseries continue to thrive with the expertise of our committed staff team. This term we welcomed our inspection from Ofsted at our Deckham site. The report should be published very soon and recognises all the positive elements of our Early Years provision with so many areas of strengths identified. The children continue to be at the centre of our work and this was acknowledged so well by the Ofsted team. Our Spring 'Stay and Play' sessions have been so well attended in all rooms across both sites; we always enjoy the chance to share our learning with you so thank you for your continued support.

Our parent/family 'voice' is crucial in supporting our work and there were so many positive comments. *'Thank you for making me feel so welcome. It is lovely to be able to play in a focused environment. I can see so many connections with things he is playing with here in nursery and things he shows me at home.'*

We hope you all enjoyed having the opportunity to meet with your child's key person this half term to discuss their progress. It always supports us in gaining any additional information from yourselves with regard to connections/experiences from home too.

Thank you for your continued support.
Sue and Jill



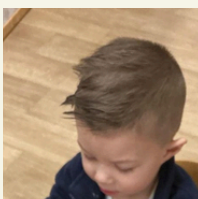
PARENTS AS PARTNERS. YOUR SUPPORT IS SO APPRECIATED. THANK YOU.



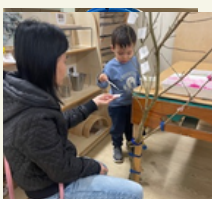
1 LOOK OUT FOR 'STAY AND PLAY' SESSIONS IN THE SUMMER TERM ALONG WITH CURRICULUM INFORMATION POSTS WEEKLY. PLEASE FEEL FREE TO BOOK A VISIT ANY TIME AS YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.



2 To support the health and safety of our children please ensure your child has appropriate head wear and skin protection as the summer months approach.



3 Please take care where you park. Dangerous parking has been noted and reported. Please also supervise your child carefully as we are so close to busy roads. Your support with this is greatly appreciated.



4 ***FYI: Nursery is closed for staff training on 2026 Friday June 26th 2026***



Sidney Grove Site Only: Many of our children are pressing the silver panel on the exit door which is becoming damaged due to children 'banging' on this. Can we ask for your support to use this exit system with care as it is in place for the safety of all of our children.

OUR VISION

Care and Education with a Purpose

"FOR A SMALL CHILD THERE IS NO DIVISION BETWEEN PLAYING AND LEARNING; BETWEEN THE THINGS HE OR SHE DOES 'JUST FOR FUN' AND THINGS THAT ARE 'EDUCATIONAL.' EACH CHILD LEARNS WHILE LIVING AND ANY PART OF LIVING THAT IS ENJOYABLE IS ALSO PLAY. PLAY GIVES CHILDREN A CHANCE TO PRACTICE WHAT THEY ARE LEARNING."

'This term we have continued our journey towards becoming a trauma informed setting as part of 'Belong Gateshead'. Our 'Meet and Greet' approach ensuring all of our children and families receive a warm welcome is at the heart of our practice and we have shared this with a number of colleagues in different schools and settings this term. It is lovely to see our approach spreading to support other children and families!

We have also started work towards becoming a 'Prem Aware' setting, as part of our commitment to meeting the needs of all of our children from birth to five.

An important aspect of our trauma informed approach involves becoming a 'School of Sanctuary'. We will be thinking carefully about what it means to 'belong' to the wider Bensham Grove family and celebrating with children and families what makes each of them special and unique. We will explore this further in the Summer term as we think about sharing our individual links with the local area and wider world through exploration of the culture, music and food that is important to our children and families.





OUR CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is underpinned by our strong philosophy on developing each child through their own personal journey by engaging with our enabling environment and our expert staff team across our Nursery community. Our personal, social and emotional curriculum is at the core of our work.

As part of our priority to ensure all children and families feel represented in our Nursery community we are aiming to work towards 'The School of Sanctuary Award'. In the summer term we will be asking families to complete some information about their interests, culture and experiences as part of a whole school display on our community and why we all belong within it, celebrating and respecting all families and our children. Watch out for our Summer 'Stay and Play' which will focus on diversity and the interesting topic of sharing and enjoying different foods.

OUR APPROACH TO POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

The positive comments gained from our parents/families at the Spring 'Stay and Play' sessions always demonstrate the value of sharing experiences for both partners. Some of the comments are shared below from our most recent one.

"Lovely morning in the Nest. It was so nice to see my daughter playing and the environment is so calm and inviting.

Thank you to the team.'

'Lovely that my child who will be starting after the holiday was invited to the Stay and Play and meet the staff and other children. Thank you.'

'We enjoyed playing.'

'Thank you for everything you planned.

We really enjoyed it.'

'Really enjoyed the visit. Children had lots of areas to explore which was great and they could come and go to the areas as they pleased.'

'Nice relaxed morning.'

We appreciate your feedback as always and find any reflective observations useful in developing our practice. Thank you.

Life at
BGNS

SUMMARY OF THE SPRING TERM

BENSHAM GROVE NURSERY SCHOOL AT DECKHAM

We have had a great spring term together at Deckham.

In January we made some changes to our environment including the development of our wonderful sensory area. This area includes: physical equipment to support climbing, balancing and travelling in different ways; small and welcoming enclosed spaces for communication, relaxation and regulation; light and sound resources; sensory toys; and is enhanced with learning opportunities to reflect the needs, interests and schemas displayed by our children.

We also developed enclosed group time areas in the classroom which enable us to meet together in smaller, key groups of children and adults. During these times we share stories, songs, discussions and focussed activities. Our outdoor area was enhanced with the addition of a new mud kitchen, water and sand trays. We have learned about some exciting celebrations this term including Shrove Tuesday, Chinese New Year and Eid al-Fitr.

Our children always display such fascination in learning about different cultural celebrations and are interested in listening to their friends talk about special times and events in their lives. Within the Discovery Hub, the children's stories and activities centred around their interests in animals. The children developed their vocabulary as they learned the names of animals and the sounds that they make.

Within the Investigation Hub the children enjoyed stories with repeated patterns and phrases. By returning to our core stories frequently, the children learn to anticipate key events and join in with repeated phrases. Some of favourites this term have included 'A Squash and a Squeeze' and 'The Three Little Pigs'. The children's understanding of stories is developed through first hand experiences, for example, after reading 'The Little Red Hen' the children looked at seeds and feathers to develop their understanding of these words, and they followed a recipe to bake their own loaves of bread for snack time.

We are looking forward to a fantastic summer term together, including observing the changes to the natural environment as we welcome the warmer weather. We cannot wait to welcome everyone back after the holiday alongside many new children and families who will be starting their journey with us.

To all of the children and families we hope everyone has a lovely holiday and we are looking forward to the next term together at Deckham.

From the whole Nursery Staff team at Deckham

SUMMARY OF THE SPRING TERM

BENSHAM GROVE NURSERY SCHOOL AT SIDNEY GROVE

In the Investigation Hub we started the term welcoming new children into our Rising Three Provision and whilst transitioning out three year old group into the existing Key Worker Groups. Wow, those children settled in so quickly and were keen to explore the environment and its learning opportunities. Although the colder dark days seems a long time ago...we continued to explore the seasonal changes in the wintery weather conditions, often investigating our garden for signs of ice and frost and remembering to leave food for the resident birds! The children took part in the Great Schools Birdwatch and enjoyed learning the names of some of the most familiar birds we see in the garden. They also learned some birdsong and practised listening and identifying birds this way!

Among our core texts which we explored in a cross-curricular approach were the Three Little Pigs, the Three Billy Goat's Gruff and Handa's Surprise. We celebrated an array of special events including; Pancake Tuesday, Valentine's Day, Chinese New Year, World Book Day and Science Week to name a few. In the run up to the Easter break it was the perfect moment to invite family members to attend a Spring Stay and Play session to observe the progress being made by our Investigators in action! Thank you for your support.

In the Discovery Hub, The Nest and The Den it has been lovely to see the children settle and progress across the term. It has been a very busy term as within the curriculum, they have engaged in events across the term such as Big Garden Bird Watch, Chinese New Year, Pancake Day, Holi Festival, Ramadan and Easter. They have also celebrated events such as World Book Day and Science Week in a child development appropriate manner.

Our smallest children have loved our outings in our new quadruple buggies enabling them to communicate and socialise together whilst enjoying the outdoors. The children have shown curiosity within all experiences and showed engagement with the activities and opportunities provided. Over the term, the children have shown a great interest with books, exploring with staff and independently. The children have been developing their listening and recall skills as they explore joining in with repeated phrases and have engaged in using props to act out well known books.

It has been lovely to see the progress all the children have made over this term and we wish the children moving on to their new spaces all the best in the next stage of their journey!

We wish all of our children and families a lovely holiday and hopefully look forward to some lovely weather too.
Thank you for all your continued support from the whole team at Bensham, Sidney Grove.



OFFICE ASSISTANT
GEORGIA COYNE

"I'M GEORGIA, I AM 25 YEARS OLD AND I LOVE— SPENDING TIME WITH MY FRIENDS AND FAMILY. I HAVE 2 NEPHEWS AND A NIECE WHO ARE 3 AND 5 YEARS OLD, WHO I ADORE. I TRY AND EMBRACE ALL OPPORTUNITIES AND LOVE TRAVELLING TO NEW PLACES. I PREVIOUSLY WORKED AT THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL AS A SECRETARY AND THEN AS A HEALTH CARE ASSISTANT, BUT I AM REALLY ENJOYING WORKING WITH EVERYONE AT BENSAM GROVE NURSERY!"



OFFICE MANAGER
JANINE BELSHAW

"I'M JANINE AND HAVE WORKED HERE AS OFFICE MANAGER AT BENSAM GROVE NURSERY SCHOOL SINCE JANUARY 2015. I'M AN EARLY-BIRD WHO FINDS MY ENERGY AT MY LOCAL GYM BEFORE THE WORKDAY EVEN BEGINS! I LIVE WITH MY HUSBAND EARL, MY DAUGHTER DAISY (11) AND MY SON TRISTAN (9). WE ARE AT OUR HAPPIEST WHEN WE ARE ON THE ROAD WITH OUR TOURER CARAVAN EXPLORING THE UK OR JETTING OFF ABROAD ON OUR SUMMER AND SKI HOLIDAYS!"

STAFFING UPDATES

MATERNITY LEAVE

Hannah Fagen is on maternity leave and has welcomed a little boy into the world. Both are doing great!

GOOD BYE to Caitlin who has been supporting at Deckham. Thank you and we wish you well in your new job.

OUR STAFF

Safeguarding Team

We believe everyone has a responsibility to promote the welfare of all our children to keep them safe and to practice in a way that protects them. We will make sure that all our children have the best protection. We have robust procedures in place for recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns. Should you wish to report a safeguarding concern please contact any of the following team members who are designated safeguarding leads.



Bensham Grove Community Nursery School
Jill Hutton (Headteacher)
Sue McElrue (Headteacher)

Bensham Grove Community Nursery School @ Sidney Grove
Hilary James (Child Care Manager)
Kelly Keating (Deputy Child Care Manager)
Lesley Chesson (SEN Co and Lead Teacher for both centres)
Emma Goodrick (Teacher)

Bensham Grove Community Nursery School @ Deckham
Claire Hardy (Deputy Child Care Manager)

If you are not able to speak with any of the above and you believe a child to be at risk please call the police or the local safeguarding team in Gateshead 0191 433 2653

CONTACT US

BENSHAM GROVE COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL
HEADTEACHER: JILL HUTTON & SUE MCELRUE

@ BENSAM
SIDNEY GROVE
GATESHEAD
TYNE AND WEAR
NE8 2XD
0191 433 4090

@ DECKHAM
ELGIN CENTRE, CARR HILL RD
GATESHEAD
TYNE AND WEAR
NE9 5PA
0191 433 5001

BENSHAMGROVECOMMUNITYNURSERY SCHOOL@GATESHEAD.GOV.UK
BENSHAMGROVENURSERY SCHOOL.ORG