

Holt Farm Infant School



Information for New Parents



Starting September 2020

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On behalf of the pupils, staff and governors, I would like to welcome you and your child to Holt Farm Infant School.

I hope that the positive partnership between home and school will support your child in their first years of education.

Robin Goodier

Headteacher

This information booklet has been produced to help you prepare your child for starting school.

Your child's feelings about starting school will depend a lot on your own approach. Please try to help them see starting school as a positive and exciting experience. The Reception Year is an important stage in their learning and in their development of social skills. Before the first day there are some useful skills for your child to learn.

Here is a checklist of useful skills, which will help your child settle in quickly and become more independent.

Does your child like to ...	Can your child ...
Look at picture books with you?	Put on and take off their coat?
Look at counting books with you?	Put on and take off their shoes and socks?
Sort and count with you?	Undo and do up buttons?
Have stories read and told?	Wipe their nose?
Go for walks?	Go to the toilet and flush the toilet afterwards?
Get up and go to bed at regular times?	Wash their hands?
Spend time away from you?	Eat with a knife and fork?
Play with other children?	Speak clearly without shouting?
Help around the house?	Ask and answer questions?
Dress and wash him/herself?	Recite nursery rhymes?
Use paint, pencils, crayons?	Know their numbers up to 10?
Play with constructive toys?	Recognise and name colours?
Talk to you about events?	Cut with scissors?
Do simple jigsaws?	Recognise their own name?
	Recognise their own belongings?

Induction Visits

Unfortunately, we would normally invite you and your child in for several stay and play sessions in June and July. Due to Coronavirus, this will not be able to happen this summer. As a school we are carefully following government guidance and have planned the following transition arrangements. However, these may be subject to change and we will inform you of these changes as soon as possible.

Visit 1: Week commencing 7th September A visit to the Classroom. The teachers will set up the Reception classrooms with familiar activities. This is an opportunity for the children to explore the classroom and see the cloakrooms, toilets, trays etc. **Parents to stay.** We will send you confirmation of dates and times for this visit.

Visit 2: Week commencing 14th September Taster session for the children in class **without the parents.** Again we will send you confirmation of dates and times for this visit.

Week commencing 21st September Children to start school on a **part time** basis 9:00-11.45

Week commencing 28th September Children to attend school on a **part time** basis 9:00-11.45

Week commencing 5th October Children to attend school on a **part time** basis 9:00-11.45

Week commencing 12th October Children to attend school on a **full time** basis 8.45-3.10

Week commencing 19th October Children to attend school on a **full time** basis 8.45-3.10

Between now and the end the summer term a member of the reception team will contact you by phone. Please update your contact details if they have changed since completing your forms.

Starting School

First part time morning Wednesday 21st September

On the first morning please see older siblings to their doors then come to your child's classroom door. Class teachers will meet you and your child. We are happy for you to bring your child into the classroom during the first week (depending on government guidance). After this the children are encouraged to enter the classroom independently. Tears, if any, rarely last long and we would always contact you if we were concerned.

If you need to speak to the teachers they will only have a few minutes as the longer the children are waiting the more anxious they become please come to the office after they have gone in and a message can be passed to the teacher or, if possible, wait until 11.45 when you collect them.

The first few days

It is very important that we give your children time to come to terms with the social and emotional demands of school life whilst gradually introducing academic challenges.

In September they will have similar activities for the first few days when they are part time because it is important that your children feel happy and secure in their classrooms. It is tiring and demanding taking a higher level of responsibility for themselves so we have planned activities such as cars and garages, beads to make patterns, books to share, play-doh, computers and the role play area. This will give them the opportunity to play alongside others and for the teachers and teaching assistants to begin to get to know them.

The first few weeks

Early morning activities are a very important part of the school day. When children are **full time** the classroom door opens at 8.45 and children should be in class before 8.55am when the door is closed. Any child arriving after this

time should come through the office. Your child will be marked late in the register if they are not in the classroom by 9.00am. After 9.10 an unauthorised absence will be recorded.

Every half term you will receive a short overview of the activities planned and there are regular news letters from the office to remind you about school events. If you need to know anything, please contact your child's teacher or the office.

In October you will be invited to an appointment with your child's teacher to enable us to share our initial assessments with you and for us to discuss ways you can help at home and the next steps in their learning.

If you have any questions or concerns please speak to the Classteacher, to Mrs Stanford, Deputy Head or Mr Goodier, Headteacher.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

At Holt Farm Infants our aim is to have children who are happy and confident in school and provide experiences to help them learn in a secure environment to make the most of the educational opportunities we offer.

I hope this information will help you and your child have a problem free start to school.

CLASS ORGANISATION

In September there will be 2 Reception classes, with up to 30 children in each class.

- In Pearl Class the Classteacher is Mrs Jackson
- In Diamond Class the Classteacher is Miss Smith

STARTING SCHOOL

The children start school on **21st September** and will attend mornings only for the first 3 weeks 9.00 -11.45.

- Diamond Class will come in through the learning garden gate on the playground
- Pearl Class will come in through the sensory garden

Staff will be there to collect the children and bring them into class.

From Monday 12th October the children will attend all day. 8.45 – 3.10pm

PUNCTUALITY

Please arrive at school before 9.00am. Children arriving late to school have a very unsettled start to the day. From 8.45-9.00 the children have the opportunity to talk to friends and to their class teacher before they settle down to their school work. Arriving late is disruptive for the class and upsetting for the child. Children arriving after 9.10 will have an unauthorised absence mark in the register which will show on their attendance record.

LUNCH-TIMES

All Infant School children are entitled to free school meals. Our lunches are cooked fresh on the premises every day by our experienced catering team using locally sourced ingredients. We also arrange fun “Themed Lunches” every half term which the children love. Each class is supported by their own Midday Assistant and the Class teachers also help the children with lunches when they first start school.

It would be very helpful if you could prepare your child for lunchtimes by getting them used to using cutlery.

SCHOOL MILK

During the morning the children can have a drink of milk or water and a piece of fruit/vegetable which is supplied to all Infant School children. We will order milk for all the children (unless you have informed us of a dairy allergy). The milk is supplied free until the child’s 5th birthday. You will receive a reminder by email about a month before to pay for the milk or the order will automatically be cancelled. If your child is entitled to Pupil Premium funding milk will continue to be provided free of charge.

All the children have free access to water during the day. Please provide your child with a named bottle filled with water every day.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Our breakfast club runs every morning from 7.45am the cost is £3.50 per session. If you would like your child to attend breakfast club you will need to complete a registration form. The children attending have a great social time at the club playing games, Lego, puzzles etc. and they enjoy a lovely breakfast. There is a cooked and cold breakfast choice available daily.

PUPIL PREMIUM

Pupil Premium funding is additional funding the school receives of £1,320 per eligible child. To check if you qualify for Pupil Premium Funding, please

would you complete the section in the pupil record booklet? We can then do the eligibility check for you. By qualifying, your child will receive extra support in school, financial support for things like breakfast club, free milk and, in Years 1&2, access to free after school clubs.

EXITING AT THE END OF THE DAY

The Teachers will bring the children out to meet you. We instruct the children to stay with us until they see you and would be grateful if you would reinforce this with your child.

When the children attend mornings only the collection arrangements are as follows:

Pearl Class Please wait outside the sensory garden.

Diamond Class Please wait on the playground outside Diamond Class door.

Please arrive promptly to collect your child at 11.45am

Once the children are staying all day

Pearl Class – please wait outside the sensory garden.

Diamond Class – please wait in the playground outside Diamond Class door.

For safety reasons we will not allow any child to leave with another adult **unless we have verbal or written consent from a parent or carer.**

If someone else is meeting your child after school, please let us know, by note or phoning the school, so teachers can be made aware. We are unable to let them go with someone else unless you have informed us.

If you are late collecting your child, please contact us. Children will wait by the office. If we have not heard from you and cannot contact someone on your child's contact list then we would eventually have to contact social services, so please inform us if you are going to be late.

At the end of the day, please would you ensure that your children including pre-schoolers do not go on the playground equipment to avoid accidents and injuries.

WELFARE

It is extremely important that we have up to date contact sheets for your children, with as many contact numbers as possible. If you change your number or mobile phone, please let us know the new number.

We will contact you if something happens that affects your child at school, e.g. sickness or an injury that needs medical attention off site.

Please would you also make us aware of parental responsibility or any changes to your family circumstances so that we have the most up to date information about who can and cannot collect your child.

UNIFORM

Wearing school uniform helps develop pride in the school and gives the children a feeling of belonging. You will already have received a copy of our school uniform. Children need to have **ALL** belongings clearly named. Your child will also need a PE bag with T shirt and shorts and plimsolls or trainers for PE. Children need a coat every day as the playground can be cold; they also need sensible shoes suitable for activities in school and on the playground. Please send in a pair of named wellies, waterproof coat and waterproof trousers for the Learning Garden as the children go out in all weathers. Please can you put spare underwear and change of clothes in their PE bag for emergencies! **For a complete uniform list please see page 28.**

JEWELLERY

Children should not wear jewellery to school. It is a health and safety hazard and can easily get lost or broken. Essex Health & Safety guidelines state that children cannot wear earrings for P.E. – so if your child already has pierced ears, earrings must be removed by parents on PE days. School staff cannot

remove earrings. Children may only wear plain stud earrings in school - No hoops.

COMMUNICATION

We communicate regularly with parents to let them know about events in school etc. We send regular letters home by email using Parentmail. We also send texts for urgent messages. Letters are on display in our foyer and on the noticeboard. Our website is full of useful information such as copies of letters, menus, photos of events in school links to policies and other documents (www.holtfarm-inf.essex.sch.uk). We also have a Facebook Page. Please ensure you keep us up-to-date with contact numbers and email addresses. If you do not have access to electronic mail you can request a paper copy of letters.

HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT

The “Home School Agreement” helps us to recognise this is a partnership. It outlines the expectations and responsibilities of the children, parents and School in our attempt to provide the best possible education for your child. You and your child will be asked to sign a copy.

PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

We want to keep you informed about how your child is getting on at school. You will be invited in to talk about your child’s progress with their teacher during the year and also to see your child’s work.

- In the Autumn term, there will be a short meeting with the class teacher to discuss how your child has settled in to school and to share assessment information and targets for your child with you.
- In the Spring term, there is a meeting with teachers to discuss your child’s progress towards those targets and next steps in learning.
- Reports are sent out to you in the summer term and there is an opportunity to discuss the report with the teacher if you wish.
- Family mornings: 8.45 – 9:10. We invite parents to come in and spend with your child in the classroom.
 - Autumn 2 – Thursdays

- Spring 1 & 2 Tuesdays
- Summer 1 & 2 Wednesdays

PARENT HELPERS

Once your child has settled into school you may feel that you would like to come into school to help. This may be an occasional visit or on a regular basis. You will be very welcome to help with technology, cooking, book sharing and on school visits. All parents who come into school are required to undertake a Disclosure Barring Service check (DBS). Please ask for an information pack at the office.

PARENTAL CONCERNS

At Holt Farm Infants we have an open door policy. Please remember that if you have a concern or problem, come in and see us straight away. If we have a concern about your child and their education, we will contact you. If you have a complaint which you need to take further our complaints procedures is available on the school website or you may obtain a copy from the office.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS IN SCHOOL

If your child has a medical condition, we will ask you to complete a form with details of the condition and this information will be shared with our staff. In some cases, it may be necessary to put a care plan in place in which case we will meet with parents and the school nurse to put together a plan. If your child has asthma their inhaler will be kept in the classroom for immediate use.

If your child needs medication, such as antibiotics, these can be administered in school by our support staff. Please bring medicines to the office where we can store them safely. **Please don't put medicine in your child's bag.** Parents will need to give details of the dose required and signed permission to administer.

If your child has continence problems, please inform the Class teacher and provide spare underwear and a spare set of clothes so that they can change easily. We do have some spare clothes in school for emergencies.

ATTENDANCE

The Government has issued new guidelines for school attendance. From September 2015 the Government has defined “persistent absence” as less than 90% attendance. A child with less than 90% attendance will now be classed as a persistent absentee. This is equivalent to missing 19 days of school during an academic year. This sounds like a lot of absence but odd days off school quickly add up particularly for Infant School children who are more prone to illness in the first few years of school.

Good attendance is 95% or above (less than 10 days absence per academic year). If your child’s attendance falls below 90% you may be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Good attendance ensures pupils reach their full potential, both academically and socially, leading to positive life chances in the future. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any problems with attendance; for example if your child is reluctant to get ready for school in the morning or often says they are feeling unwell. We are able to provide positive support for you and your child.

HOLIDAYS

Taking holidays in term-time is very disruptive to children’s education, especially at the start of the terms when the children are settling back into their classes. Holidays in term time cannot be authorised and taking them may result in a Penalty Notice and a fine.

SICKNESS ABSENCE

If your child is unwell and cannot attend school, please phone and leave a message as early as possible so that the register can be marked accordingly. If it is a stomach bug with sickness or diarrhoea children should not return to school until they have been free from symptoms for 48 hours.

If your child becomes unwell at school or has an accident and we feel they should not be in school, we will contact you by phone. If your child has a minor bump and requires first aid they will bring a note home to inform you. If

your child bumps their head you will also receive a text message. All our support staff are trained in first aid.

If your child catches head lice you will need to seek advice from your G.P., the School Nurse or a pharmacist. If we notice that your child is in discomfort at school and may have head lice, then we will contact you. Head lice are always present in school and we do not send notes home.

BEHAVIOUR

We have high expectations of behaviour with clear behaviour guidelines for the children. In each class the children discuss and formulate their own rules. Sometimes children have difficulty following school rules and we may have to contact you about their behaviour.

We encourage children to let us know if an incident has occurred and they are upset so we can deal with it. However, sometimes they don't do this and tell you when they get home. If this occurs, please contact us so that we can deal with it directly. Please do not speak directly to other parents, this can cause bad feeling. Please let the Class teacher know and we will deal with the problem in school.

At school all staff act as role models for their children, demonstrating politeness, good manners and taking responsibility for their actions. We would ask that parents also act as role models at school, showing the children the behaviours we would like them to use.

SECURITY & SAFETY

Adults must always enter the building through the main entrance & report to the office. All visitors must sign in and get a badge before coming into the school. If you need to speak to the teacher, please catch them at the end of the day or leave a message at the office that you would like to speak to them.

CAR PARK

Please do not use the car park it is in constant use for staff and deliveries and is locked at the beginning and end of the day. Please do not walk across the car park with your child, keep to the pathways.

If children come to school on scooters or bikes, please dismount before coming onto the school site. We are unable to store bikes and scooters on site.

The area around the school gets very congested at the beginning and end of the day. If possible we ask that children are walked to school. If you need to bring your child to school by car, please park safely and with consideration for our neighbours. Please do not block driveways our neighbours need to get to work and school too.

OFSTED

There is further information about our school on our website and the OFSTED website. Our last OFSTED was in September 2017 and the outcome rated our school as Good.

Ofsted highlighted the following:

- Pupils learn in a caring, friendly and stimulating environment. They are encouraged and supported so they can achieve their best. Pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school.
- Children in Reception learn in a stimulating environment.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive.
- Holt Farm Infants is passionate about providing pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum in order to develop their interests and talents.
- Sport and physical education are a real strength of the school.

FRIENDS OF HOLT FARM INFANTS

We welcome parents getting involved in school life. Our parent group works with staff, helping to fundraise for the school, organising a variety of events such as the Christmas and Summer Fairs and other activities, such as Mothers' and Fathers' day gift shops, Easter egg hunts and the Year 2 leavers' disco.

EXTERNAL SERVICES

Sometimes we need to get advice and support from external services for our children and their families. We are fortunate to have access to Rochford Extended Services based at the King Edmund School. Support workers can visit parents in their own homes and children in school. The team includes:

- Family support workers
- Attendance Support workers

They are able to help with:

- Child care
- Study Support for children
- Parental Support
- Access to Services – e.g. Health services
- Family Learning
- Creative use of school sites – e.g. arts, sports, community groups
- Resolve any problems that prevent children benefiting from their education

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST

If children are having difficulty with their learning then the E.P. is able to help identify problems, advise teachers and work with parents to explain their children's difficulties and ways in which they can be helped.

SCHOOL NURSE

The school nursing service is available for parents with concerns about their child's welfare, e.g. sleeping disorders, dietary problems, continence etc.

CHILD PROTECTION

Our first responsibility is the children's welfare. Under certain circumstances, we may have to consult other agencies before we contact you. We are required by law to follow set procedures laid down in our Child Protection Policy.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Copies of our school policies are published on our website. Copies of policies are also available on request from the office. A charge will be made for copying.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

The school office is open from 8.30 -3.30pm daily. You can contact the school on 01702 544058 to speak to a member of the office team or to leave a message on the answering machine. Our email address is admin@holtfarm-inf.essex.sch.uk. Our website address is www.holtfarm-inf.essex.sch.uk and our school Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/HoltFarmInfantSchool/>.

If you are visiting the school at any other time apart from dropping off your child, please come to the office.

CURRICULUM

EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM

At Holt Farm we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework for all the children in our Reception year group.

It sets out:

- The legal welfare requirements that everyone registered to look after children must follow to keep your child **safe** and promote their welfare
- The 7 areas of **learning and development**
- Assessments that will enable us to discuss your child's progress throughout the Foundation Stage
- Expected levels that your child should reach at age 5, usually the end of the reception year; these expectations are called the "**Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**"

Our Ofsted report tells you how we were judged in the last inspection not only for our school but specifically in the Early Years.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is delivered through structured play where the learning has been clearly identified, together with opportunities for children to lead their own learning.

Early in the Foundation Stage Year, the children will have the opportunity to take part in a variety of activities. These will include adult, independent and child initiated activities based around a topic. The children are encouraged to select their activity and can move around the classroom freely.

Practitioners ensure that the child experiences a range of cross-curricular activities.

The guidance for Early Years supports and promotes children's

- Attitudes towards learning
- Attention, skills and persistence
- Social skills

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through **7 areas of learning and development**. Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first.

The prime areas are:

1. Communication and language;
2. Physical development; and
3. Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

1. Literacy;
2. Mathematics;
3. Understanding the world; and
4. Expressive arts and design.

These areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. We will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. The curriculum is designed to be really flexible so that we can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children develop at their own rates, and in their own ways. They have all had a range of different experiences before starting school and Mrs Jackson has already started to gather information by ringing the pre-school providers. You will also have a telephone appointment with a teacher from our Early Years as it is important that we know as much as possible about your child before they start school so that we can plan the next step for your child and help with their transition to school life.

The area of communication and language includes

- Listening and attention
- Understanding

- Speaking

SPEAKING & LISTENING

Opportunities are provided to promote and develop every child's ability to listen attentively and to communicate clearly and confidently.

We have role play areas in our classrooms and in the outside classrooms to encourage use of language in play and more formal sessions in class to tell news, share work etc. They need to listen to their peers as well as teachers and to the visitors we have in our classrooms and we encourage them to ask questions as well as answer them. They also have to listen to and follow instructions, take messages and repeat information that they have learnt.

PHYSICAL

We have an excellent Learning Garden that is used every day in Reception. The children have planned activities and their learning is led by teachers and teaching assistants from bothy Reception classes throughout the week. A Teacher or Teaching assistant works with individuals or small groups whilst the others have free choice from a range of carefully chosen activities. Your child will need to have a coat available as they go out in all weathers. The children will need named welly boots, waterproof trousers and a rain mac for the outside classroom.

The bikes, cars, hoppers, scooters, climbing frame etc. help provide exercise and develop gross motor skills. The children get the opportunity to play/work with children who are in other Reception classes because we send out small groups from each class every session.

We also have PE indoors in the winter for gym and dance and in the summer we use the field and playground for games and the pool for swimming.

PSE

At snack time the children have something to eat and a drink of milk or water and all children need a named, filled water bottle.

We play circle time games and discuss things that are important to the children. They help to make the rules for their own classes and we celebrate good examples of rule keeping with stickers, certificates and praise. This is also a good time to share our work and our feelings. We send home “Wow” notes to be filled in by parents to show what things they can do at home – a proud moment and share it in class e.g. “Can now write my name”.

We have high standards of discipline and high expectations for behaviour. We use a positive behaviour approach and reward good behaviour with praise, stickers, dojo points and certificates as well as the “Superstar” reward at lunchtime.

It is essential to teach children when certain behaviour is inappropriate and unacceptable. We have sanctions for example time out in class or another class and sometimes children are sent to Mrs Stanford or Mr Goodier.

You will be informed if there are any incidents so that we can work together to develop appropriate good behaviour.

The children have a voice in what happens in our school through the class and school councils and although in early years it does not operate in quite the same way as year 1 & 2 where they elect councillors we still have regular circle time to discuss issues in school.

COMMUNICATION

To learn more about the children, we are asking if you could send in a photo of an event or something they enjoyed over the summer holidays. A short parent commentary or quote of what your child said would be wonderful. We will then share this with the rest of the class and use the photos to create a display.

BASELINE ASSESSMENT

During the first 3 weeks of school we need to complete our Baseline Assessment. This is a national requirement for all children starting school. During this time, we will share each child’s ‘holiday news’ as it will help us to get to know them. We watch them play as well as sharing books together. The

baseline helps us know what to plan as the next step in their learning journey. Your “WOW” moments will help too.

READING

Our reading programme has been carefully structured to meet the needs of every child. We use a range of books from different schemes and non-scheme books and we will send home our READING DIARY as soon as possible in September.

Teachers will write notes to let you know where they have read up to and any specific words they are concentrating on. Please write back to let them know you have read at home and anything they enjoyed about the books or found difficult.

ORT books are a big part of our core scheme and the children will be making a book about the characters in these books for you to share at home.

Our reading scheme books are in coloured coded boxes starting with library type books and books without words for you to share. We understand that parents are usually keen to receive books with words, your child will receive these after the baseline and once we have started teaching the first set of sounds. The picture books are wonderful to help your child’s imagination and develop their story language.

Your children should change their book **about x 2 each week**. If they want a new book each day they can change it themselves. Try to check that it is the correct colour and show them the colour on the spine of the book.

They need to have their book bags in school everyday as we often have students and helpers who hear readers and teachers and teaching assistants take any opportunity available to hear the children read. This needs to be flat to fit in their tray. **No back packs please.**

As well as individual reading we have lots of shared reading sessions from Big Books that we use whole class to introduce new sight vocabulary, punctuation etc. The children will also have a class story and tell stories each day and experience rhymes/poetry and non- fiction texts every day.

PHONICS

There will be a big emphasis on phonics throughout this year. We have lots of planned activities to help children focus on the sounds they hear.

We teach letters and sounds using the Jolly Phonics scheme which not only teaches the letter sounds but has actions to help the children remember them. Many of you will have heard something about synthetic phonics which really means the sounds that single letters and two or even three letters blended together make. There are 44 of them. It is an important skill to be able to break words down and blend the sounds together when trying to read unfamiliar words or segment words into letter sounds when spelling. We will have short sessions every day to introduce the sounds and actions and then we reinforce all the sounds learnt with practical activities for example matching letter tiles to an alphabet mat, using a computer program or building words with plastic letters both in the inside and outside classrooms.

From the fourth week onwards the first sounds will be sent home with the action instructions and a book for you to stick the sheets into as we learn them.

These sounds have been chosen so that we can begin to blend to make the first words in our scheme.

We might give “homework” which will be games, handwriting practise or activities that you can do at home to reinforce the work we are doing in school on sounds or we might ask you to send in an object with the sound of the day in for us to use in school.

All the Jolly Phonic letters are displayed in all the Reception classrooms to help the children with their reading and writing.

VOCABULARY

To begin with children find sounding and blending decodable words challenging. During our letters and sounds sessions we will be encouraging children to sound and blend, for example cat will be c-a-t cat. When your child reads with you at home we ask you to help them sound and blend the words carefully to support their learning at school.

We also have tricky words, which need to be learnt by sight. Again these will be taught in school but we will ask you to practise these words at home and look out for them in their books.

HANDWRITING & WRITING

We want all your children to be motivated and confident to write. We need to prepare the way for correctly formed handwriting with activities that encourage a smooth action made with the whole body before we can expect letters well formed with pens and pencils.

We will be concentrating on left to right handwriting patterns because this is how we read and write in English, then up and down movements as well as anticlockwise and zig-zags.

We use paint and water inside and outside as well as streamers in dance and role play.

We encourage “have a go” writing – the children are encouraged to use the writing areas where different forms of writing, lists, books, cards etc. are displayed and they choose what they would like to draw and write. We then talk to them about what they have written as this will range from circles and lines to letters from their names to words they know how to write. We will model for them the writing either on their work or on white boards praising their efforts and pointing out the things they have got right. They also have opportunities in role play to make shopping lists, menus cars etc.

We have more structured writing where they draw pictures and write their news or a sentence for a story or a “silly sentence” which is a sentence that might not make sense but gives an opportunity to practice a sound they have recently learnt.

To start with this will be individually with the teacher or teaching assistant and gradually we increase the number of children we work with in the group depending on their ability and concentration.

MATHS

Number, calculating, shape, space and measure are an essential part of the curriculum. Strong emphasis is given to the recognition of numerals to 20 and

the acquisition of number skills. Initially we do not need the children to represent numbers with numerals they might use pictures or marks such as dots or lines. Forming the numbers comes later in the year. Children often reverse numbers when they begin to write so don't worry if this happens. We count forwards and backwards from 0 to 20, 20 to 0 and count out objects to match numerals progressing to adding and taking away later in the year.

We will provide a range of activities to enable development of understanding of the mathematical concepts for example, sand and water play to investigate full/ empty/ a bit more/less etc.

We make shape pictures, patterns and sort shapes and learn shape names and their properties as well as making direct comparisons and using objects to measure height and length.

We often set up play situations for the children to practice taught skills such as a shop to use money and scales to weigh things and restaurants to write numbers for prices etc. We also go on shape walks and point out triangle shapes on roofs of houses or rectangles on the bricks. Problem solving happens every day when collecting equipment for example "How many more pencils do I need?" and we encourage children to explain how they have worked the answers out.

Children need to recognise the standard 2D shapes, circle, square, rectangle and triangle.

UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD

This includes History, Geography, ICT, DT, Science and RE. Children are regularly involved in practical activities such as clearing the garden and planting, cooking, junk modelling, talking about the past, finding their way around the school environment and discussing features, and using floor robots and regular computers in the classroom and ICT suite. We hope to encourage enquiring minds, logical thinking and a sense of responsibility for our surroundings.

Your child will take part in cooking once each half term. This could be making class play-doh or something for them to make and eat. The emphasis is on the cooking process but children with allergies may bring in alternative ingredients

if needed. We will let you know in advance on our newsletter so you can send the alternative items in for your child. We will be asking for a contribution to help us with the cost of all these practical activities.

RE is non-denominational but has a bias towards Christianity although other major religions are studied to promote tolerance and understanding.

The school aims to assist the children's personal development in regard to relationships with others. We hope to encourage a respectful, tolerant outlook with an appreciation of the rich diversity of culture and belief in the world.

We regard school assemblies as opportunities to share the values and the ethos of the school. It draws the school together as a community. We also have regular visitors to take assemblies who help to give the children a sense of the wider community. We start with taking part in the Friday celebration assembly where we celebrate birthdays, good work, appropriate behaviour and full time children who follow the lunch time rules may be chosen to the class SUPERSTAR by their midday assistant. This means they choose two friends to sit with them on the special table at lunch time and receive a certificate and a badge.

Arrangements can be made for children to be withdrawn from Religious Education sessions and assemblies by making a written request to Mr Goodier in the first instance.

CREATIVE

We offer a wide range of creative activities such as music, drama, art and craft and role play. We use a variety of media – pencils, paints, fabrics and clay and lots of junk modelling. We are also very lucky to have Wendy Sergeant who comes in every week to play the piano and guitar and teaches songs and aspects of pitch, rhythm etc. to the children through games on a Friday.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Please note the school does not stock school uniform. We only ask that children wear the correct colour uniform. It is not necessary to have the school logo on any items of uniform as items with the logo are considerably more expensive. Items with the school logo are available from Danielles if preferred.

Hockley shop- 30 Main Road Hockley SS5 4QS, 01702 202005 or Rayleigh shop- Claydons Lane Rayleigh Weir SS6 7UP, 01268 967542.

Girls' Winter Uniform

Grey pinafore, skirt or trousers
White blouse/polo shirt
White socks/grey tights
School tie (optional)
Maroon cardigan/pullover/sweatshirt
Conventional shoes, black (no trainers or high heels)

Boys' Winter Uniform

Grey trousers
White shirt/polo shirt
School tie (optional)
Maroon pullover/sweatshirt
Conventional shoes, black (not trainers)

Girls' Summer Uniform

As above or
Pink gingham dress (plain style)
Sandals, black, brown or white, no jellies

Boys' Summer Uniform

As above or
Grey shorts
Black or brown sandals.

Reception Uniform

Reception children may prefer to wear grey jogging bottoms, white polo shirts and maroon sweatshirts for ease of changing. If you prefer tailored trousers or skirts, please have an elasticated waist with no buttons. It is not necessary for Early Years children to wear a tie. Reception children also need suitable clothes for the learning garden.

- Welly boots
- Raincoat
- Waterproof trousers

These items will stay in school at all times, children without waterproofs will not be allowed outside when it snows or drizzles.

PE Kit

A Plain white T-shirt

Black shorts

Plimsolls or trainers

Jogging bottoms and a warm top for outside PE

Please would you provide your child with a **named** drawstring bag in which to keep their PE clothes.

Nearly New Uniform

Items of nearly new uniform are available from the school office.

Jewellery

For reasons of health and safety we ask that children do not wear jewellery to school. If your child has pierced ears only plain studs may be worn. Earrings must be removed for PE. If your child is unable to do this themselves, they must be removed before coming to school. Thank you for your co-operation.

If you are thinking of having your child's ears pierced, please wait until the summer holidays as children are not allowed in the pool with earrings for health and safety reasons and earrings cannot be taped for swimming or any other PE.

Outdoors

It is most important that children wear shoes that are suitable for the activities they do at school both inside and out. Children cannot use the play equipment if they are not wearing suitable shoes. The children spend a lot of time outdoors; please make sure they have a coat in school as our playground can get very cold.

PLEASE NAME ALL ITEMS. WE HAVE NO LOST PROPERTY IN SCHOOL

ALL NAMED ITEMS ARE RETURNED TO THE CHILD

