



MINCHINHAMPTON C of E PRIMARY ACADEMY

GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS/CARERS OF NEW RECEPTION PUPILS

"Starting school is an exciting time in a child's life. We aim to ensure the transition to school is a positive experience for every child. It is the beginning of a home-school partnership which is built on mutual trust which is essential for all areas of learning" - Mrs Sarah Bugg, Early Years Foundation Stage Lead

- **Class Structure**

Minchinhampton has an intake of 45 children each year. Reception will register as 2 separate classes but will be taught by all members of the Reception Team.

- **The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn best by playing and exploring, being active and through creative and critical thinking which takes place indoors and outside. They will be encouraged to use their senses, ask questions and follow their own interests. We aim to nurture positive attitudes to learning that will remain with them throughout their lives. Children will arrive in school having had many different experiences: we will look to draw upon these, on what they already know and can do to ensure they feel secure and valued and can go forward and build their resilience for the challenges ahead.

In Reception we continue to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework (EYFS). These are the standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5.

The 7 areas of learning are used to plan your child's learning and activities. Planning for this curriculum is designed to be flexible so that your child's unique needs and interests are supported:

- Communication and Language development
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

- **Supporting your child as they start school**

Starting school represents a big change in a young person's life and we need to work together to support them through this time. Try to keep home routines similar when your child starts school and this will provide comfort that some things are staying the same. Critically, give them your time and listen as they talk through their new experiences. Encourage them to talk openly about how they feel so they can start recognising and understanding different emotions. Support them to share, cooperate and take turns when they are playing with other children.

- **Independence**

Independence begins when children find the confidence to try something for themselves; when they are successful, they gain more confidence. Independent skills build as children grow and develop but we all need to encourage them to "have a go". For example you could help them to become more independent when dressing and undressing and you could encourage them to practise putting on their school uniform. Encourage your child to use a knife and fork and adjust meal times so they can get used to eating at the same times they will eat on school days (12.10pm for Reception children). Support your child with independent toileting routines so they can go to the toilet on their own, wipe themselves properly and flush; then wash and dry their hands without any help. Encourage your child to tidy up their toys - use clear instructions and build your expectations of them. We want to do our very best to set them up for success.

- **Sleep**

If children get enough sleep, it helps them enormously to get up happily in the morning and be alert and happy for most of the day at school. Starting school involves many new experiences and this can be really tiring. A good night's sleep will help them both mentally and emotionally: for their brains to function and for them to be able to manage their emotions. A regular pre-bedtime routine is really important.

- **Speaking and Listening**

Encourage your child to talk about themselves, their feelings, their thinking and their ideas. Through talk children are able to express their needs, make relationships with others and explain their thinking and understanding of the world around them. It is a powerful skill which will underpin all their future learning. When asking questions, give them time to think about what they want to say. You can also support your child's language skills by singing together, having fun with rhymes and jokes and retelling stories together.

- **Reading**

We cannot underestimate the impact reading at home will have on achievement in reading and on your child's education going forward. Our aim is to teach children to read and develop a desire to become lifelong readers with a love of books.

Please read picture books with your child daily. Children often have favourites and enjoy having them read to them over and over again. They learn to join in and to discuss the illustrations; often choosing to pick the book up and read it themselves. We ask you to read at home at least five times per week and record the reading you do in your child's reading record book which will be provided by us in September.

We teach Letters and Sounds daily. Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. We will invite parents/carers to a meeting in October to explain Letters and Sounds teaching and how you can support your child at home.

- **Physical Skills**

Help them to develop their physical skills by using scissors, drawing, craft activities and play- dough; also by finding opportunities to climb, run, skip, jump and lift; by playing and exploring at the park; by taking part in games and activities that make them out of breath. Play is one of the most important needs children have, including once they go to school.

Early writing involves making marks. Mark-making is a term used for the creation of different patterns, lines, textures and shapes. This may be on a piece of paper, on the floor, outside in the garden or on an object or surface. You can support the development of writing skills by providing opportunities for your child to take part in mark-making activities- these could involve drawing, making marks with pencils, crayons, or paint brushes on paper. Chalk works well outside and pictures and patterns can be made with sticks, rocks and creations using fir cones and seed pods.

To support your child with writing their name, write it for them so they can begin to recognise it. This will help when they look for their belongings. Some children may begin to practise writing their name. Support your child by ensuring they start their name with a capital letter and they write from left to right. Playing with Lego, beads, playdough and other activities that develop fine motor skills will strengthen fingers which will support your child's ability to develop pencil control.

- **Numbers**

To develop their number skills, encourage your child to count objects and actions, for example toys, stairs, claps, plates and raisins. Play track games and count dots on dice; say and sing number rhymes; talk about numbers and use number language for example 'more and less,' 'greater and fewer' and 'how many.' Talk about numbers in the world around them and encourage the recognition of numbers that are relevant, for example, "4 because I am four".

- **Tapestry**

In Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 we use an online system called Tapestry to record and track children's learning. Tapestry enables staff to take photographs, videos and make written observations of the activities your child does at school to create an individual Learning Journal. You will have access to the Learning Journal using your e-mail address and a secure password. It also allows you to add your own photos and comments to the journal from home which enables us to build a complete picture of your child together.

- **School Routines**

Children can arrive at school between 8.35 and 8.50am. The children will be greeted by the Reception teaching staff. If you arrive after 8:50am please report to the school office.

A regular routine in the morning will help your child feel confident about the day ahead. We ask you to be punctual at both ends of the day.

When you leave your child at school, ensure they know that you, or whoever is dropping them off, will be back to collect them later. Please inform your child's teacher if someone else is collecting them from school. Please try to avoid changing arrangements during the school day but if you do need to please let the office know by leaving a message.

If they're really upset, talk to the class teacher about ideas for making the separation process easier and work on them together. Ask if you can phone the school office later to check your child is okay.

School finishes at 3.05pm. Children must be collected from their class teacher. They are not allowed to leave the school premises unless they are with an authorised adult. When you pick your child up at the end of the day, they may be tired and hungry. Some children appreciate a snack to sustain them on the way home.

- **Home-School Communication**

Encourage your child to talk to the teacher if they are worried or upset about anything that happens. If you do have concerns about how your child is settling at school, try and speak to the class teacher first- they may have made the same observations as you. Ask if there are things you can do at home that will help support your child. If you want to talk again about how things are going, agree a time with the class teacher. It can also help if you let the teacher know if there is something happening at home that may be affecting your child

- **School Meals**

All Reception and Key Stage 1 children are entitled to a universal free school lunch. We encourage all children to have a universal free school lunch. Your child may be entitled to Free School Meals, this can help parents who are on a low income or in receipt of benefits. If you feel this may apply to you, please look on the school website under the parents tab and under New Parent Pupil Forms 2023/24. There are several choices each day, including a vegetarian option. All individual dietary requirements are catered for (please complete and return the Allergy/Special Diet Form for your child). You may also send a packed lunch for your child. *We are a nut free school so we ask you not to send nuts into school. We also ask you not to include egg, for example egg sandwiches or scotch eggs, or mayonnaise in packed lunches due to egg allergies.*

- **Absences**

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, please contact the school office before 9.30 am on the first morning of their absence. Please call 01453 883273 (option 1) to leave a message. Or email admin@minchschoo.net and include your child's name, class and reason for the absence. Should your child have sickness or diarrhoea, please keep them off school for a full 48 hours after the last bout of illness; this helps with infection control. The phones in the school office are answered between 8.30am - 4.30pm. Before school and at all other times you can leave a message. These will be listened to regularly.

- **Other Information**

For all other information including Uniform, Before and After School Care and 2023-24 Term Dates, please see the Parent/Carer Information Booklet also in your welcome pack.

If you have any further questions about your child starting school, please e-mail them through to admin@minchschoo.net or call the school office on **01453 883273**.

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