

Job advert

Early Years Apprentice- Oaks Nursery

Salary: Apprenticeship rate in line with government guidelines, with a pay review upon successful completion of the Level 3 qualification.

35 hours per week

34 days' annual leave (full-time equivalent).

Join Our Team as an Early Years Apprentice at Oaks Nursery!

Are you passionate about working with children from birth to five years?

Do you thrive in a nurturing and busy nursery environment?

Would you like to be part of a friendly, dedicated team making a real difference every day and complete an online Level 3 Early Years Educator apprenticeship.

If so, we'd love to hear from you!

We're looking for a **nursery apprentice** to join our warm and experienced team at **Oaks Nursery**, based on the beautiful University of Kent campus.

You'll be part of a well-established, supportive setting committed to providing outstanding care and inspiring learning opportunities for children from babies to pre-schoolers.

What we offer:

- Paid full-time apprenticeship (35 hours per week, 5 days per week)
- Online Level 3 Early Years Educator course
- Nursery closed over Christmas and Bank Holidays
- Nursery uniform provided
- Support and mentoring from experienced practitioners
- Friendly and inclusive working environment
- Opportunities for progression on successful completion of the apprenticeship

About the Role:

As an Early Years Practitioner, you will:

- Provide a high standard of care and early education in line with the EYFS
- Create a stimulating and inclusive environment for all children
- Observe, plan and assess children's learning using *Development Matters (2023)*
- Contribute to regular summative assessments and developmental reports
- Build positive relationships with children, parents, and colleagues

About You:

To be successful in this role, you will be kind, enthusiastic and excited to start a career working with children. You don't need previous childcare experience, but you should have a genuine interest in helping children learn and grow. You'll be keen to learn new skills, happy to take guidance from experienced team members and committed to completing your Level 3 Early Years Educator apprenticeship. Being reliable, friendly and able to work well as part of a team is important, along with a positive attitude and a strong commitment to keeping children safe.

About Oaks Nursery:

Nestled in the heart of the University of Kent campus on Parkwood Road, Oaks Nursery is a well-established setting with an excellent reputation in childcare. We're proud to be rated 'Good' by Ofsted (October 2022) and care for up to 90 children daily. Our families include university staff, Kent Union employees, and students.

You'll be joining a passionate team of 30 dedicated professionals from nursery practitioners to support staff all working together to create a warm, nurturing environment for the children in our care.

Information about the role

Duties and Responsibilities

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational Duties – What you'll be doing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing High-Quality Care: Ensure all children are cared for in a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment that meets their physical, emotional, and developmental needs.• Planning and Delivering Learning Opportunities: Use your knowledge of the <i>EYFS</i> and <i>Development Matters (2023)</i> to plan age-appropriate activities that support children's learning and development.• Observations and Assessments: Regularly observe children, record progress, and complete summative assessments to inform planning and track development milestones.• Promoting Positive Relationships: Build warm and trusting relationships with children, parents, and colleagues to create a positive and collaborative nursery environment.• Safeguarding and Welfare: Follow safeguarding procedures and promote the health, safety, and well-being of all children at all times.• Maintaining a Safe and Organised Setting: Ensure all areas of the nursery are clean, tidy, and well-prepared throughout the day. Assist with setting up and clearing away activities and resources.• Team Collaboration: Work effectively as part of a team, contribute to meetings, and support colleagues across different age groups when needed.• Key Person Role: Take on responsibility for a small group of children, developing individual care and learning plans and maintaining accurate records.• Continuous Professional Development: Actively engage in ongoing training and professional development to enhance your skills and stay up to date with best practices.
People Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supporting Children's Wellbeing and Development: Act as a consistent and caring adult in children's lives, responding sensitively to their individual needs and promoting their confidence, independence, and emotional security.

- **Key Person Responsibilities:**
Take on a key person role for a group of children, fostering close bonds with them and their families, and being the main point of contact for their care, development, and progress.
- **Partnership with Parents and Carers:**
Communicate regularly with parents and carers, sharing updates on children's development, responding to concerns, and working together to support learning at home and in the setting.
- **Collaborating with Colleagues:**
Work as part of a team of practitioners, contributing ideas, sharing best practices, and supporting one another to deliver high-quality care and education.
- **Mentoring and Supporting Others (if applicable):**
As an experienced practitioner, provide guidance and support to less experienced staff, students, or apprentices as needed, helping to build a strong, knowledgeable team.
- **Promoting a Positive Team Culture:**
Contribute to a positive, inclusive, and respectful working environment where all staff feel valued, supported, and motivated to deliver their best.

Financial Responsibilities

- **Use Nursery Resources Responsibly:**
Ensure that all equipment, toys, and materials are used appropriately, maintained in good condition, and stored safely to avoid unnecessary replacement or waste.
- **Contribute to Cost-Effective Practices:**
Support the efficient running of the nursery by using resources mindfully, helping to reduce waste, and contributing to a culture of sustainability and value for money.
- **Awareness of Nursery Funding and Ratios:**
Have a basic understanding of how funding (e.g., government-funded hours) and staff-to-child ratios impact the daily operation and staffing of the nursery.
- **Report Resource Needs or Issues:**
Communicate promptly with supervisors or management when resources are low, damaged, or need replacing, helping to ensure spending is necessary and well-justified.
- **Support Fundraising or Events (if applicable):**
Participate in or help organise occasional fundraising or parent engagement events that may contribute to nursery funds or resources.

Expected Behaviours - As a Nursery Apprentice of Oaks Nursery, you are expected to model the values and behaviours that support a high-quality, inclusive, and professional early years setting. These include:

- **Child-Centred Approach:**
Always put the needs, safety, and wellbeing of children first. Be responsive, caring, and respectful in your interactions with every child.
- **Professional Conduct:**
Demonstrate integrity, reliability, and professionalism in all aspects of your work. Follow nursery policies and procedures, including safeguarding and confidentiality protocols.
- **Positive Communication:**
Communicate openly and respectfully with children, families, and colleagues. Use clear, supportive language and actively listen to others.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration:**
Work cooperatively with colleagues, supporting a culture of mutual respect, trust, and shared responsibility for the nursery environment.
- **Initiative and Accountability:**
Take responsibility for your role, show initiative in your day-to-day duties, and seek guidance or support when needed.
- **Commitment to Development:**
Embrace ongoing learning and reflection. Actively participate in training and show a willingness to adapt and improve your practice.
- **Inclusive Practice:**
Promote equality, diversity, and inclusion by valuing and respecting the background, culture, and needs of all children and families.
- **Positive Role Modelling:**
Set a good example for children through your actions, language, and attitude – fostering kindness, patience, cooperation, and respect.
- **Training**
Attend training sessions and complete coursework for the Level 3 apprenticeship

This job description does not form part of the
contract of employment.

What we're looking for

Person Specification				
Essential requirements should be demonstrated before appointment and maintained in post. Desirable elements should be developed and maintained once in post as needed.				
Criteria	Essential	Desirable	Tested at Interview	Tested at application
Genuine interest in working with young children	X		X	X
Commitment to completing Level 3 Early Years Educator apprenticeship	X		X	X
Willingness to learn and follow guidance	X		X	
Good communication skills (verbal & listening)	X		X	
Ability to work as part of a team	X		X	
Professional attitude and reliability	X		X	
Basic understanding of safeguarding and child welfare	X		X	
GCSE English(or equivalent)		X	X	X
GCSE Maths (or equivalent)		X	X	X
Previous experience with children (paid or voluntary)		X	X	X

About the role

Summary of terms

This is a full-time, permanent position.

The contracted hours are 35 hours per week

This post will be based at University of Kent, Canterbury Campus.

Salary

Apprenticeship rate in line with government guidelines, with a pay review upon successful completion of the Level 3 qualification.

Probationary arrangements

This post is subject to a 6-month probationary period, with 1, 3 and 6-month reviews.

Notice Period

The notice period for this position is: 4 weeks

Annual Leave Entitlement

The post holder is entitled to 34 days' leave; this is inclusive of 6 'customary' days', normally taken over Christmas, and the 8 statutory leave days for England. (full-time equivalent).

Pension

Staff who are 'eligible jobholders' (subject to the eligibility criteria as determined by the government from time to time) are automatically enrolled into the NEST Pension Scheme. NEST is a workplace pension scheme set up by the government but run independently as a trust. Your contribution to the scheme is 5% of the pensionable salary you receive each month, which is based upon your annual salary, and KUTL's contribution is 3% of this pensionable salary.

Hours of Work

The contracted hours are 35 hours a week. The nursery is open Monday – Friday 8-6pm, your working hours will be within these times. Ad hoc weekends maybe required.

Work-Life Balance

Kent Students' Union is committed to facilitating a healthy work-life balance and has cutting edge flexible working policies.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

We have recently implemented our new EDI strategy 2023-28 the Strategy is here to ensure equity and inclusion are a priority for Kent Students' Union. Please see the full document here [Link](#)

Annually we review racial diversity within our workforce, and it is a key priority for us to improve racial and ethnic diversity amongst our workforce, and as such we particularly welcome applications from Racially and Ethnically Marginalised People (REMP) and have introduced a REMP Priority Interview Scheme.

Pre-employment checks

All job offers are conditional on the receipt of two satisfactory references.

We are also obliged to check your identity and obtain proof of your right to work in the UK, which you will be asked to provide at interview if you are successfully shortlisted.

Induction and training

All new staff benefit from an induction from the HR Team and their own team, as well as ongoing support and personal development.

How to apply

Application and Selection Process and Timetable

Position advertised	16/02/2026
Applications close	On going
Shortlisting	
Interviews	TBC

Applications

To apply please go to our recruitment portal at ksu.co.uk/careers to complete your application and submit your CV. Please ensure that you pay particular attention in your application to detailing how you meet the requirements of the person specification.

Website

The Nursery website contains further background information about Oaks Nursery to help potential applicants. Potential applicants are encouraged to look at the website prior to applying; the website address is oaksnurserykent.co.uk

Further Information and Questions

If you require further information, please contact:

Name	Heidi Firth
Job title	Nursery Manager
Contact number	01227 827676
Email address	oaksnursery@kent.ac.uk

For more information about Oaks Nursery, please visit our website

oaksnurserykent.co.uk

How much an apprentice gets paid depends on:

- their age
- which year of their apprenticeship they are in

Apprentices aged under 19

The National Minimum Wage rate for apprentices is £7.55 per hour (£8 from 1 April 2026). Employers must pay at least this rate to all apprentices who are under 19.

Apprentices aged 19 or over

For an apprentice who's aged 19 or over, how much they get paid depends on the year of the apprenticeship they're in.

First year

When someone aged 19 or over is in the first year of their apprenticeship, their employer can choose to pay them either:

- the apprentice rate of £7.55 (£8 from 1 April 2026)
- more than the apprentice rate

This includes:

- during the first year after an apprentice has changed employer, even if it's part of the same apprenticeship
- during the first year of a new apprenticeship agreement, even if it's with the same employer

Second year or later

In the second year of an apprenticeship, their employer must pay at least the minimum wage for the apprentice's age.

This is:

- age 19 or 20 – £10 per hour (£10.85 from 1 April 2026)
- age 21 or over – £12.21 per hour (£12.71 from 1 April 2026)

If an apprenticeship lasts longer than 2 years, these rates also apply to later years.

