



Curriculum  
Information  
Monte  
Nursery



st Chris  
2024-25



ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL  
LETCWORTH GARDEN CITY



# Curriculum Information

## Monte Nursery

In this booklet you will find a summary of the main subjects covered in the St Chris Monte (Nursery) and the amount of time dedicated to them each week. The class teacher is the main lead for the subject except for those subjects which are led by specialist teachers, detailed throughout.

In the Monte, we have a two-year rolling cycle of overarching topics as some of our children are with us for up to 2 years. The Monte comprises our youngest learners; children in Half Monte are aged 2 rising 3 and children in Top Monte are aged 3 rising 4. Monte topics are explored through each of the seven areas of learning: Personal, Social, Emotional Development, Communication and Language, Physical Development, Literacy, Maths, Understanding the Word and Expressive Arts and Design, as well as through Child Initiated Learning (CIL). In addition to our planned topics, we follow student's interests to enhance and facilitate new and spontaneous learning.

Hours per subject over each week

Child Initiated Learning 10-15 hrs	Music 2 x 30 mins	Personal, Social, Emotional Dev. 30 mins
		Communication & Language 30 mins
	PE 2 x 30 mins	Literacy 30 mins
		Swimming 30 mins
	Forest School 1 hr 45 mins	Maths 30 mins
		Understanding the World 30 mins
		Expressive Art & Design 30 mins
		Physical Development 30 mins

## Early Years



### Personal, Social, & Emotional Development

**Chrissie Parry, Kelly Wailes**

#### Child Initiated Learning

**Adult directed – up to 30 minutes weekly, through group time and daily routines**

In the Monte, we focus on teaching and developing social skills through play. Children begin to understand the concept of sharing, becoming independent, recognising, talking about, and expressing their emotions. Over time children begin to develop empathy which consolidates their friendship skills and builds their confidence and resilience. These skills enable them to cope with new situations and begin to take on small responsibilities as part of our community.



### Communication & Language

**Chrissie Parry, Kelly Wailes**

#### Child Initiated Learning

**Adult directed – up to 30 minutes weekly, through group time and daily routines**

Children in the Monte are exposed to a language-rich environment and develop their receptive and expressive language skills through daily interactions with adults and peers. Adults support language development through all interactions and some guided activities. Children are also supported to learn new vocabulary, understand language, and articulate themselves using simple sentences. Attention and listening skills are vital to language development; children gradually build up these skills over time.



### Physical Development

**Chrissie Parry, Kelly Wailes**

#### Child Initiated Learning

**Adult directed – up to 30 minutes weekly, through group time and daily routines**

Children in the Monte incrementally develop their gross and fine motor skills. There is a greater focus on gross motor development as these muscles need to develop to support fine motor development and skills. Activities for physical development are planned and available to the children daily. These take place during adult led sessions as well as in Child Initiated Learning (CIL). Children learn how to control their body movements when climbing, balancing, and maneuvering and learn how to control tools for writing, painting, and cutting. Fine motor activities are planned through CIL and some small group time.





## Literacy

**Chrissie Parry,  
Kelly Wailes**

### Child Initiated Learning

**Adult directed – up to 30 minutes weekly,  
through group time and daily routines**

Literature is at the heart of the St Chris Monte environment. We have daily story time which encompasses rhyme, alliteration, and story structure, whilst exposing the children to a wide range of literature. Children are taught how to handle books carefully and basic features such as page numbers, illustrations, and text. Early comprehension skills are taught through story books, children are supported to engage in dialogue and express their views about text through specific and open-ended questions. Discretionary phonics is taught alongside stories and through our everyday experiences. Top Monte children are introduced to focus phonic activities to begin their understanding of phonemes, graphemes, oral blending, and segmenting skills.

## Maths

**Chrissie Parry,  
Kelly Wailes**

### Child Initiated Learning

**Adult directed – up to 30 minutes weekly, through  
group time and daily routines**

Maths is all around us and we use this to our advantage in the Monte. Through daily routines, numbers have a strong presence, and children are exposed to counting and written numerals from their first day, making maths part of everyday life. Children are taught shape and measures together with a sharp focus on mathematical vocabulary. Once children have mastered the basic concepts of mathematics, their knowledge is extended through mastery skills to gain a deeper understanding of each concept.



## Understanding the World

**Chrissie Parry,  
Kelly Wailes**

### Child Initiated Learning

**Adult directed – up to 30 minutes weekly, through group time and daily routines**

Through our topics we explore a range of concepts. Children are exposed to the weather and changing seasons all year round and learn how to distinguish between seasons by comparing elements of the natural world. We celebrate faiths, beliefs, and communities at special times during the year and through our topics. Children are encouraged to share and talk about themselves, their family, where they live and where they have visited. This information is used as a basis to compare and contrast experiences, family life, places around the globe, and most importantly, what is special about each individual child.



## Expressive Arts & Design

**Chrissie Parry,  
Kelly Wailes**

### Child Initiated Learning

**Adult directed – up to 30 minutes weekly, through group time and daily routines**

In the Monte, we explore creativity through daily singing and the opportunity to craft. Through outdoor play, children are taught skills to enable early mark making and drawing, allowing the children to explore and create independently. Hands-on sensorial play is explored through paint mixing, playdough and textures. Children are supported to talk through and describe what they are feeling physically and emotionally. Specific skills are taught through group time and CIL. A range of craft materials and junk modelling is available daily for the children to access.



## Child Initiated Learning

**Chrissie Parry,  
Kelly Wailes**

**10–15 hours per week  
(dependent on sessions attended)**

Child Initiated Learning is an integral part of student's development and helps them make sense of the world around them. During CIL, children can explore new learning experiences, embed previously taught skills, and start to understand and develop social skills. Both adults and children inform what learning activities are available through CIL. Student's suggestions originate from their interests, and adult input is informed by previous learning and the curriculum, to move learning forward. Spontaneous learning happens daily and is unplanned but will often evolve over a few days to gain new experiences. Adults support student's learning through interactions and guidance during CIL.





## Music

**Ann-Marie Knight**

**2 x 30 minutes**

In music, children are supported by specialist teachers to explore the foundations of music – sound and rhythm. Even in the earliest years of their development, Monte lessons don't shy away from learning notation. Throughout music lessons, Monte children practice music in a variety of ways; children are encouraged to sing as a group and engage in interactive songs while other lessons introduce musical instruments to the group. Monte children are encouraged to be creative with sound and perform music as a group. These fundamental skills build a wider understanding of music and sounds which aids children in their later musical development.



## PE

**Abigail Lester/Lyn McGregor**

**2 x 30 minutes**

Throughout their PE lessons, Monte children focus on developing their gross motor skills in PE and learn to negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others. They also develop strength, balance, and coordination through a play-based approach, and focus on their fundamental movement skills such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping, and climbing.



## Swimming

**Jenny White**

**30 minutes (+ changing time)**

In swimming lessons, specialist swimming teachers support the Monte children to develop confidence and enjoyment in the water. This is achieved through a range of stimulating and fun activities and play-based learning. In their lessons, the children complete a variety of activities including: flotation and relaxation in the water to aid controlling their body position; learning basic travel techniques on their front and back using their arms and legs and building water skills including supported jumping in and collecting sinkers.



## Forest School

**Lydia Sommerville**

**1 hour 45 minutes (+ changing time)**

Forest School enables our youngest learners to expand their awareness of the outside world throughout the changing seasons. Children learn new vocabulary, take part in sensory exploration, and start encouraging self-regulation by recognising when they feel hot or cold. Forest School sessions are hands-on and offer children lots of practical activities for dexterity; Monte children handle sticks and ropes and practice pulling, pushing, and twisting. Throughout the sessions, the Forest School Leader draws attention to, and encourages children to explore, simple patterns, differences, and cycles in nature. During Forest School sessions, children also learn the fundamental aspects of fire awareness.



## What is *Forest School*?

Junior Forest School at St Chris is a child-centred, inspirational process that gives our young learners opportunities to challenge themselves, develop confidence and increase their self-esteem through hands on learning experiences in a natural environment. Sessions are based on a fundamental respect for children and for their capacity to instigate, explore and maintain curiosity in the world around them. Most importantly, our children develop a deep and meaningful connection to the natural world and understand their place in it.



**'There's a lot of love in the Monte and you can see everyone is really happy there.'**

Current Parents' Survey, 2022