

**APPLICATION FOR COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) GRANT
FOR A PROJECT IN THE WOLVERCOTE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM AREA
Spring Round 2026**

1. Please read the “Guidance Notes for WNF CIL Funding Applications”
2. The sections of this application form may be used flexibly to provide additional information where necessary. Not all sections will be relevant to all projects, and you may leave these blank.
3. Applications will be assessed by the WNF Steering Committee, taking account of the following criteria; applicants may wish to include supporting information regarding their project’s fit to the criteria.
 - Location within or serving the WNF Community
 - The recipient operates as a recognised body with a nominated bank account
 - The project has agreement in principle from the property or asset owner
 - Value for money
 - Consideration has been given to health and safety requirements
 - Environmental sustainability
 - Innovation
4. If your application is successful, please
 - Confirm to the Forum receipt of funding from the City Council
 - Send us photographs of your finished project.

APPLICATION DATE	16 March 2026
REVISION DATE if applicable	
TITLE Short title by which the project will be known	Wolvercote Community Nursery
PROJECT APPLICANT(S) Name of person (not organisation) who has initiated the project. Do not include contact details here: see page 3.	Kathryn Krakowka (Chair of the Trustees) Jonathan Lusthaus (Treasurer) Emma Winberg (Secretary) Catherine Milne (Safeguarding Trustee) Katherine Croft (Community Engagement Trustee)
APPLICANT ORGANISATION Name and type of organisation, if applicable, charity number.	Wolvercote Community Nursery Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Charity number forthcoming)
OUTLINE PROJECT DESCRIPTION Short description so others not associated with the project can understand its purpose and scope. Include aims & objectives, and expected beneficiaries (max 150 words)	<p>We are establishing a community nursery to replace Wolvercote Montessori Nursery, which will cease operations in July 2026. The new nursery will be a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity governed by a Board of Trustees.</p> <p>As a not-for-profit, the nursery will reinvest all income into delivering high-quality childcare and maintaining the long-term sustainability of the setting. This model allows us to prioritise the needs of local families by offering more affordable childcare, while also paying fair and competitive wages to retain capable and caring staff.</p> <p>We aim to build strong links with the local community by welcoming volunteers (subject to DBS checks) and</p>

	<p>developing partnerships with nearby organisations, including the local primary school.</p> <p>We also plan to offer in-house training opportunities, enabling residents interested in careers in Early Years Education to train and gain experience locally. The nursery will provide a valuable, sustainable resource for the Wolvercote community.</p>
<p>MAIN TASKS</p> <p>A list of the main tasks and if appropriate an initial project plan with timescales.</p>	<p>Project Tasks and Timeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - March-May: Register the organisation as a charity (Charitable Incorporated Organisation). Our application is currently in preparation and will be submitted by 25 March. Charity Commission guidance suggests approval for small community charities typically takes 6-8 weeks. - March onwards: Continue applying for grants and undertaking community fundraising to build the funds required to establish the nursery. - April-July: Begin our application to Ofsted to register as an Early Years provider. The registration process typically takes around 3-4 months. We aim to begin this process by 15 April at the latest. - May onwards: Begin community outreach and publicity once charity status is confirmed, including local advertising and engagement with families. - July: Employ staff (2-3 full-time staff required). One current member of the Wolvercote Montessori Nursery has committed to joining the new community nursery. A second staff member is interested in remaining with the initiative, and there is potential interest from a teaching assistant currently working at the primary school. Recruitment will be completed in line with Ofsted requirements to ensure the nursery is fully staffed and ready to operate. Applicants from within the local community will be given preference wherever possible, supporting both local employment and strong community links within the nursery. - Summer: Hold a community open day and invite families to submit expressions of interest. Formal child registration will begin once Ofsted registration is confirmed. - September 2026: Planned opening of the community nursery.
<p>STAKEHOLDERS & DETAILS OF CONSULTATION</p>	<p>We are working closely with the Oxfordshire County Council Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency and Access Team to establish the nursery in line with current</p>

<p>(e.g. Council, Highways, site owners or asset holders, community organisations, businesses, neighbours)</p>	<p>government guidance (contact: Sue Brown, 07920 751982).</p> <p>We have an agreement in principle with the Wolvercote Village Hall Committee to continue using the space currently occupied by Wolvercote Montessori Nursery. We also have an agreement in principle with Oxford Montessori Schools (OMS) to retain much of the existing equipment currently used at the Village Hall.</p> <p>The project has strong local support. We are developing links with Wolvercote Primary School and are reaching out to the Wolvercote Young People’s Club to explore opportunities for collaboration and community engagement. These partnerships will help embed the nursery within the local community and strengthen support for children and families.</p>
<p>RELEVANCE TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN</p> <p>How does the project enhance or develop our neighbourhood?</p>	<p>The Wolvercote Neighbourhood Plan aims to support ‘a more vibrant, healthy and well-balanced community’ and ‘to ensure that the local community has the most appropriate services, community facilities... to meet the needs of residents through all stages of their lives’. The proposed community nursery directly contributes to these objectives by maintaining and strengthening local Early Years provision.</p> <p>The announcement that Wolvercote Montessori Nursery will close in July 2026 was met with widespread disappointment within the community. In response, there has been a strong groundswell of support to keep the nursery provision in Wolvercote by establishing a community-run nursery. This support has come not only from current parents but also from many other residents, including families whose children previously attended the nursery and community members who recognise the importance of maintaining Early Years provision in the village.</p> <p>With this closure, childcare provision within the neighbourhood will become extremely limited. At present, the only other provision for children under three is a single local childminder (max 12 places), while the Ladybirds Nursery class (from three to four years) at Wolvercote Primary School can accommodate only half the typical Reception intake and is frequently oversubscribed. This capacity already does not meet the needs of local families and will only be further exacerbated as the nearby Oxford North development is completed. Discussions with the Head of Wolvercote Primary School, Mrs Mandy Hayes, have revealed that efforts to expand to under three provision will not happen in the near future. They fully support our initiative to start</p>

	<p>this community nursery and view it as an important Early Years partner for the school.</p> <p>Establishing a not-for-profit community nursery will help ensure that families can access affordable, high-quality childcare within the neighbourhood. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 recognises childcare as essential infrastructure, reflecting the importance of Early Years education in supporting children’s development and enabling thriving communities. Maintaining Early Years provision in Wolvercote will therefore benefit not only young children and their families, but the wider community by helping to ensure the best possible start in life for future generations.</p>
<p>CONSENTS REQUIRED</p> <p>Are any legal consents required before the project can go ahead (e.g. from a Council department such as Highways, Planning, Building Control, or other statutory organisation)?</p>	<p>The primary consent required for the project is registration with Ofsted as an Early Years childcare provider. We plan to begin the application process by April 2026, which typically takes around 3-4 months. We are working closely with the Oxfordshire County Council Early Years and Childcare Sufficiency and Access Team as well as the Wolvercote Primary School to achieve this.</p> <p>Any additional regulatory requirements, such as health and safety, safeguarding policies, and insurance, will be addressed as part of the Ofsted registration process prior to opening.</p>
<p>FINANCE</p> <p>How much will this project cost in total? What proportion is being sought from CIL funding? What other sources of finance are being pursued? Are you seeking matched funding? What will the CIL grant be spent on?</p> <p>PLEASE INCLUDE COPIES OF FIRM QUOTATIONS</p>	<p>The total start-up cost for the community nursery is estimated at approximately £35,000. This conservative estimate covers equipment (£10,000), hall deposit (£2,100), Ofsted application fees (£220), staff training (£600), insurance (£2,000), and a three-month operating cost buffer (£20,000) to ensure the nursery can open sustainably even before full occupancy.</p> <p>We are seeking £10,000 from the CIL to provide equipment to replace that which OMS is not able to donate to us, such as office equipment (signage, laptop, tablets, laminator, etc.), as well as to replace some of the furniture and toys which are no longer fit for purpose (see attached estimate of costs for equipment).</p> <p>The remaining £25,000 will be raised through other sources, including a National Lottery Award currently under application, local fundraising efforts, parent deposits, and support from Community Action Groups Oxfordshire to explore additional funding options. Should some of these efforts not come to fruition, we currently have six families who have agreed to front costs in the short term, amounting to £15,000.</p>

	<p>The CIL grant will be specifically spent on essential equipment to ensure the nursery is fully operational and safe for children from day one.</p>
<p>MAINTENANCE</p> <p>How will the outputs of the project be maintained and by whom? Please note that CIL grants cannot be used to cover ongoing costs.</p>	<p>Once open, the community nursery will be managed by the Board of Trustees, who will be responsible for overseeing its ongoing operations, governance, and financial sustainability. The nursery will be maintained through a combination of government funding for Early Years provision, fees from families, and any additional fundraising.</p> <p>In particular, any equipment purchased with CIL funding will be carefully maintained and regularly inspected by staff, with oversight from the Board of Trustees to ensure it remains safe, functional, and in good condition for long-term use by the nursery and the wider community.</p>
<p>RISK ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Are there any financial or other risks to the completion of this project?</p> <p>Are there any safety issues associated with the project?</p>	<p>Risks: There is a risk that Ofsted registration may not be granted in time for the nursery to open in September 2026, which could affect early enrolment. We are mitigating this risk by working closely with Oxfordshire County Council, the local primary school, and other community nurseries to help ensure the registration process proceeds as smoothly as possible.</p> <p>If registration were delayed and the nursery could not open in September, the project would still proceed once approval is granted. Given the limited childcare provision in the area, we anticipate strong demand from families as children reach the eligible age (2) during the year. This ongoing demand would allow the nursery to build enrolment gradually and remain financially sustainable in its first year before reaching full operational capacity in the second year.</p> <p>There is also a risk that the full amount of funding required may not be secured. To mitigate this, we are applying to multiple funding bodies and undertaking community fundraising initiatives. Oxfordshire County Council is aware of the shortage of childcare provision in the area and is supportive of efforts to establish additional places. We are also benefiting from strong local support, with a number of families who have expressed interest in the nursery willing to contribute towards start-up costs. In particular, six families have already committed to providing up to £15,000 in bridging funds, if required, and we are continuing to reach out to other families in order to secure a more comfortable financial buffer.</p> <p>Safety: The nursery will implement rigorous safeguarding practices in line with Ofsted requirements. The designated trustee, Catherine Milne, will oversee safeguarding and will undertake further training to</p>

	<p>strengthen her expertise. All staff will be fully qualified to work with children, and all other adults associated with the nursery will undergo DBS checks as required. Regular safety checks and policies will ensure the nursery remains a secure and high-quality environment for children.</p>
<p>MONITORING AND REPORTING</p> <p>How will the success of the project be monitored? Over what timescale?</p>	<p>The success of the project will be monitored against key milestones as addressed in the above section on ‘Main Tasks’. Progress will be reviewed monthly by the Board of Trustees to ensure the project remains on schedule and any issues are addressed promptly. Evidence of success will be demonstrated by the nursery opening on time, fully equipped, staffed, and ready to receive children.</p> <p>Following opening, ongoing monitoring will continue through enrolment numbers, feedback from families, and regular operational reviews by the Board to ensure the nursery continues to meet the needs of the Wolvercote community.</p>
<p>OTHER COMMENTS OR INFORMATION</p> <p>Please list anything else of relevance you wish the Committee to be aware of.</p>	
<p>Completed applications, WITH COPIES OF FIRM QUOTATIONS WHERE APPLICABLE should be sent with a covering email to wolvercotenf@gmail.com</p>	