

Welcome to The Hawthorns Primary School

Preparing to Start School



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Welcome to The Hawthorns Primary School, where our vision is for all children to **Belong, Believe, Achieve and Grow**. We place children at the heart of everything we do, with the priority to keep them safe and happy.

We are fortunate enough to have a well-equipped modern building with spacious grounds and very knowledgeable, hard-working staff who aim to provide the best education they can for all our children. We are well-supported by our enthusiastic and active governors and parents.

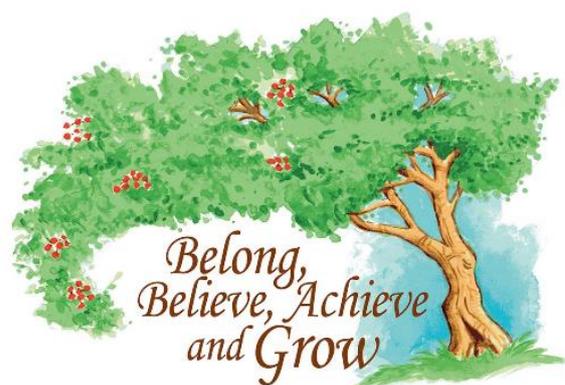
Our children come to school eager to learn and we aim to encourage this positive attitude by providing them with learning opportunities that are memorable, challenging and tailored to the way each child learns best.

We promote a growth mindset and aim to unlock the potential of the whole child by focusing on a set of ***Aspirational Qualities*** throughout our curriculum. We teach children to be confident and independent; to believe in themselves and be resilient; and to be aware of their responsibilities both to the school community and the world at large.

The children in our school work hard, make good progress and achieve high standards, but more importantly they develop personal skills which will ensure their future success.

We look forward to welcoming your child into our school and seeing them grow and develop throughout their time with us.

Ms Raha Razeghi
Headteacher



Transition into School

We are delighted that your child will be joining our school and want your child to settle quickly into a happy school life. We hope this booklet offers you an insight into what we do and how you can support your child's learning through that vital home-school partnership.

As parents, carers and family, you are the most influential teachers in a child's life. With you, your child will have been watching, listening, feeling, copying and generally experimenting with day-to-day experiences. They will have acquired amazing skills from you already. They will be learning about relationships and beginning to have and express thoughts and feelings of their own and to understand others.

Most children will have experienced a range of learning at their pre-school/nursery setting which we build upon in Foundation Stage 2 (also known as the Reception Year) continuing with the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021.

Visits to the School

Transition starts during the Summer Term when a member of the Reception team visits the children at their playgroup/pre-school/nursery if possible.

We will be offering one-to-one consultation meetings with your child's teachers at school in September, to give you and your child the opportunity to visit the school and have a discussion with your child's teacher. Full details of the dates and times of these arrangements will be detailed in a separate letter.

Many of the new children will have recently turned four years old and for some children a slow build-up will ease their transition into school.

If you feel your child will benefit from beginning school on a part time basis attending mornings only, please talk to your child's teacher.

Even with this gradual start, many of the children will be very tired in the first few weeks. We expect this and so should you.



Helping to prepare your child for school

We would like all children to be able to settle happily and quickly into school. One way in which parents can play a big part is by equipping your child with some of the practical skills which will help them to be independent when they start school – this is a huge help for children in terms of their confidence and self-esteem. We understand that children develop at different rates and we do not expect every child to be able to do everything on the list. However, it would help your child to settle in if you could spend time with them to learn how to:

- Be able to express their needs appropriately.
- Wash their hands effectively, following the handwashing steps, for 20 seconds.
- Use the toilet alone, flush it and wash their hands afterwards. If you have questions regarding toileting, please do not hesitate to let us know and we will be as supportive as possible.
- Fasten and unfasten coats. Children should be able to put on and take off their coats and hang them up on a peg.
- Be able to take off and put on again, their jumper or cardigan.
- Turn sleeves the right way again on jumpers and coats if they are inside out.



- Take off, and put on again, shoes and socks/tights.
 - Teach your child to use a tissue, (tissues are always available in the classroom,) dispose of it in the bins provided and wash their hands for 20 seconds afterwards.
 - Teach your child to cough or sneeze into the crook of their arm.
- Sit on a chair correctly at a table – get your child used to working at a table when drawing, etc.
 - Sit quietly and be able to listen to a story or a piece of music.
 - Be able to manage fruit at snack time e.g. open a banana, peel a small orange or manage the container if they have brought a fruit snack from home.
 - Learn to cut up their own food using a knife and fork as all Reception children are entitled to a free school meal at lunchtime. You can help by encouraging good table manners at home.
 - Sharing and taking turns; coming to school means learning to work in a group and to wait for attention. Try to ensure your child knows how to take turns and how to share toys. Help your child to learn to wait their turn by not allowing them to interrupt *your* conversations; instead, make them wait until you are ready.
 - Tidy up things they have used.
 - Say goodbye with a smile when left by parent/carer.



- Pronounce commonly used words correctly.
- Adopt a sensible daily routine now, which will carry on when your child starts school, e.g., allow plenty of time to get ready in the morning and set bedtime at a reasonable time.



You could also practise these activities at home to develop coordination and skills:

- Hold a pencil or felt pen to draw or write
- Using scissors
- Using glue and paint carefully
- Hopping, balancing, running, jumping
- Kicking a ball, catching and throwing a ball
- Drawing straight and curvy lines
- Playing board and matching games
- Completing jigsaws
- Playing I Spy
- Playing Spot the Difference, Snap and dot-to-dot games.
- Please encourage your child to walk as often as possible and give them opportunities to play on large equipment in the park. It is good to encourage games in which they develop upper body strength, which is a precursor to developing writing ability and fine motor skills.
- You can help develop the key skills of counting, sorting and matching when laying the table, shopping for items, sharing fairly and sorting various items by shape or colour.
- Talking about whether there is enough will lead to an awareness of 'too many' and 'too few'.
- When building with construction toys use position words such as 'inside, on top, beside' – these provide good early mathematical experience for all children.
- You can help by teaching them nursery rhymes and tapping to the beat of familiar songs.
- Collect junk and provide glue and string for imaginative modelling.
- Use paper, paints and different types of coloured pencils; these will also help with the fine motor control necessary for learning letter formation.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework 2021



Every child deserves the best possible start in life. Children develop very quickly and a child's experiences at this stage have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high-quality learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.

The EYFS learning and development requirements comprise seven areas of learning. All are important and inter-connected.

There are three prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Personal, social and emotional development.
- Physical development

There are four specific areas, which are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design



Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to

thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Children learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. They will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. They learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood leading to the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices with their food.

Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.

Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing) development

involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. The curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go' and not be afraid to make mistakes.

Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.

Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe. It involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.

Learning Through Play

We deliver the curriculum through providing a range of opportunities in which children can develop relationships and personal skills during their play alongside teacher led learning. It is vital for personal and social development and can promote development of speech, numerical ability and physical and creative development. Make time to play with your child and do not under-estimate the value of play. Play underlines everything that we do in the Foundation Stage.

Children learn best by first-hand experience – this helps them to make sense of the world around them. They need the chance to explore and manipulate a range of materials such as water, dry and wet sand, dough and good old fashioned mud!



How you can help your child with reading, writing and maths

As your child moves through the Foundation Stage, they will be ready to take part in more teacher led learning activities. Research has shown that starting too early can damage future progress. Children are ready at different ages. We aim to catch the right moment for your child.

Literacy

Children need to be able to speak clearly and listen carefully to appreciate words and therefore read and finally write. How you can help:

- Listen attentively to your child.
- Talk to them and encourage them to talk to you.
- Make eye contact and encourage them to do the same.
- Talk in full sentences; avoid baby talk.
- Give them time to explain and retell events to you.
- Avoid interrupting.
- Give clear instructions and encourage your child to follow these.
- Allow them to identify sounds around them, distinguish between similar sounds and words. Let them appreciate silence.

- Letter sounds will be introduced to your child. They will be asked to listen for the sounds in the order they occur in regular words. They will also start to break words down into their individual sounds for spelling.

In school your child will need to have clear speech so that both teachers and other children can understand them. However, be assured that many children start school with immature speech. If you have any real worries, now may be a good time to speak to your GP, Health Visitor or go to a speech and language drop in at the Children's Centre to see if a referral to Speech Therapy would be helpful. If you are already aware of any problems or receiving help, please let the school know as soon as possible.

Reading

Children love having stories read to them. To help your child foster a love of books, take time to enjoy stories together. Reading to your child every day is one of the most beneficial things you can do. Why not introduce your child to the public library? To assist your child in getting ready to read:

- Let your child see you reading, let them see it is useful and fun.
- Draw attention to words in the street, on TV, on cereal packets, etc.
- Look at pictures in magazines and talk about them.
- Speak to your child and listen to what he says. If your child does not have the oral vocabulary, they cannot be expected to understand the written words.
- Get your child to listen to you. Listening is an important acquired skill.
- Provide books in the home and make quiet time for sharing a book with them.
- Use letter sounds, not letter names.
- Teach your child simple songs and rhymes to develop your child's memory.
- Keep it FUN! Do not prolong the reading when your child has lost interest – short enjoyable experiences are best.
- Pay attention to the mechanics of reading, e.g. holding the book, and turning the page. Let your finger go under the words as you read from left to right.
- Your child's main interest will be in the pictures – allow time to examine them and comment on them. Ask "What happens next?".
- Play simple games, like *I Spy* to encourage recognition of letter sounds and *Spot the Difference* to aid observation and therefore future reading skills.

Once a child has mastered some good speaking and listening skills they will start matching sounds to written letters and words. **Phonics** is the art of recognising the individual sounds that make up words. Sounds may consist of one or more letters. These are called phonemes. Graphemes are the written letters that make the sounds. Letters have a name as heard in the alphabet but phonemes can make more than one sound. We will be introducing the different sounds through our phonics programme.

Early recognition of words is mainly through breaking them up into sounds. In the English language there are a number of words that have to be sight read because they do not follow the rules of phonics. Your child will be introduced to high frequency sight words that will help their reading.

Children can often decipher words by using clues from the pictures in their books or the context of the story. All these strategies build up their reading skills. With early reading do encourage your child to follow words with their finger as they say them. This helps them to match the word shapes with the spoken word. Look for words within words.



Encourage them to have a go at decoding words they are stuck on. Draw attention to any of the 'tricky words' or high frequency sight words they may be working on (these will be sent home once your child starts phonic sessions).

Many books are written with repetitive text to promote confidence. Ask questions about the text and pictures to make sure your child understands what they are reading.

Writing

Gradually children start to make marks, often through their play activities, which as they mature, will develop through emergent writing stages to accurate writing of words, then sentences and finally full pieces of text.

Good quality reading and listening experiences lead to imaginative, interesting and detailed writing. Good writing depends on both technical and creative skills. Children are more willing to write if they are inspired or if they see a purpose. To assist your child in getting ready to write:

- Let him/her see you write shopping lists, messages, etc.
- Get your child to make up messages and help him/her to 'write' them.
- Write his/her name and let them trace the letters with their finger.
- Help your child to develop his/her fine motor skills by modelling with plasticine, drawing on a blackboard or with crayons, joining the dots, etc.



- Develop his/her observation skills and recall by sorting shapes, doing jigsaws or matching snap cards.
- Encourage a good grip on his/her crayon or pencil – an incorrect grip can cause problems later on, so ask your teacher for help if necessary.
- Use only **lower-case letters** (except for the first letter of their name) and do not show your child capital letters to write as the children have to “unlearn” this once in school.
- As your child begins to write, encourage good letter formation from the start.

Mathematics

Children eventually recognise that numbers and shapes can help them to discuss situations and solve simple problems. There are many ways you can reinforce numeracy skills at home through shopping, cooking, counting, ordering, drawing, looking at things around you, playing games, sharing things into halves and quarters, matching, using scales, estimating, playing with water containers, comparing and number spotting etc. Here are some of the skills your child will be working on throughout their Reception year and into Key Stage One.

Numbers

Counting to ten, then twenty, recognising numerals, putting numbers in the correct order. Matching numbers with objects, counting one more and one less. Beginning to use the language and idea of adding and taking away.

- Concentrate on 1:1 counting e.g. can you find four spoons? How many sausages are there on your plate?
- Talk about quantities e.g. 5 is more than 2.
- Try to get your child to visualise numbers and understand, e.g. that 4 is 4 and not 1, 2, 3, 4.
- Play dominoes or simple board games, e.g. snakes and ladders.
- Out and about, look at house numbers, or count the number of red cars you see.



Numerical Patterns

Beginning to recognise and describe basic shapes. Beginning to measure with non-standard units. Using the language of comparing. Beginning to use the language of location and direction. Recognising and continuing simple patterns.

Maths is everywhere and at this age, with almost no effort, any journey, shopping trip, waiting time or mealtime can be turned into a maths game.

General Information

In the first few weeks of school, when bringing your child to school they may become upset. We have found that it is better for parents to leave fairly quickly if this happens. Prolonging the parting tends to make matters worse. We have a team of very experienced staff who will help your child and children usually cheer up once the parent has left – you are welcome to phone and check that this is the case.

Every child should have a named bottle to bring drinking water to school; we expect this to come into school daily refilled with fresh water – not juice or squash. Please send your child's book bag each day and we ask that you do not put water bottles or clothes into your child's book bag.

The Hawthorns belongs to the national free fruit scheme which provides fruit for the children to eat, (there will be a permission slip for you to sign in our Pupil Information pack). We want to encourage the children to eat healthily. Snacks sent in from home should reflect this – fresh fruit or vegetables. You will receive information about free or subsidised milk for your child.

To encourage your child to feel happy about school, make sure you always talk about school positively and enthusiastically.

Remember if there are changing circumstances at home which may affect your child's emotions or wellbeing, please let your child's teacher know.



Start of School, Lunch and Home Time Arrangements

We ask that you drop off your child between 8:45am and 8:55am. Coats are hung up on named pegs in the Foundation Stage cloakroom. There are book boxes for their book bags and trays for water bottles. Everyone goes into their classrooms

for registration. After registration, the children take part in planned and child-initiated activities such as short phonic sessions, practical number work or P.E. During the morning there is a fruit snack and a drink of milk or water available.

Under the government directive, all Foundation Stage children can have a free hot school meal. At lunchtime, the children are taken to the dining areas where the lunchtime staff help them and encourage them to eat their lunch. After they have eaten the children go outside to play.

During the afternoons, the children get involved in practical subjects such as art, music and topic work as well as reading and writing activities. The children will also have free choice of play activities during this time. The day ends with all the class together to hear stories or rhymes and songs.

At the end of their school day the children will be brought out at 3:20pm and we ensure that each child is collected by an authorised adult who will be waiting by the Foundation Stage doors. When you see your child at the front of the line, please come forward to greet them. Please do not be on your mobile phone – a greeting and a smile from you is important for your child and the teacher may have a quick message to pass on to you. If someone other than the parent/carer (or named person) is collecting the child the school needs to know who this will be. If a parent is delayed, we will keep the child in the school office until they arrive. It is important that we know about any delay.

School Information and Letters Home

The school sends a weekly news bulletin and other correspondence home via eSchools weekly. Copies of all letters/bulletins are available to read on the School's Learning Platform (www.thehawthorns.eschools.co.uk). The school also has a texting service whereby urgent and emergency messages can be sent for immediate attention i.e. club cancellations, school closures.

Getting Involved in school life

We are fortunate in having a great deal of parental support at our school. However, extra voluntary help from families for helping with activities such as art and cooking and going on visits, is always welcome. Helpers need to obtain a DBS check (details available from the office) and attend the parent helper briefing.

You can make a huge contribution to the school and the children by getting involved in our PTA. This group has a social and fundraising role.

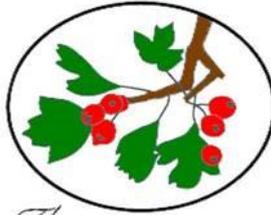


You may also like to think about becoming a Governor when vacancies arise!

More information can be found at Wokingham Borough Council. Also our School Learning Platform at www.thehawthorns.eschools.co.uk has links to the Governors' Page as well as lots of other useful information.

Finally, we look forward to your child starting with us in September and to meeting with you in September to discuss your child's individual needs as they start school and answer any questions you may have.

May 2022



The
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Primary School

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