nursery

DOVER COLLEGE

2+ YEARS | ALL-YEAR-ROUND





At Dover College, we firmly believe that the early years of a child's education are critical in shaping their future. The experiences children have during these formative years lay the groundwork for a lifelong love of learning. In our Nursery, we nurture curiosity and creativity, fostering an enduring enthusiasm for discovery that we hope will accompany each child throughout their school journey and beyond.

Our aim is to provide an inspiring and joyful learning experience in a caring, stimulating environment. Led by dedicated and experienced staff, each child is encouraged to explore their individual interests and talents through imaginative play and purposeful learning. We believe passionately that children should play to learn and learn through play.

Our Nursery is an integral part of Dover College life. From making mud pies in our on-site Discovery Garden during Forest School sessions to exploring stories in the library, from early numeracy to music and PE lessons led by specialist teachers, our youngest pupils benefit from the full breadth of what the College has to offer. There is something here to excite and engage every child.

Mrs Tracey Mills

Deputy Head (Prep School)

Where curiosity begins

"There's such a happy, calm and nurturing atmosphere. The breadth of opportunities is fantastic; our son gets to take part in music, Spanish and Forest School."

Nursery Parent

At Dover College Nursery, we believe that curiosity is the spark that ignites a lifelong love of learning. Our carefully curated environment is designed to capture the imagination and inspire children to ask questions, explore ideas, and discover the world around them. Whether it's marvelling at nature, experimenting with textures and sounds, or engaging in imaginative play, every moment in our Nursery is an opportunity for wonder.

Children enjoy access to our on-site Discovery Garden, a vibrant outdoor learning space where they take part in weekly Eco Explorers sessions led by experienced practitioners. Through hands-on exploration of the natural world, children develop confidence, creativity, and independence forming a deep, lasting connection with nature and a growing resilience.

We see each child as a natural learner, full of potential, creativity, and questions. Our experienced staff nurture this innate curiosity through a play-based approach that blends exploration with gentle guidance. From story corners and outdoor adventures to early phonics and problem-solving, we offer a rich tapestry of experiences that help children develop confidence, independence, and a genuine joy in learning, setting the foundation for everything that comes next.



Growing every day



"In the Early Years, leaders ensure that staff are suitably qualified and trained and have a detailed understanding of how children learn at this stage of their lives."

ISI Inspection Report, 2024

At Dover College Nursery, we recognise that the early years are a time of extraordinary growth, not just physically, but emotionally, socially, and intellectually. Each day brings new discoveries, new challenges, and new achievements, and we are here to guide and support every step of that journey. In a calm, nurturing environment, children are encouraged to express themselves, build friendships, and develop the resilience and confidence that will stay with them for life.

Our approach to learning is both gentle and purposeful. Each day, children take part in focused phonics and maths sessions, carefully tailored to their stage of development. Through playful, engaging activities, they build strong early foundations in literacy and numeracy, developing key skills such as sound recognition, counting, and early reasoning. Weekly Spanish lessons are delivered by a qualified specialist teacher.

From learning to share and take turns to developing gross motor skills in PE lessons and coordination in music, our experienced staff ensure that every child is seen, valued, and supported, growing not just in knowledge, but in character and confidence, every single day.

Learning through wonder

From the moment our daughter started at Dover College Nursery, we saw her grow in confidence and curiosity. She comes home full of stories about Forest School, music, and her new friends. It is clear she is thriving in such a nurturing and inspiring environment.

Nursery Parent

At Dover College, we see wonder as the starting point for all meaningful learning. Children are naturally inquisitive, and we create an environment where that curiosity is not only welcomed but encouraged. Through purposeful play, exploration, and hands-on discovery, we help children make sense of the world around them sparking imagination, deepening understanding, and building confidence.

Music and movement are joyful parts of daily life at our Nursery. Every week, children enjoy Music and PE sessions led by qualified specialist teachers, helping them to develop rhythm, coordination, balance, and a love for physical activity, all within a fun, supportive environment.

Our carefully designed indoor and outdoor spaces are full of opportunities to investigate, experiment, and create. Whether observing nature in the garden, building dens, or collaborating in imaginative role play, children are constantly engaged in experiences that blend fun with foundational learning. Our skilled staff guide this exploration with care, ensuring that every moment of play is also a moment of growth, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.



A place to belong



Children learn within a stimulating environment and with well-chosen resources that supports the acquisition of social, creative and physical skills.

ISI Inspection Report, 2024

Our Nursery is set within a secure, leafy green campus in the heart of Dover, offering a peaceful and inspiring environment for young children to thrive. In addition to a dedicated Early Years playground, pupils benefit from access to the beautiful 12th century Priory site, where history and nature come together to enrich their daily experience. This unique setting offers space to play, explore and imagine, all within a safe and nurturing atmosphere that helps children feel part of something bigger.

Mealtimes are another opportunity to foster community. Children have the option to enjoy a nutritious, hot cooked lunch each day, freshly prepared by our in-house catering team and served in the Refectory alongside our Prep School pupils. This shared experience helps instil positive social habits and a strong sense of belonging from the very start.

Our Nursery offers exceptional flexibility for busy families, operating from 8.00 am to 5.30 pm, Monday to Friday, throughout the year, with the exception of one week over the Christmas period and recognised Bank Holidays. Government-funded childcare hours are offered over the course of 48 weeks of the calendar year, alongside a range of non-funded sessions to provide families with flexibility to access additional childcare beyond their funded entitlement.

With a convenient one-way drop-off system through the school site and just a one-minute walk from Dover Priory station, our location is ideally placed for commuting parents. We combine high-quality care with practical convenience, ensuring that every child and every family enjoys a smooth and happy start and end to the day.

Finding their voice



Fees

Government Funding
Dover College participates in the Kent County Council's Free Early Education Entitlement for eligible 2, 3 and 4-year-olds.

- We offer the 30-hour funding as 24 hours per week, delivered as Monday – Thursday 9:00 – 14:00 and Fridays 9:00 – 13:00 over 48 weeks per year.
- The 15-hour funding is offered as 12 hours per week, delivered as 9:00 – 12:00 4 days a week subject to availability over 48 weeks per year.

The Nursery is open 50 weeks per year. The funded hours cover 48 weeks per year. The remaining two weeks, if required, are charged at £300 per week (£60 per day).

Fees for Additional (Non-Funded) Hours

- Breakfast Club (08.00 - 9.00): £8.50
- Afternoon session (14.00 - 16.00): £17
- Late session (16.00 - 17.30): £15
- Full day (8.00 - 5.30): £30

Non-Funded Fees
- Full Day (8.00 am – 4.00 pm): £60
- Morning Session (8.00 am – 12.00 pm): £37.50
- Afternoon Session (12.00 pm – 4.00 pm): £37.50

Late Collection Fee
An initial charge of £10.00 for the first 5 minutes past the agreed session end time and then £1.00 per minute will be charged thereafter for any late collection from the agreed session end time.

Food
- Snack: £1.50
- Hot lunch (two courses): £3 per day

Uniform
At Dover College, we aim to ensure that our youngest pupils are comfortable, active, and easily identifiable as part of our school community. To support this, all Nursery children are asked to wear:

- A crested black sweater (plain black jumpers are accepted)
- A plain red polo shirt
- Plain black shorts or jogging bottoms (no branding is permitted)
- White socks
- Trainers
- Suitable waterproof clothing for Eco Explorers



DOVER
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Dover College, Effingham Crescent,
Dover, Kent, CT17 9RH
+44 (0) 1304 205969
admissions@dovercollege.org.uk
www.dovercollege.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 307856