

WINGATE COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL

come and
experience
a day @ wingate



immersed in our work and play

A DAY HOSTED BY

BECKY WOOD AND THE SCHOOL TEAM

history of our school



The original Wingate Nursery was built by the Local Authority in 1942 to care for the young children of the mothers who were working on the war efforts, but it was taken over the Education Department in 1952 as a Nursery School.

In 1989, Paddy Beels came to Wingate as new Headteacher. At this time everything about the place was worn down and dilapidated: the building was ancient and shabby with holes in the walls; morale was low, amongst staff, parents and the whole ex-mining community; and crucially, the education practice itself lacked understanding and direction!

Working in close partnership with parents, families and the whole community, Paddy picked the Nursery up off it's knees and injected a whole load of enthusiasm, passion, rigour and love, so that in 1992 a new Nursery School was built and opened on site, celebrating the previous tough 50 years and welcoming a bright exciting future !

A clear, new Vision was firmly established for the way that learning and teaching happened at Wingate, based upon adults' understanding of the value of the learning climate, our image of the child, the role of educators and relationships with parents and families.

our school today



Becky joined the nursery school in 1998 and worked alongside Paddy for 17 years, before she retired in July 2014. Becky was appointed as headteacher and began her own leadership journey in September of the same year.

Over time, the school has continued to grow and extend its provision, firstly opening it's first outdoor site in 2016, on a community allotment, and in 2021, after a long battle, the school opened its second outdoor site at the Park Keeper's Cottage, beside the woods.

Both outdoor sites operate all year round, with children accessing their nursery education across our 3 sites. It works brilliantly, with children's overall development soaring, as they build up resilience and strength physically, but also socially and emotionally.

We are staggered by how time in nature positively affects children's behaviour and are hoping to work with Durham University and their psychology department to explore and evidence the impact.

our values

THESE 9 VALUES REPRESENT WHAT REALLY MATTERS TO US IN OUR SCHOOL, WITH OUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN OUR COMMUNITY, UNDERPINNING OUR SCHOOL ETHOS AND PHILOSOPHY ON EDUCATION.



the holistic learning climate;
physical and emotional
environments combined



genuine, respectful partnerships
with parents, carers and families



happiness, kindness,
collaboration, co-operation
and teamwork



the relationship and mutual
respect with the local
community



reciprocal relationships
between children and adults,
as co-learners



and respect the natural world,
with uninterrupted time to
wallow in nature



professional love and respect for
children, their childhood and the
right to play



the description of our school by
Sir Antony Gormley;
'a laboratory of possibilities'



children's questions,
fascinations and lines of inquiry,
as leaders of their own learning

staff

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



BECKY WOOD
HEADTEACHER

Becky joined the Wingate family in 1998, as Assistant Headteacher, spending 17 years working alongside Paddy, prior to becoming Headteacher in 2014.

Becky now leads the ever expanding team of early years educators, as they venture down new and exciting pathways on the wingate journey. Becky is in her element, working creatively, innovatively and autonomously as leader of a very special place.



NICHOLA HESSEWOOD
DEPUTY HEADTEACHER

Nichola joined the team in 2018, initially on supply, but never left! Because she quickly grew to love and cherish the ethos and philosophy of 'the wingate way', she soon became our permanent early years teacher and more recently, the deputy headteacher. Nic has a passion for young children learning in nature and is enjoying supporting the staff with the pedagogy at our outdoor sites - the Allotment and Outdoor Nature School.



PADDY BEELS
CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

In 1999, during her time as Headteacher at Wingate Nursery School, Paddy was awarded the first National Teaching Award for working with parents and the Community. And in 2000 she received an OBE for services to education. In 2014, following 25 years @ wingate, Paddy finally decided to retire and take a step back ... or rather a sideways step, into the role of Chair of Governors, maintaining close contact, support and friendship.

staff

EARLY YEARS EDUCATORS



ANGE WILKINSON
EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR
AND YELLOW GROUP LEAD

Ange joined the team in 2014 and is key person for the yellow group.

She is a military wife, with two teenage daughters and an adult son, and has worked all over the world, as a 'nursery nurse', before settling back in the north east.

Ange loves being outdoors and is deeply committed to saving the planet. She grows her own veg at home and recently became vegan.



BURCU MCGHIN
EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR
AND GREEN GROUP LEAD

Burcu came to us in 2019 on a one year contract to cover Adele's maternity leave. She became the foster carer for the red group and breezed in 'like a breath of fresh air'. Burcu is still with us and is now the key person for the green group.

Burcu is originally from Turkey, but came to live and work in England in 2018 as a teacher.



BEATA BRZEZIŃSKA
EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR
AND ORANGE GROUP LEAD

Beata is originally from Poland, but has been living and working in England as an educator for the past 15 years, with her partner, Raf, who's also a teacher.

Beata joined us in 2019 and is key person for the orange group. She loves the great outdoors and asks to work outside every day. Beata has a great sense of humour and doesn't take life too seriously.

staff

EARLY YEARS EDUCATORS



HANNAH HEDLEY

EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR
AND BLUE GROUP LEAD

Hannah began her time at wingate working with the babies. She then became the Manager of the Childcare Company and did a great job leading and managing a large team of practitioners for 4 years.

In September 2023, Hannah decided to hang up her leadership hat and step into the key person role within the nursery school and is loving it! Hannah has many skills to bring to the team - including her knowledge and experience of working with 2 year olds, as we step into mixed age ways of working in school.



SOPHIE EDWARDS

EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR
AND RED GROUP LEAD

Sophie worked with us on supply for a whole year, supporting our children with SEND, before she became a fully fledged member of the team. She jumped at the chance to become a key person and is embracing the new role, learning alongside the team.

Sophie comes from a farming background and is passionate about our work with children outdoors.

staff

NATURE LEADS AND EARLY YEARS PEDAGOGUES



NICHOLA HESSEWOOD
DEPUTY HEADTEACHER
AND NATURE LEAD

Nic has a passion for young children learning in nature and is enjoying supporting the staff with the pedagogy at our outdoor sites - the Allotment and Cottage - Outdoor Nature School. She shares this role with Adele and works across all 3 sites to support the teaching and learning in nature.



ADELE CHAPMAN
EARLY YEARS EDUCATOR
AND NATURE LEAD

Adele first came to wingate nursery as a child, then a student and then a member of staff. We strongly believe that the 'grown your own staff' is by far the best way to acquire staff who truly 'get' the wingate way.

Historically, Adele has been the key person for red group, but in January 2023, she stepped into the role of nature lead at the cottage. She now works alongside Nichola, working across all 3 sites as a leader of learning.

about the day

We are often asked if people can come and visit us, so rather than this being random and rushed, we plan a full day at wingate, where we dedicate all our time to you, your questions, your wonderings and to do this properly, we need to charge.

The fee is £150 which includes lunch and refreshments throughout the day. We will also give you a set of images of the environments and learning spaces you see on the day, to share with your team.


Please remember, we are not claiming to be experts in early years, or believe that our practice is something we think everyone should be following. We simply do what we believe is right for our children and families, in our local community in the north east of England and are happy to share this with interested colleagues.

This brochure will hopefully help you decide if 'a day @ wingate' is something you would like to invest in.



networking

There could be up to 12 delegates joining us, from various schools/settings across different parts of the country. We try to make it as interactive as possible, with lots of discussion between all parties, to get the most out of the day.



more info about the day

Please arrive between 8.00 and 8.15am for coffee/tea.

Following brief introductions, you will join staff and children in family group time, where you can listen in to their conversations, discussions and plans for the morning session.

We have 5 groups in total, but only 3 on our school site during your visit. One family group will be spending their week at our community allotment, just around the corner from school. The other family group will be 'in residence' at our outdoor nature school, 'the cottage in the woods', about a mile away.

You will spend the morning observing practice at the main school site, before heading off to 'the cottage' for lunch. We plan to spend an hour at the cottage, before heading back to visit the allotment during the afternoon, to see the space, the opportunities and the children and adults sharing it together.

Throughout the day, there will be ample opportunities to chat and ask questions to Becky and the team. We will return to the school site to end the day together, where we will host a Q&A session to answer any further questions.



housekeeping

A FEW REQUESTS

Can we please ask ..

- if possible, that you switch your mobile phone to silent/vibrate throughout the day (other than at lunch time, of course)
- you not to take photographs during the day (Becky will take a selection of photographs during your visit and will what's app them to you at the end of the day to share with colleagues in your school/setting)
- that you bring suitable footwear for outdoors and a waterproof coat - in case of wet weather

rhythm of the day (a.m.)

EVENT	START TIME	END TIME
INTRODUCTIONS		
SHARING MORE ABOUT YOU: YOUR ROLE, WHY YOU ARE HERE AND WHAT YOU HOPE TO GET OUT OF TODAY	8.30	8.55
JOIN FAMILY GROUP TIME		
LISTENING TO CHILDREN IN CONVERSATION WITH THEIR KEY PERSON AND EACH OTHER TO PLAN THEIR PLAY	9.00	9.20
DELEGATE DISCUSSION		
A QUICK CHAT ABOUT GROUP TIME, WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS	9.20	9.30
JOIN MAIN PLAY SESSION		
JOIN THE CHILDREN AND STAFF AS THEY WORK ALONGSIDE EACH OTHER FOR THE MORNING. YOU WILL BE FREE TO OBSERVE THE PLAY SESSION, INDOORS AND OUTDOORS. THROUGH ALL THE LEARNING SPACES!	9.30	10.40
REJOIN FAMILY GROUP TIME		
LISTENING TO CHILDREN IN CONVERSATION WITH THEIR KEY PERSON AND EACH OTHER TO CHAT ABOUT THEIR MORNING'S WORK	10.40	10.55
DELEGATE DISCUSSION		
WHILST THE CHILDREN TIDY UP AND GO INTO THEIR DIFFERENTIATED STORY GROUPS, WE WILL GET TOGETHER TO CHAT ABOUT THE MORNING, SHARING OVERALL IMPRESSIONS, THOUGHTS AND WONDERINGS	11.00	11.30

rhythm of the day (p.m.)

EVENT	START TIME	END TIME
LUNCH WE WILL PROVIDE LUNCH FOR EVERYONE AT THE COTTAGE	11.45	12.30
AN HOUR AT THE COTTAGE WE WILL HAVE TIME TO JOIN THE CHILDREN AND STAFF IN RESIDENCE TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY'VE BEEN UP TO OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS	12.30	1.30
AN HOUR AT THE ALLOTMENT ONE FAMILY GROUP AND THEIR KEY PERSON WILL BE WITH VICKY AT THE ALLOTMENT. WE'LL POP DOWN TO SEE WHAT THEY'RE UP TO	1.30	2.30
A FINAL CHANCE TO CHAT A FINAL HALF HOUR TOGETHER TO FOCUS ON ANSWERING ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED ACROSS THE DAY. WE ARE MORE THAN HAPPY TO TALK ABOUT ANY ASPECT OF OUR WORK, BUT WILL BE LED BY YOU DURING THIS SESSION, SO PLEASE MAKE THE MOST OF THIS OPEN Q&A SESSION	2.30	3.00
EVALUATIONS AS WE APPROACH THE END OF OUR DAY TOGETHER, WE ASK THAT YOU COMPLETE OUR ONLINE EVALUATION FORM, TO ENABLE US TO REFLECT ON YOUR THOUGHTS AND CONSIDER HOW WE MIGHT IMPROVE DAYS LIKE THIS IN THE FUTURE. A LINK TO THE FORM WILL BE IN YOUR EMAIL.	3.00	3.15

the allotment

IS ROUND THE CORNER FROM THE SCHOOL AND WAS GRANTED TO US BY WINGATE PARISH COUNCIL IN 2015

IT HAD BELONGED TO AN OLD CHAP CALLED RONNIE, WHO LOVED HIS GARDEN, BUT OVER TIME IT BECAME OVERGROWN AND NEGLECTED

SO, WORKING WITH PARENTS FROM THE 2015 AND 2016 COHORTS, WE DEVELOPED IT INTO A SPACE WHERE CHILDREN COULD BE BASED THERE TO EXPLORE NATURE IN THE GARDEN AND 'BEYOND'

On a rota, each family group spends a whole week at the allotment with their key person and a member of staff from our childcare team, who brings along a small group of 2 year olds.

Parents are given a timetable each half term, so they know which location to drop off and collect their children from.

So, across the year and throughout all the seasons and diverse weather conditions, staff and children are outdoors, learning in and with nature, all day long.

We are well established using this outdoor space and have also been given the allotment beside ours, which has enabled us to expand and develop the opportunities even further.



the cottage

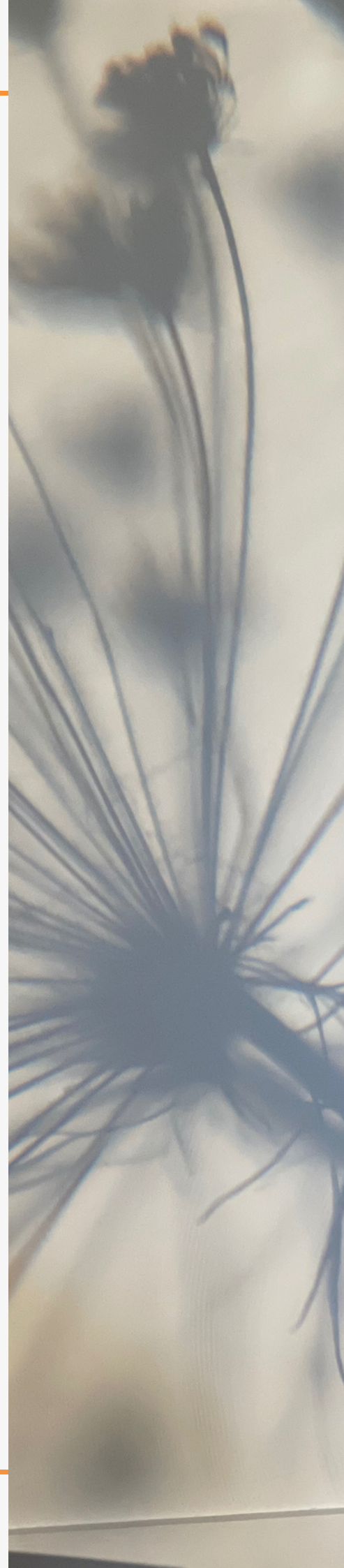
THE PARK KEEPER'S COTTAGE WAS EXACTLY THAT - THE COTTAGE WHERE MR PICKLES, THE PARK KEEPER AND HIS WIFE LIVED FOR MANY YEARS, BESIDE THE WELFARE PARK AND WOODLAND IN WINGATE

WHEN MR PICKLES RETIRED, THE COTTAGE BECAME AVAILABLE AND SO AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF FUNDRAISING AND OVERCOMING OBSTACLES IN OUR WAY, THE COTTAGE WAS RENOVATED AND EQUIPPED READY FOR CHILDREN TO LEARN AT OUR OUTDOOR NATURE SCHOOL.

The cottage is equipped with resources that enable children and adults to research and find out more information about their curiosities and discoveries when out in nature.

There are non-fiction books, a computer, an iPad and knowledgeable adults who are as curious about nature as the children are. There's also a high quality microscope attached to the pc, so that as the smallest treasures are found, detailed images can be seen and projected onto the wall for closer examination and discussion

Throughout the year, a family group and their key person take up residence at the Cottage, with Nichola. Their stay is usually 3 to 4 weeks, where together, they go on hikes and adventures as a close-knit team. I call these children my 'Duke of Edinburgh students', because in exactly the same way, they are a group of young people adventuring in all weathers, tackling uneven terrain, working together to solve problems, taking care of each other, enjoying the camaraderie and having the time of their lives.



WINGATE COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL

we hope you
choose to
join us for
a day @wingate

... to wallow in
the wingate way



thank you for being interested in us

TO BOOK, PLEASE CONTACT US TO ENQUIRE ABOUT SET DATES WE
HAVE AVAILABLE EACH TERM