

Our Dedicated Staff



We currently have an operational manager (also a company director and teacher), a settings manager, three Early Years Practitioners, two Early Years Apprentices, A Senior Early Years Practitioner, another teacher and two Early Years Assistants. We adhere to Government adult/child ratios which means there will be one adult for every three children aged one, one adult for every four children aged two years. For children over three there will be one adult for every eight children. We can operate on a 1:13 ratio for 3-year-olds as we are a teacher led setting, but our aim is not to do this (see ethos) unless necessary. We always try to have at least one more adult than we need, to improve outcomes for children.



Clare Wilkins (Company Director, Operational Manager, Teacher and Safeguarding Lead)

Clare is a qualified teacher with over 24 years' experience of working with children aged 3-11 in a variety of settings. She has been an Assistant Headteacher for the past ten years in two different schools. Clare is passionate about helping children to be 'school ready' by ensuring they have the emotional resilience to cope, a growth mindset to know they can do anything

they want to if they try hard enough and the self-confidence to believe in themselves.



Marika Groce (Deputy Manager and SENCO)

Marika has a BA degree in Childhood Studies and over 20 years' experience in early years settings (15 years in management roles) and achieved an OFSTED good in her last setting three times (most recently in 2018). She is fluent using Makaton and loves to create a visually stimulating and language rich environment. Marika has a wealth of experience working with children with additional needs of every kind. Marika also organises our daily messy and sensory play opportunities.



Phillip Wilkins (Early Years Practitioner and Company Director)

Phillip has an NVQ Level 3 in Teaching and Learning in Schools and a Level 3 Early Years Educator NVQ. She has worked with children in schools from aged 3-11 over the last thirteen years. She oversees our first aid.



Danni Harrison (Senior Early Years Practitioner)

Danni joined us in March 2021 and also has an NVQ level 3 in early education. She has around 7 years of experience working with children from birth to 5 years old and is especially fond of the pre-school age group. Danni likes to teach the children their alphabet sounds and engage in Literacy and maths development ready for school. Danni is a big fan of our ethos and particularly the way we get to know each individual Shooting Star in order to cater for their needs to secure the best outcomes possible for them.

Charlotte Dobson/Lucy Axten/Josie Perkins (Early Years Practitioners)

Charlotte joined us in November 2021 and Lucy/Josie join us in January 2022. They are all NVQ Level 3 qualified and have lots of suitable experience. More information and photos to follow as we get to know them.



Kacey Prince and Izzy Lewry (Early Years Apprentices)

Izzy and Kacey joined us in summer 2021 and are learning 'on the job' whilst completing their NVQ Level 2 qualifications. It is lovely to have them working and at the same time learning from our more experienced staff.



Eliza Farrall-Hyder (Early Years Assistant)

Martha Farrall-Hyder (Early Years Assistant)

Eliza joined us in March 2021 and Martha in June 2021. They help when we need them. They are great at engaging with our Shooting Stars on a 1-1 level and developing their language skills and confidence.

Alison Brown (Teacher)

Alison is another part time person who we call on in times of need! She has years of experience teaching children from aged 3-11. She has worked in nursery settings in the past and is a grandmother as well as being partly retired.

Linda Banfield (Clare's Mum)

Linda is our lunchtime helper a couple of times a week, she washes up on our busier days and ensures our Shooting Stars have enough to eat!

We pride ourselves on being a setting with high quality and extremely experienced staff. We are constantly looking for opportunities for further training to refine and rethink our practice in the light of current thinking and bearing in mind the needs of our children.