



Dovecote Nursery

Welcome to Dovecote Nursery

A Guide for New and Returning Families

2026-2027



To Inspire, To Nurture, To Protect



Dovecote Nursery



Welcome to Dovecote Nursery

We are absolutely delighted to welcome you and your child to Dovecote Nursery, whether you're joining us for the first time or returning for another exciting year. Becoming part of the Dovecote community means stepping into a warm, nurturing, and engaging environment where your child is supported, encouraged, and inspired every step of the way.

Starting or returning to nursery is a special milestone, not just for children but for parents too. We know it often comes with a mixture of excitement and question - especially around routines, expectations, and how best to support your child during this transition. To help make the process as smooth and reassuring as possible, we've created this booklet as a guide for both new and returning families.

Inside, you'll find helpful information about daily life at the nursery - from what your child needs to bring each day, to how we communicate with families, details about our routines, our approach to learning, and important policies. We've also included answers to frequently asked questions that we know parents often have at the beginning of the year.

Our goal is to ensure you feel confident, informed, and well-supported as we work together to create a positive and enriching nursery experience for your child.

If at any point you have questions or would like to discuss anything further, please know that our team is always here to help. We truly value the partnership we build with each family and look forward to a wonderful year ahead filled with learning, laughter, and growth.



At Dovecote Nursery, we know childhood is a treasured time. We believe it is our responsibility to create inclusive environments and deliver learning experiences that capture the joys of childhood, nurture each child's individual growth and development, and pave the way for success in school and life.

Our vision over the last decade has been to create a Nursery where each child's individual needs and capabilities would be recognized while instilling the love of learning in children.

Using an individualized approach, we strive to unleash every child's full potential and foster a love for learning. At Dovecote, we have a unique community of staff, parents, and children, encouraging every child to gain a sense of independence throughout their learning journey.

We understand how important it is for all children to grow, learn and explore at their own pace, which is why we offer personalised care and attention that prepares your child for their early school years by transforming them into confident and independent students.

Warm regards,

Mena Press
Group Nursery Academic Lead

Meet the Team



Mena Press
Nursery Manager



Annie Espiritu
Nurse / Admin



Angela Lee
Sunflowers
Teacher



Sameen Raza
Lilies
Teacher



Jennifer Chahine
Deputy Manager / Daisies
Teacher



Mariam Akhtar
Bluebells
Teacher



Kaeren Milligan
Poppies
Teacher



Marissa Francisco
Teaching Assistant



Cherry Alancado
Teaching Assistant



Miracel Ugerio
Teaching Assistant



Maribeth Dineros
Teaching Assistant



Pina Catapang
Teaching Assistant

Meet the Team



Mykaela Alejo
Classroom Assistant



Lalaine Vinluan
Classroom Assistant



May Samaniego
Classroom Assistant



Marcela Ocana
Classroom Assistant



Dulce Yousep
Classroom Assistant



Jennifer Gabo
Classroom Assistant



Liezl Marquez
Classroom Assistant

Working Together with Respect

At Dovecote, our team is committed to the care, safety, and happiness of every child. We create a warm, nurturing environment where children feel valued, safe, and inspired to learn. Each day, we provide the highest standard of care, supporting your child's development, confidence, and sense of belonging.

We believe a strong partnership between parents, and our team is key to every child's success and well-being. We encourage open, honest, and respectful communication and invite families to share questions and feedback. Working together ensures the best experience for your child.

We kindly ask all parents and carers to treat every member of the Dovecote team with courtesy and kindness. We have zero tolerance for unkind or inappropriate behaviour towards staff, as a respectful atmosphere benefits everyone especially the children.

Thank you for your trust and collaboration. Together, we can make your child's time at Dovecote a happy, enriching start to their learning journey.

Learning at Dovecote Nursery

At Dovecote Nursery, we are passionate about providing children with a rich and meaningful early years experience that nurtures every aspect of their development. We follow the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**, the UK's statutory framework that supports children from birth to five years old. The EYFS outlines seven areas of learning, but for our youngest learners - from birth to age three - we focus primarily on the three Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

These core areas are the foundation for all future learning, and at Dovecote, we place great care in supporting each child's growth in these vital aspects. We believe that **children learn best through play**, and our approach is both **child-led and play-based**, allowing children to explore their environment, follow their curiosity, and make meaningful discoveries at their own pace. Our classrooms are thoughtfully prepared each day to invite learning through open-ended resources, sensory exploration, storytelling, music, imaginative play, and time spent outdoors.

Our dedicated educators observe closely and plan weekly activities tailored to children's emerging interests and developmental needs. Through topics, themes, and play-based exploration, children are gently introduced to the Specific Areas of learning: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts & Design.

Our ethos is rooted in the belief that **each child is unique**, capable, and full of potential. We strive to create a warm, secure environment where children feel confident to take risks, make choices, build friendships, and grow in independence.

At Dovecote, our mission is to foster a **lifelong love of learning** - to inspire not only school readiness, but joyful, resilient, and curious learners who feel seen, supported, and celebrated every day.

Nursery Hours, Extended Care & Contact Information

Daily Timings & Extended Care Options

At Dovecote Nursery, our core school day begins at 7:45am and finishes at 1:45pm. To better support working families, we also offer optional extended care sessions:

- **Early Bird Drop-Off** (7:30 am – 8:00 am): AED 35 per day / AED 1,000 per term

- **Afternoon Extended Day** (2:00 pm – 4:00/4:30 pm): AED 75 per day / AED 2,000 per term

Please note: These sessions must be booked in advance. The Afternoon Extended Day is available once your child has fully settled into their nursery routine. We'll be happy to provide a booking form when the time is right.

Should you have any questions about timings or availability, please don't hesitate to get in touch - we're always here to help.

Contacting Us

We're always happy to hear from you and support you in any way we can.

Main Nursery Line: +971 (04) 440 3424

General Enquiries: admissions.albarsha@dovecotenursery.org

Mena: mena.press@cognita.com

If you'd like to speak with your child's teacher or schedule a meeting, please reach out to them directly via email or through the nursery office.

Session Changes and Parent Support

Changing Sessions

We understand that families' needs can change, and we're here to support you as best we can. If you'd like to **increase your child's sessions**, please complete a session request form. We will do our best to accommodate your request as soon as space becomes available.

If you need to **reduce your child's sessions or withdraw from the nursery**, we kindly ask for **a full term's notice**. As we operate at full capacity, regular sessions are fixed and cannot be changed week to week.

If you'd like to **book an additional session**, please speak with the Nursery Manager in advance to check availability. Any extra sessions will be invoiced separately, either within the same month or term. If you need to cancel an extra session, please give us **at least 48 hours' notice**. Kindly note that missed sessions cannot be swapped or transferred.

Absences

If your child is going to be **absent from nursery for any reason**, we kindly ask that you inform **both your child's teacher and the Nursery Manager** as soon as possible. This helps us ensure accurate attendance records and support your child appropriately upon their return.

Questions and Concerns

We value open communication and are always here to help. If you have any questions about the information in this booklet or anything related to your child's experience, please feel free to speak first with your child's teacher, who knows your child best. For general questions or anything administrative, you're always welcome to contact the nursery office directly.

At Dovecote Nursery, we follow over **50 policies and procedures** to ensure the highest standards of care and safety. These are available for you to view upon request - please don't hesitate to ask.

Questions You May Have

Here to guide you through the first steps of nursery life.



Nursery Routine and Timings

• What are the drop-off and pick-up times?

Our regular nursery hours are from **8:00 AM to 2:00 PM**. We understand that every family has different schedules, so we also offer additional flexible options:

- An **Early Club** from **7:30 AM to 8:00 AM** for families who need an earlier start to the day
- An **Afternoon Class** from **2:00 PM to 4:00 PM** for those who would like their child to stay a little longer and enjoy more time at nursery

These extra sessions are available upon request and help support a variety of family routines.

• Where do I drop off and collect my child?

Drop-off and pick-up take place directly at your child's classroom. Each morning and afternoon, your child will be greeted by their teacher and the familiar faces of their classroom team. This creates a calm, reassuring transition into and out of the nursery day, and gives you a moment to connect with the staff if needed.

• Can someone else (e.g., a nanny or grandparent) collect my child?

Yes, of course! We understand that parents may not always be able to collect their child in person. If a nanny, grandparent, or another trusted adult will be collecting your child, please ensure they are listed on your **authorised collection list**.

For regular collection, we kindly ask that they wear a **Dovecote lanyard**, which can be arranged through the nursery team for added security and peace of mind.

If it's the **first time** someone new will be collecting your child, we ask that you **email the Nursery Manager and the admissions team in advance**, sharing a **copy of their Emirates ID or passport**, along with a clear statement confirming that they are permitted to collect your child. This is part of our commitment to keeping all children safe and ensuring collections are handled securely and confidently.

• What happens if I'm running late?

We completely understand that delays can happen from time to time. If you think you'll be late for pick-up, please give us a quick **call on the nursery landline** or **email the Nursery Manager**, making sure to copy in the **admissions email address**. This allows us to make sure your child is cared for and reassured while waiting and helps us to manage the end-of-day routine smoothly.

A Few Important Reminders for Parents

At Dovecote Nursery, we want every day to run smoothly and happily for our children, families and team. A few simple reminders help us keep the nursery safe, calm and organised.

Drop-Off & Collection

Please arrive on time to collect your child. Our nursery day finishes at **2:00 pm**, and all children should be collected by this time unless they are booked into our Afternoon Club.

If you are unexpectedly delayed, please **call the nursery as soon as possible** so that we can reassure your child and make the necessary arrangements.

Please remember that we can only release your child to an **authorised adult**. If somebody different will be collecting your child, you must inform the nursery in advance and provide the required identification.

Keep Goodbyes Short & Positive

We know saying goodbye can sometimes be difficult, particularly during the first few weeks. A warm, confident and positive goodbye helps your child understand that nursery is a safe and happy place.

Once you have said goodbye, please allow our experienced team to take over. We will always contact you if your child is finding it difficult to settle.

What to Bring Each Day

Please ensure that **all belongings are clearly labelled with your child's name**, including:

Water bottle

Snack and lunch

Full change of clothes, including underwear and socks

Nappies and wipes, if required

One small comfort item, if needed

Sun hat when appropriate

Even children who are toilet trained may need spare clothes after water play, messy activities or little accidents.

Please Keep Us Informed

You know your child best. Please tell us about anything happening at home that may affect their emotions, behaviour or routine.

This could include a parent travelling, a new baby, moving house, changes to sleeping or eating, or changes within the family. Even something that may seem small to an adult can feel very big to a young child.

The more we know, the better we can understand and support your child.



Illness

If your child is unwell, please keep them at home until they are ready to return to nursery.

This not only gives your child the opportunity to rest and recover but also helps us protect the health and wellbeing of all our children and staff.

Please follow the illness and exclusion guidance outlined in this booklet.

Communication

Please regularly check **Showbie, emails, weekly newsletters and classroom notices** so that you don't miss important nursery information, events or reminders.

Our teachers spend their day focused on the children and may not be able to respond to messages immediately. For anything urgent, please contact the nursery office directly.

Mobile-Free Nursery

We kindly ask parents and carers **not to use mobile phones within the nursery**. Drop-off and collection are important moments for your child. We encourage you to use this time to connect with them and, where needed, speak with their classroom team.

Working Together

We want Dovecote to be a happy, welcoming and respectful community. Open communication and mutual respect between families and our team are extremely important to us.

If you are unsure about anything, **please ask us**. We would always prefer you to speak with us so that we can help, clarify or resolve any concerns quickly.

Thank you for helping us make Dovecote a safe, happy and nurturing place for every child.

Settling-In and Emotional Support

- **How long will it take my child to settle in?**

Every child is wonderfully unique, and as such, each one will take a different amount of time to feel fully settled into the nursery environment. Some children adjust quickly, while others may take a little longer - and that's perfectly normal. Our team will support both you and your child throughout this transition, taking a gentle, responsive approach that helps build confidence and trust over time.

- **Can I stay with my child during the first few days?**

We understand how tempting it is to stay close during those early days, but we kindly ask that parents and caregivers do not stay in the classroom. Having multiple adults in the room can be unsettling for the other children, and more importantly, it can make it harder for your child to begin forming important bonds with our educators. Rest assured, we will be there to comfort, support, and guide your child as they adjust to their new environment.

- **Will you call me if my child is upset?**

Absolutely. Your child's emotional well-being is our top priority. If your child remains unsettled for an extended period of time, we will call you and may ask you to collect them. During the settling-in period, we also recommend shorter nursery days to ease the transition and ensure your child begins to associate nursery with positive, calm experiences.

- **How do you support children with separation anxiety?**

Separation anxiety is very common in the early days, and our team is experienced in helping children navigate these emotions gently and sensitively. One of the tools we use is the **"All About Me" booklet**, which helps us learn more about your child's likes, dislikes, and comfort items. This allows us to create familiar, enjoyable experiences for them in the classroom. Whether it's a favourite song, a comforting story, or simply a cuddle, we tailor our approach to each child's individual needs to help them feel safe, loved, and understood.

- **What time will my child spend at nursery when they are settling in?**

During the **first week**, we take a gradual approach. Most children will begin by staying for **1 to 2 hours on the first day**, and we will slowly increase their time at nursery each day based on how they are coping. We want to ensure that children feel confident and secure before staying for longer periods.

Please note that **afternoon classes will begin from the 7th of September**. During the **first week of term**, we will not run afternoon sessions, as our focus will be on helping all children settle in smoothly and happily.

Food and Snacks

• What should I pack for snack and lunch?

If you choose to send food from home, we recommend packing **simple, nutritious meals and snacks** that your child can enjoy independently. Finger foods such as cut fruits, vegetable sticks, sandwiches, cheese cubes, crackers, as well as small portions of **rice, pasta, chicken, or other proteins** work well. Please ensure everything is clearly labeled and packed in containers your child can easily open. Water bottles should also be sent in daily, filled and clearly labeled.

• Is there a nut-free policy?

Yes, we are a **strictly nut-free nursery**. For the safety of all children, no nuts or nut-based products are permitted on the premises. Please check ingredient labels carefully before packing any food items.

• Can my child eat warm food?

While we do not reheat food at the nursery for safety and hygiene reasons, you are welcome to send warm food in a **thermo-insulated container** to help keep it at the desired temperature until mealtime.

• What is a healthy lunchbox?

A healthy lunchbox should include a **balance of food groups**. For example:

- A sandwich or wrap with a protein filling
- Small portions of **rice, pasta, chicken, or other cooked proteins**
- Sliced cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, or carrot sticks
- Fresh fruit such as apple slices or berries
- A dairy item like cheese or yogurt

We encourage wholesome, minimally processed foods that will fuel your child's energy and support their development throughout the day.

• What are children not allowed to bring to nursery?

To help promote healthy eating habits and maintain a focused learning environment, we kindly ask that **chocolate, sweets, sugary drinks, and other processed or unhealthy snacks** are not included in lunchboxes. We also ask that all round fruits like grapes and cherry tomatoes be sliced lengthwise to reduce choking risk.

Toileting and Hygiene

• Do I need to send nappies/wipes?

Yes, please provide nappies and wipes if your child is not yet fully toilet trained. Along with these, it's helpful if you share any specific instructions or preferences about how you would like your child to be cleaned and cared for. This ensures consistency between home and nursery, and helps us support your child in the most comfortable and familiar way.

• How do you manage toilet training?

Toilet training is a big step, and we approach it as a partnership between nursery and home. We work closely with you to understand your child's current routine and progress, ensuring a consistent approach. Please remember to send plenty of spare clothes, as accidents are a normal part of the learning process. Our caring staff will offer gentle encouragement and support to help your child develop independence and confidence at their own pace.

• Will staff help if my child has an accident?

Absolutely! Our team is experienced and compassionate when it comes to supporting children through accidents. If your child has an accident, staff will promptly and discreetly assist with cleaning and changing them, ensuring your child feels safe and comfortable. We always handle such moments with kindness and sensitivity to maintain your child's dignity.

Clothing and Personal Items

• What does my child need to wear?

Please dress your child in comfortable, practical clothes suitable for play and the weather. Clothes that can get messy are fine, as children engage in lots of creative activities.

• Should I send spare clothes?

Yes, please send a full set of spare clothes, including underwear and socks, to help your child stay comfortable in case of accidents or spills. Don't forget to label everything.

• Can I send a comfort toy or blanket?

Absolutely! We understand that a familiar comfort toy or blanket can be a great source of reassurance for your child, especially during settling-in or nap times. Please send one small item that your child loves, and make sure it's clearly named. We encourage comfort items that are easy to keep safe and hygienic.

Communication and Updates

- **How will I know how my child is doing?**

In the first couple of weeks, your child's class teacher will provide **verbal updates at drop-off and pick-up**, focusing on how your little one is settling in. Once your child's **Showbie app account** is activated, you'll begin receiving regular photo updates of their activities and learning experiences.

Each week, teachers also share the **weekly plan**, a **newsletter summarising the week**, and a preview of the upcoming theme, along with any reminders. Be sure to check your child's **classroom noticeboard**, as upcoming events and important information are often posted there too.

- **Do you use an app or daily report?**

Yes, we use the **Showbie**, where teachers post photos a **few times per week**. While we don't provide daily written reports through the app, teachers offer **verbal feedback** at the end of the day to keep you informed on how your child is doing.

- **Who do I speak to if I have concerns?**

If you have any concerns, please feel free to speak directly with your child's **classroom teacher**, who knows them best. If you'd prefer or need further support, you are always welcome to contact the **Nursery Manager Mena Press**. We value open communication and warmly welcome feedback at any time.

Parent Whatsapp Group

- **Can I communicate with other parents in my child's class?**

Yes, absolutely! Each classroom at Dovecote Nursery has a parent representative who will create a WhatsApp group for the class. You are welcome to join this group if you wish.

The purpose of the group is to share important reminders, updates, and general information related to Dovecote Nursery. It may also be used to organise playdates or communicate about class-related matters.

We kindly ask that all members of the group follow our **WhatsApp Code of Conduct**, which includes treating one another with respect and keeping messages relevant and considerate.

Health, Safety & Illness

• What happens if my child becomes ill during the day?

If your child becomes unwell while at nursery, we will **contact you immediately**. If we're unable to reach you, we will call your listed **emergency contact**. While waiting to be collected, your child will be gently separated from the rest of the class and cared for by our **nurse, classroom teacher**, or the **Nursery Manager**, ensuring they remain comfortable and reassured.

• Can I send my child with a runny nose?

We understand that mild symptoms such as a light runny nose can be common, especially during the cooler months. However, if your child has additional symptoms such as **fever, coughing, sneezing, or is generally unwell**, we ask that you keep them at home to rest and recover - and to help protect the health of others.

• Do you give medication at nursery?

We can **only administer medication** that is prescribed by a **doctor**, and it must be accompanied by a clear prescription note. Unfortunately, we are **unable to give fever-reducing medications** (e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen) at nursery.

• What is your policy for fever or diarrhea?

If your child has a **fever**, they must be **fever-free for at least 24 hours without medication** before returning to nursery.

For **vomiting or diarrhea**, children must be **symptom-free for 48 hours** before they can come back, to help prevent the spread of infection.

• What happens in the case of Hand, Foot & Mouth or other common childhood illnesses?

If a child is suspected of having **Hand, Foot and Mouth**, we will call the parents to collect them promptly and separate the child from their peers to rest comfortably. The classroom and all shared areas will undergo a **thorough deep clean**. Once the case is **confirmed by a doctor**, we will notify all parents in the class and request that families be extra vigilant for symptoms.

Our top priority is the health and well-being of all children and staff, and we thank you for your support in keeping our nursery a safe and healthy environment.

Parents as Partners

At Dovecote Nursery, we believe children thrive when parents and staff work closely together. Every child is unique, and by sharing information openly, honestly, and respectfully, we can provide the individual care and support each child needs.

We value parents and carers as important partners in this journey. Strong relationships built on trust, respect, and understanding are at the heart of our approach. Our team is dedicated to supporting families in a professional, sensitive, and approachable way, helping children feel secure, confident, and happy.

We kindly ask all parents and carers to communicate with staff in a respectful and considerate manner. Positive communication strengthens the partnership between home and nursery and sets a great example for the children we care for.

Communication

To keep you closely connected with your child's experiences at nursery, we use a dedicated nursery app to share photo updates throughout the week. These snapshots give you a glimpse into the activities and moments your child enjoys while at nursery. At the end of each week, we also share our weekly newsletter and upcoming planning so you can stay informed about what's been happening and what's ahead.

The app also provides a secure and convenient way for you to communicate with your child's teacher through direct messaging. Please note that during the morning session, teachers are fully engaged with the children and are therefore usually unable to respond to messages until after 2:30 pm. Additionally, teachers will not respond to messages after 5pm. We appreciate your understanding as we prioritise time spent with the children throughout the day.

Please note that, to maintain a calm, safe, and focused environment for the children, the use of mobile phones is not permitted within the nursery premises.

We encourage parents to keep us informed about any important developments in their child's life - whether related to health, wellbeing, routines, or family circumstances. The more we know, the better we can adapt our care to suit your child's specific needs, especially when it comes to medical conditions, dietary requirements, or emotional support.

We are excited to work hand-in-hand with you throughout the year. By nurturing a strong home-nursery connection, we can ensure that your child enjoys a rich, engaging, and joyful early learning experience. Together, we can give your child the very best possible start on their educational journey, filled with curiosity, creativity, and confidence.



Dovecote Nursery

We Can't Wait to Begin This Journey With You

Thank you for taking the time to read through this booklet. We hope it has helped you feel more informed, prepared, and confident about your child's time at Dovecote Nursery. Whether you are new to our community or returning for another year, we're truly delighted to have you with us.

Starting or returning to nursery is a big step for both children and parents. It marks the beginning of new friendships, discoveries, and experiences that will shape your child's early years. At Dovecote, we cherish the opportunity to support your little one as they grow, explore, and develop into capable, confident learners.

Our dedicated team of educators and staff are passionate about creating a nurturing, inclusive, and inspiring environment where each child is recognised as an individual. We believe that children thrive when they feel secure, supported, and excited to learn - and that is the environment we strive to offer every single day.

Throughout the year, we will be sharing updates, photos, and learning experiences with you, because we believe that strong partnerships between home and nursery are at the heart of a successful early years experience. We want you to feel connected, involved, and reassured every step of the way.

This booklet has covered many of the common questions families ask during the start of term, but we understand that every child and every family is unique. If there is anything else you'd like to ask or share, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Communication is key, and we are always here to listen and support you.

We look forward to getting to know your family, celebrating your child's achievements, and creating a joyful and memorable year together.

With warmest regards,

Mena Press