



# Tinkers and Tribe

~Prospectus ~

At Tinkers and Tribe, we strive to ensure that all of our children are happy, confident and excellent communicators, giving them the solid building blocks for later life.

We aim to provide a caring and nurturing environment that is an extension of home. We believe that all children should have the space and opportunity to flourish and learn through play. Once your child feels safe and settled, we support their growing self-confidence by providing activities and resources that challenge and encourage their developing understanding and learning.

## Our Settings

~ Consider the most convenient setting for your family ~

Sevenoaks, Weald



Shipbourne



Dunton Green



‡ Morleys Farm Oast, Morleys Road, **Weald**, Kent. TN14 6QY

‡ Woodlands Farm, Back Lane, **Shipbourne**. TN11 9PP

‡ 2 Barrett's Road, **Dunton Green**, Kent. TN13 2UN

[info@tinkersandtribe.co.uk](mailto:info@tinkersandtribe.co.uk) | 01732 810 621

IG @tinkersandtribe | FB: Tinkers & Tribe Ltd | TikTok: tinkers.and.tribe



# Our Approach

Our approach at Tinkers and Tribe is unique and is one of the many elements that make our practice and settings extra special.

At Tinkers and Tribe, our children are at the centre of their play and learning, and our experienced Educators empower them to direct their own play experience. The role of the Educator at Tinkers and Tribe is to facilitate the child's next steps by supporting and extending the activity but the play itself is self-directed by the child.

The theory of self-directed learning is called **Heutogogy**. By embracing this practice, the children are motivated and engrossed in the play they love; and it's only when a child is engaged and happy, can they begin to learn. We are so passionate about self-directed play at Tinkers and Tribe that we have our very own **Director of Heutogogy**, who supports our Educators and ensures that their practice and play spaces truly reflect each child's personal interests and developmental next steps.

When we think about what great play looks like we must look at our environment, our surroundings, and our resources. If we want children to be engaged and motivated to learn we must calm their senses, ignite their curiosity, and create imaginative play spaces. That is why, at Tinkers and Tribe, we are proud to be known as the **"nursery without toys"**. When we replace toys with open ended resources, natural materials and authentic objects, the children's imaginations are stimulated, and their creativity is sparked. This wholesome and quirky approach to learning is called the **curiosity approach**. It replaces conventional play with ideas based on traditional theorists such as Steiner and Montessori and like everything at Tinkers and Tribe we have added our own twist: eco sustainability.

The final arrow to our Tribal bow harnesses our vision for all children at Tinkers and Tribe to care for themselves and their environments. A large part of our vision is to embed **eco sustainable values and practices** into our children's development. We start this journey by supporting our Tribe to fall in love with nature. We spend huge amounts of time outdoors, being awed by the wonders of the natural world. Our experienced Forest School teacher even takes the children off site weekly for extra special woodland play sessions! It is our hope that when our Tribe leave us, they have an appreciation for their environment and an understanding of the important role that they hold in the world.



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# Outdoor Learning

Everyday experience and research show how important the outdoors is to young children. We are aware that children's behaviour, attitudes, and happiness are much improved when their outside environment is valued.

We are fortunate to have our own Forest School Teacher who visits from our sister Forest School, **Trees and Tribe**. The children explore the beautiful woodland around them and enjoy all the wonders nature has to offer. Only by falling in love with nature will children appreciate the importance of caring for their environment. As an eco-sustainable setting, we model environmentally friendly habits, and our children soon take on their own appreciation for their environment and the important role they play within it.



Outdoor play also promotes muscle development so children need to engage in physical activities to aid the development of their finer motor skills. The brain and body develop together and are inextricably linked; health, emotional well-being and building self-esteem. Children need an environment where they are free to move and have permission to make noise, as well as places for quiet, solitude and feeling as if no one can see you.



Outdoor play offers lots of opportunities for developing social problem-solving skills such as the ability to negotiate and compromise, to cooperate and collaborate with other children and supportive adults. It gives times for being and doing things and when children are able to act in a way more suited to their needs for space, movement and energy, many behavioural difficulties encountered indoors diminish.

The curiosity and fascination that children have about the natural world is a delight and the outdoors offers lots of ways to respond to the strong exploratory drive that our children have. The sense of awe and wonder is part of this and is a wonderful opportunity to gain knowledge and empathy of the living world. Children have a fundamental need for 'risky freedom' in order to develop a healthy mind and body.

Learning how to be safe develops the dispositions for an active learner; being willing to try things out, learning from mistakes, perseverance, problem-solving, asking for (but not relying on) help. Children are supported to act safely when hazards are encountered which in time should develop into children being able to know what is risky, how to handle it (and not be afraid 'to try') and how to cope with any consequences.

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# 'The Nursery without Toys'



“If our children can make a positive contribution in the world as adults, I see it as our role to develop these skills when they are children. That is why, at Tinkers and Tribe, we have no toys. Our settings are equipped with loose parts, natural materials, and authentic objects. The children are thinking, creating, using their imagination, sharing ideas, and exploring a new, calm environment full of awe and wonder”.

~ Alexandra Stewart.



# Starting at Tinkers and Tribe

Handing your child over to a carer for the first time is a new experience; we understand that this can be unsettling for both you and your child. We will arrange a “joint” settling in session for you and your child to attend. This is an opportunity where you can sit down with your child’s caregiver and discuss their needs and assure that we know your child and can cater for their individual needs while they are with us. Here, your child has the opportunity to explore their new surroundings with the comfort of knowing that you are nearby.

Following the joint settling in sessions, we will then schedule a series of short play sessions for your child, ahead of their formal start date.

Our primary aim for the children who join us is to ensure that they are happy and settled within our environment as soon as possible.

## Tracking Progress

Assessing and tracking our children’s development is the key to effective planning. Our activities and play are tailored to the developmental needs and targets of each individual child.

To share your child’s progress, we use an online learning journal called *Tapestry*. Photos are emailed directly to you, and we share these regularly with our children. Each month, caregivers write your child a letter, celebrating their wonderful achievements and capturing their developmental progress as well as looking ahead together, at their next steps. We have a strong parent partnership programme at Tinkers and Tribe. We hold regular celebrations for families, and we invite families into the settings to share the children’s’ success and to discuss their care.



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# Our Tribe

Alexandra Stewart ~ Owner Director, SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Credentials ~ LLB (Hons) Law Postgraduate Certificate of Education with QTS



“My journey into Early Years is far from traditional. After graduating from Law School in 2007, I felt drawn towards making a positive change through education. I was fortunate to have some inspirational educators in my life, including my own Grandmother, so it was no surprise that in my early 20s I retrained and qualified as a teacher. I soon realised that the world young people face today is full of social and emotional pressures, which presented real barriers for our learners. Amid this turmoil, I saw the value of pastoral care and the importance of meeting children's emotional needs to support their academic success.

My passion has always been to put the child at the heart of their learning and development and I didn't feel that current educational practice allowed this to happen. I soon realised that if I wanted to make a real impact, I would need to develop my own unique approach to education starting at the very beginning, in Early Years.

I founded Tinkers and Tribe in 2017, (formally Dimples Day Care) after my own children went through early years care and education. I felt that there was a real need for an early years setting that combined the structure and learning of a nursery with the family feel of a childminder. I am fortunate to work with a team of nursery practitioners who retain the highest standards in care, teaching and learning. Each child has a personalised learning plan, and their achievements are shared with families throughout the day. Personalised planning combined with curious learning resources provides families with a comprehensive early year's care package where their child flourishes in a happy and positive environment.”

To meet the rest of our tribe, click on the link below ~

<https://www.tinkersandtribe.co.uk/meet-the-tribe>

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