

The History of Church Croft Nursery School

The building was erected in 1942 on the site of piggeries and a farm. It was opened as a war time Nursery to care for young babies and children below school age for the purpose of releasing women to do war work. In the case of Hungerford this was almost entirely employment at the Chilton Aircraft factory. The children were given breakfast on arrival and it was open between 7am and 7pm staffed by a Matron and Nurses assisted by other young women who took a 'Child Care Reserve' course. Although young children attended daily, the staff were resident.

The Day Nursery closed shortly after the war and the building was reopened on 9th December 1947 as a Nursery School for children of 2-5 years under the Ministry of Education. Opening hours were from 9.00 to 4p . There were only 22 children, this soon rose to 30 by the following year. Children had toothbrush drill, handkerchief drill and a hot meal at lunch time plus a dose of cod liver oil. The children also slept for 1 1/2 hours every day.

In 1950 the admission age raised to 3 ½. In 1960 there were 40 full time equivalent places. This continued for many years with 60 children on roll who usually spent three terms in the Nursery leaving to attend Primary School the term after their 5th birthday. In 2005 the old building was replaced and had a new designated Family Room. In 2006 it became a Children's Centre.

Hungerford Nursery School Headteachers:

Miss Beryl Cheetham -----1947 – 1949

Miss C Jean Earle -----1949 – 1954

Miss Stella French -----1954 – 1984

Mrs Angela Pomroy ----- 1984 – 1998

Mrs Jane Simons ----- 1998 – 2008

Mrs Suzanne Taylor -----2008 – to date

We now have a Family Centre to support parents and children. There are 104, 3 and 4 year olds on roll in the Nursery School. In 2011 were appointed an Early Years Teaching Centre one of 16 across the country to offer training to other practitioners. In 2015 we opened a Pre-Nursery for 2 year olds, and there are now 40, 2 year olds in the Pre-Nursery.

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