

William Cassidi Church of England Aided Primary School



Reception Handbook
2024/25

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

We would like to welcome you and your child to the Reception class at William Cassidi C of E (Aided) Primary School. The next year is an exciting one for you and your child, as they start their first year in full-time education. For some children this is their first experience of education outside their home, and for others it is a continuation of their learning from Nursery.

At William Cassidi Primary School, we view education as a continuum that starts at home and continues throughout the school years and beyond. We want to work in partnership with you to ensure that your child learns and develops to the very best of his/her ability.

This booklet is designed to answer some of the common questions asked at this time. We are really looking forward to meeting you and your child.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. K. Howell
Reception Class Teacher
EYFS Lead

Mrs. S. Mohan
Reception Class Teacher

Our Aim

At William Cassidi we aim to provide the highest quality care and education for all our children, thereby giving them a secure foundation for their future learning. We create a safe and happy environment with motivating and enjoyable learning experiences that enable children to become confident and independent. We value the individual child and work alongside parents and others to meet their needs and to help every child to reach their full potential.



The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework

All early years providers in England are required to meet the standards set out in the EYFS Statutory Framework. The aims and requirements stated within this framework shape our practice:

‘Every child deserves the best possible start in life and the support that enables them to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the early years and a child’s experiences between birth and age five 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 early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.’

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS Framework sets out four overarching principles:

- Every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured
- Children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**
- Children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/ or carers
- Importance of **learning and development**. Children develop and learn at different rates. The framework covers the education and care of all children in early years provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

Principles into practice

As part of our practice we:

- Help the children to develop positive relationships both with other children and staff
- Provide a balanced curriculum, based on the seven areas of learning in the EYFS
- Encourage children to try new experiences and help them to develop independence
- Promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice
- Provide early intervention for those children who require additional support
- Work in partnership with parents and within the wider context
- Plan engaging learning experiences, based on individual needs and interests
- Provide exciting activities, both adult-led and child-initiated
- Provide a secure and safe learning environment indoors and out



The Foundation Stage Curriculum

We plan an exciting and challenging curriculum based on our observation of children's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the early learning goals.

All seven areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are the **prime** areas:

Communication and Language

Physical Development

Personal, Social and Emotional Development



Children are also supported through the four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The **specific** areas are:

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design



These areas are further split into a total of 17 strands which form the basis of the EYFS curriculum.

How we deliver the EYFS Curriculum

The EYFS Framework sets out three 'Characteristics of Effective Learning', which underpin everything we do in our EYFS:

- **Playing and Exploring**

We provide opportunities for the children to explore and investigate the different areas of our setting, both indoor and outdoor. The children are encouraged to try new activities, develop their skills and find different ways of doing things.

- **Active Learning**

How actively a child engages in their learning will depend on how interesting or relevant a learning opportunity is to them. For this reason, we have flexible themes for learning and plan learning opportunities based around children's interests and needs. The children have lots of opportunities to learn independently, with a partner, as part of a small or large group and alongside an adult. This helps them to develop concentration, persistence and resilience.



- **Creating and Thinking Critically**

We provide lots of opportunities for 'thinking'! We use open-ended resources to encourage creative thinking and innovation. We understand that children learn in different ways and we work hard to create an environment which supports this.

Much of our EYFS curriculum is delivered using a play-based approach. The children have access to resources chosen specifically to help them to develop key skills. As children play, staff observe their understanding and interactions, and stretch and challenge them.

In Reception, we also have dedicated Literacy and Maths time each day. We follow the 'Success for All' Foundation Phonics programme to deliver a daily phonics lesson. The children learn letters and sounds, as well as how to read and spell simple words. Once your child can do this independently, they will start to read and write simple captions and sentences. The children also have shared reading and writing sessions each week, as well as dedicated story time each day.

We follow the 'Maths No Problem! Foundations' maths scheme which links directly with the 'Maths No Problem!' scheme followed from Year One onwards. Our maths scheme develops children's understanding of number and numerical patterns through a wide range of practical experiences, often linked to their play or interests. Your child will also learn number songs and rhymes, as well as how to form numbers.

If you would like further information on how the EYFS Framework is delivered in our setting, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Early Learning Goals

The Early Learning Goals summarise the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception year. There are seventeen in total, split across the seven areas of learning. You will find a copy of these in this pack.

Assessment

In the EYFS, ongoing observation and assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process. During their first few weeks in Reception, your child will work with a teacher to complete a statutory Reception Baseline Assessment, which informs us of your child's starting point. We will continue to make assessments throughout the year, usually by observing the children as they play. In addition to the observations we make at school, we would love to hear about what your child has achieved at home via our eSchools class page!

You are always welcome to come to speak to us about how your child is getting on at school and you will receive a written report each term. Additionally, Parent/Teacher Consultations are usually held twice per year. This is a great opportunity to have a look at your child's learning journey and to discuss their progress.

At the end of the summer term, we will complete an EYFS Profile for your child. The profile gives a well-rounded picture of your child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels (whether they are meeting expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels – 'emerging'), and their readiness for Year One. This profile is shared with you as well as with the Year One staff and the Local Authority.

Sharing Learning at Home

The best way to keep up to date with what your child is learning at school is by logging on to our class page on eSchools. Here you will find our class blog, photographs of what we have been doing and ideas about how to support your child's learning at home. If you don't already have a user name and password from Nursery, you will be assigned these once your child starts school in September. We also send home a class newsletter at the end of each half-term.

Rewards

Your child will receive 'jumps' on our rainbow for positive behaviour. Once your child has earned ten jumps, they may choose a small prize to bring home.

'Celebration Worship' is held every Friday. This is a celebration of all the amazing achievements that the children in our class have made. Each week, teachers choose a 'Golden Person' and 'Stars of the Week'.

Safeguarding and Welfare

'Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them.'

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

We adhere to the requirements of the EYFS Framework and work hard to create a high quality setting which is welcoming, safe and stimulating, and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. EYFS guidelines require each child to be assigned a 'Key Person' who parents can liaise with at school, either in person, by phone or through the home/ school book. A letter stating your child's key person will be sent home in September.

Home Time

In our pack there is a form for you to record the names of adults allowed to collect your child from school. Children leave school through the Reception Class door once an adult from your list is there to collect them. **We operate a password system so please ensure that all of the adults on your list know your chosen password.** If a child is not collected, they are taken to the main reception where we attempt to contact parents/ carers. The child will stay at school until their parent/ carer arrives to collect them. If all efforts to contact parents, guardians and carers from the contact list fail, social services will be contacted. It is, therefore, very important that we are informed if there is to be a change in who is meeting your child.

Children who go home on the school bus are put onto the bus by school staff. If your child normally takes the bus, but you are collecting your child on a particular day, please inform us. You can use your child's Reading Record/ Home Link Book for this purpose.

If your child travels to school by bus, the school escort will bring the children into the school playground. The children are then supervised until the beginning of the school day.

Health

Please record any health issues or allergies your child has on the forms provided.

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, please phone the school as soon as possible to let us know.

The school phone number is 01740 630 270.

Medicines

If you require us to administer medicine to your child, you will need to complete a medicine form. These are available from the school office. Please note that we can only administer medicine which has been prescribed by a doctor.

First aid

The EYFS staff in our school are first-aid trained. Should your child have an accident or sustain an injury at school, we will treat this as appropriate and inform you by note. We may also contact you by phone depending on the type or severity of the injury.

Food and Drink

Please record any allergies or dietary requirements your child has on the forms provided.

School dinners are provided free of charge for all children in Reception (and KS1). During the first few weeks, we will support your child with the lunchtime routine. After this, they will be supported by our lunchtime supervisors. You may wish to provide a packed lunch for your child instead, but please note that you need to inform us of any changes to your child's usual lunchtime routine.

Fresh drinking water is available to the children throughout the day; however, we recommend that your child brings their own (named) water bottle to school each day. Please note that only water is permitted.

During the day, children are also offered a choice of fruit at playtime and milk (or water if they prefer).

Toileting

We recommend keeping a change of pants in your child's bag. If your child has an accident at school, we can provide spare clothes for them to change into and support them with getting changed, if required. Please ensure that you complete the toileting paperwork in your pack. If your child has frequent accidents, we may ask to work with you to develop a plan to support their needs, and ask you to pack additional spare clothing in your child's bag which can be used in the event of an accident.

Supporting children with SEN and/ or disabilities

Children who have Special Educational Needs and/ or disabilities are individually catered for. We have ensured that our setting provides a wide range of resources which stimulate children's learning, including specific resources matched to children's needs. We meet with the parents/guardians of children with SEN and/or disabilities to ensure that we can meet individual needs, and sometimes a care plan may be put into place depending on the need.

Staffing

EYFS Leader: Mrs. Howell

Reception

Mrs. Mohan – Teacher Mrs. Howell – Teacher

Starting School

Your child may feel both excited and nervous about starting Reception. To support them, we have two visit days planned. We would love your child to attend both days if possible.

Once your child starts school in September, the emphasis will be on settling your child in so that they are happy and excited to come to school! We have a set routine which the children will learn in the first few weeks. This will enable them to be more independent and to understand expectations. The children will also be very busy helping us to add things to our classroom to make it 'theirs'.

A Typical Day in Reception

By the time the children have been in school for a few weeks, we will hopefully have established a clear routine. Whilst every day in Reception is unique, most days will follow the structure below.

Reception children start school at 8.45am. We would be grateful if you could ensure that children stay on the main playground (rather than in our outdoor area) before school. Registration is at 9.00am - we like to make a prompt start to the day – there are lots of exciting things to do!

The day usually begins with a bit of exercise to get us ready for learning! This is followed by a phonics session, initially focused on learning the sound each letter makes and how to read and write simple words. They work in small groups or 1:1 with a teacher to develop their phonics further and they also spend some time playing inside or in our outdoor area. This is followed by direct, whole-class teaching, which is usually Literacy or topic-based and may be linked to a story, a theme, a special object or something the children have shown particular interest in. Following this, the children have further opportunities to play and explore, and work with an adult, either individually or with a small group.



Towards the end of the session, we have a short Dough Disco or Squiggle Whilst You Wiggle session, aimed to develop finger muscles.

Children have lunch between 11.55am and 12.55pm. The children eat their lunch in the hall and then they have a playtime outside afterwards.



In the afternoon, we usually have a Maths lesson, where children learn together and then in small groups. They might develop their maths skills through play, or complete a page in their workbooks. There is also more time for playing and exploring.

Each day, children are offered a choice of fruit and milk or water.

Before home time, there is time for children to reflect on their learning as well as dedicated story time.

Each week we also have I.C.T. time (using equipment such as iPads), and at least one P.E. session.

Uniform

The school encourages uniform to be worn as it believes that it is practical clothing for an active, messy classroom, and that it strengthens a child's sense of belonging. We advocate the use of a short sleeved polo shirt, as it is easier for changing for P.E. and for such activities as painting, water or cooking.

Shoes with laces are impractical for the Reception class age group – few children can cope with tying their own laces and they do occasionally cause accidents.

Identity labels on each item are important, as much of the uniform is identical and this can lead to items becoming mixed up or lost. We advise that you buy a set of clothing labels for your child's uniform and P.E. kit. Some items of uniform can be embroidered with your child's initials – please see the order form for details. Please ensure that all items of clothing, shoes and bags are labelled.

We have a no jewellery policy. Should you wish to have your child's ears pierced, we would appreciate it if this could be done at the beginning of the school holidays so that the earrings can be removed at home before your child returns to school.

P.E.

On their transition days, your child will receive a blue draw string PE bag. We ask that your child brings their named PE kit into school at the beginning of the school term. It is preferred to keep P.E. clothes at school, as they can be required at any time. P.E. bags will be sent home at each half term for washing.

The bag should be big enough to contain a full P.E. kit which comprises of:

- Navy t-shirt
- Navy shorts
- Trainers (and socks if applicable)
- Plain navy tracksuit top and bottoms for colder weather.

Please ensure that everything is CLEARLY NAMED.

We would be grateful if you could work with your child to practise getting changed, putting on their coat, etc. prior to September.

Book Bags

In Reception, children often have lots of things to bring home! You can order a blue book bag when ordering your child's uniform. This should be brought to school every day. Your child will be provided with a plastic packet which they need to bring to school every day. This will contain their Reading Record/ Home Link book. You are welcome to record your child's interests and achievements in there, as well as any books that your child has enjoyed sharing with you and any messages for us. These packets and books are checked at lunchtime each day, but please phone the school office if your message is more urgent. We will put any letters or messages into your child's packet. Please note that we do not check book bags.

If you have any other queries or questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

Thank you,

Mrs. S. Mohan
Reception Teacher

Mrs. K. Howell
Reception Teacher