

EARLY YEARS BOOKLET

Starting school at Drayton Community Infant School

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Learning, Caring
and Growing
together

Our Early Years Policy

Our Aims:

- To provide a secure, caring and stimulating learning environment.
- To ensure that all children are valued.
- To build on what the child already knows and to encourage a positive attitude and enjoyment of learning.
- To encourage independence and confidence.
- To provide a range of opportunities to learn through direct first hand experience and active exploration, in the classroom and outdoors, using a wide variety of equipment and materials.
- To value the role families can play and work together in partnership.

How do we do this?

We want children to be engaged in the learning process and for their learning to be relevant and purposeful. Therefore, our philosophy is centred around the notion that children learn best by doing. We believe that play, both indoors and outdoors, is an ideal vehicle for young children's learning. Play helps children to explore, investigate and make sense of the world around them. Play allows children to be challenged in their thinking and helps them to practice and rehearse skills and to be motivated in their learning. Children are inquisitive and curious and we wish to build upon this in a positive and enjoyable manner.



Our Early Years Curriculum

At Drayton Community Infant School our curriculum is based around the Foundation Stage Curriculum. The curriculum is divided into six areas:

Personal, Social & Emotional Development
Communication, Language & Literacy
Mathematical Development
Knowledge & Understanding of the World
Physical Development
Creative Development



Each area of the curriculum has equal weighting and children are given opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in all of these areas through a wide range of activities and play. Through careful observation and assessment staff are able to move children on in their learning and to also encourage them to participate in identifying the next steps for their learning.

Learning opportunities are developed:

- Through play which is structured at times to enable new skills to develop.
- Through children's interests noted by staff and suggestions from parents.
- Through allowing children to make their own decisions and choices.
- Through provide a range of stimulating resources that children are encouraged to explore freely and through direction from staff.
- Through incorporating drama and role-play into sessions.
- Through catering for different learning styles and needs.
- Through offering very high quality pastoral care so that children feel confident, valued and secure.

Welcome

The staff team at Drayton Community Infant School area pleased to welcome you and your child to our school. We hope it will be the start of a happy partnership.

We want your child to be very happy at school and we work hard to ensure the transition from home/pre-school into school is as smooth as possible.

This booklet is designed to help you and your child in the earliest days at school. We hope you will find it useful as your child begins their school career, giving you some idea of the way we work, and the important role you can play in the process.

Developing Literacy

Literacy activities are planned daily as part of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. They are interwoven into an integrated, investigative approach to learning.

To help children learn letter shapes, sounds and names we use elements of a scheme



called Jolly Phonics, together with Letters and Sounds from the National Literacy Strategy. This enables us to teach the children using aural (listening) skills, visual (looking) skills and kinaesthetic (action) skills. Up to three letters are introduced each week and the children are encouraged to take home sheets that show the letter sounds and actions so that they can

practice these at home and involve their families in their learning.

One of the most important skills we need is to be able to read. At Drayton Community Infant School we want children to enjoy reading and develop a love of books and stories. In the Autumn term we encourage children to take books home to share with their families from the first day at school. Children can take a different book home on a daily basis. We want to develop "real readers" and so have a range of books available in each class that include "real books". Reading scheme books are introduced after October half term. Children

will have a home/school contact book that parents and staff can contribute to and note reading developments in as well as any other significant events or messages they want to share with staff. To aid development of reading skills we also look at "whole word" recognition and some of these key sight



vocabulary words will be sent home to practice with families. A reading workshop to fully explain our system is arranged for families during the first half term.



Literacy is also developed through sharing stories and big books, interactive whiteboard activities, learning songs and rhymes, using role-play and drama, plus a whole range of activities that develop hand-eye co-ordination, visual memory and discrimination.

Developing Numeracy

Children in Reception continue to use play and exploration to acquire mathematical skills. A large majority of mathematical work is practical and learning happens in many different contexts around the classroom and outside. Some whole class work exploring mathematical concepts is teacher-led and children can also freely explore these concepts through a variety of different activities and resources set up each



day. Children will have many opportunities to explore number, shape, pattern and measures in the course of their learning. Role-play and cooking can also offer the chance to understand how Mathematics is used every day. The staff encourage the children to use

appropriate mathematical language through modelling and in play situations. When ready, the children begin to record their ideas and calculations using standard notation.

The Outdoor Environment

We believe that children should have regular access to outside learning opportunities. The use of the outdoor environment compliments and extends the learning which takes place indoors. The outside environment can offer unique opportunities for learning and the children have more space to move freely which is crucial for their physical, social and emotional

development. At Drayton Community Infant School we have a secure designated Reception outdoor area to which each class has direct access. Each day there will be a variety of activities set up outside for the children to explore and develop their learning. The area will be well resourced and there will be systems in place ensuring equal



access for all children to this area. The children will also have supervised access to other outdoor facilities on the school site such as the sensory garden, musical area, trim track, climbing apparatus, orchard and playing field. Children need to be prepared to play outside in all weathers and should bring suitable clothing.

Assessment

All children are assessed in their first term using the Bury Infant check. This forms a basis for funding for the school's Special Education Needs budget. It also provides clear information about children's skills in terms of their visual and auditory memory, counting skills, language development and fine motor skills.

Our staff use on-going assessment to inform them of the child's learning and where to move them next. This is supported through daily contact with parents who can keep staff informed of any successes and areas of difficulty noted at home. Parental contact also allows staff to know when a child is "not themselves" or has had any bigger emotional change that might be affecting their child, eg illness in the family.

The staff use observation, work samples and conversation with children to help them assess their understanding. This is recorded on the Foundation Stage Profile. The profile is shared with parents at our parent/teacher interviews and forms the basis from which the child's Record of Achievement is written at the end of the summer term. It also provides a good source of information for the Year 1 staff at transfer.



Behaviour & Social Skills

When your child enters our school community they will be encouraged to get to know one another and respect and value others. We promote positive behaviour management and always like to "catch them being good".

Staff understand that children mature at different rates and that children enter school having had different experiences. Through our pre-school cluster group we aim to continue working positively to overcome any behaviour issues. It is essential that we work with parents when dealing with behaviour issues and aim always to use a range of strategies including raising self-esteem, modelling how to play co-operatively, peer support and giving clear and consistent boundaries. (For more information, please read our Behaviour Policy).

Staffing & Organisation

Each class in the Foundation Stage will have a full-time teaching assistant working with the class teacher. You will be able to meet the whole Reception team at the initial Parents' introductory meeting. All staff in the Foundation Stage are involved in continuing their professional development. This can be through attending training courses, through observation of each other, other examples of good practice through their own reading and action research and through being evaluative and reflective practitioners.

A "typical" day in a Reception class:

Approximate timings	Learning Opportunities
8.45 - 9.00	Parents reading/playing with their children as they arrive in the morning.
9.00-10.25	Whole class interactions and discussions followed by activities planned around a theme covering six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum
10.25- 10.40	Playtime
10.40 - 11.50	Whole class interactions and discussions followed by activities planned around a theme covering six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum
11.50 - 1.00	Lunch time
1.00 - 3.00	Whole class interactions and discussions followed by activities planned around a theme covering six areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum

Children have the opportunity to snack and have a drink at any time during the school day.

Working with families

At Drayton Community Infant School we want to develop an active partnership with parents.

Through our "open door" ethos parents have the opportunity to talk to the class teacher as their child enters school so there exists a daily contact between home and school. To support this, we issue Homelink books that go home daily. These include information about the child's learning, interests and social and emotional needs. Families are encouraged to write their own comments thus ensuring two-way communication.



We will also send out a termly newsletter informing families of events and learning that have happened during the term.

We will have workshops throughout the year for families to have the opportunity to share their children's learning and to develop a greater understanding of the learning that takes place at school.

We will also have designated parent-teacher meetings during the year.

We welcome parental support at school. We are pleased to see parents in the classroom and are keen to hear of any special skills that they could offer to help develop in the classroom. If you would like to help in school please see a member of the Reception team. All helpers in school must complete a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure check. Forms are available from the School office.

Starting school - Induction procedures

To ensure the best possible start to school, our staff visit children, where possible, within their pre-school setting and spend time to and playing alongside the child as well as talking to staff working with them in their pre-school setting.



This is complimented with a meeting for parents giving them the opportunity to meet the Reception staff. They also get to find out about the first few weeks in school and ask questions. Following this meeting children and their families are invited to visit the school. During these sessions families can informally meet with the staff, chat to each other and help themselves and their child become familiar with the school environment.

When the children start school in September they are brought in as small groups of about six and seven. This enables everyone involved to have the time and space to get to know one another.

- It allows children to build up confidence and gives them time and space to absorb information and feel comfortable in their new environment.
- It allows staff to get to know individual children properly and to have time to talk to them.
- It allows parents to have a chance to talk to the staff and feel confident as a new member of our school community.

Following this introduction the children are then usually ready to begin their time at school, either as a part-time or full-time pupil (see Admissions policy).

What equipment will my child require?

Please provide comfortable, sensible clothes for outside play which the children can fasten and unfasten themselves.



Please remember that these clothes should be suitable for a practical day, which could include sand play, water play, painting, clay work and all outside activities.

We advise that children wear sensible, flat-heeled footwear so that they can play safely outside.

We do have a uniform, and sell sweatshirts and t-shirts with our school logo. These are available to order from our School office. We also stock sunhats, shoe bags and book bags for you to purchase.

Please make sure all articles of clothing are labelled with your child's name.

Physical Education

The children should wear shorts and a t-shirt for PE. They also need a pair of plimsolls for outdoor PE and use of the climbing frame. These need to be kept in a drawstring bag on the child's cloakroom peg. **NO JEWELLERY** should be worn for PE.

Snacks

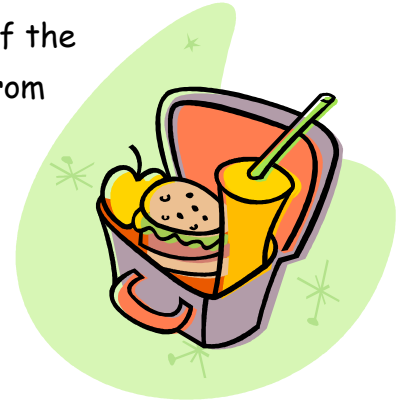
All children will receive free a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable snack during the school day. This is provided under the Government scheme.



Children are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school to drink when required throughout the day.

Lunchtimes

Your child may choose whether to have a hot lunch provided by the school or bring a packed lunch from home. Lunches provided by the school are currently £2.00 per day. They need to be ordered in advance from the School office and money presented in a named envelope. A sample of the hot lunch menu, including the vegetarian option is available from the School office. Packed lunches from home should be in a named container/lunch bag and should not contain nuts, sweets or bars of chocolate or sugary drinks. All Reception children will eat together amongst friends and will have an assigned Midday Supervisor looking after them during the lunchtime period.



And finally.....

We hope you have found this booklet helpful. If there are any other queries about your child starting school at Drayton Community Infant School, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

We look forward to meeting you all soon.

The Reception team.