



# Welcome to Reception



**@Highlees**  
**#EYFSHighlees**



## **Welcome**

We hope that your child is looking forward to starting school at Highlees Primary School. We have written this booklet to help both you and your child as he or she starts school. We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to school and if, after reading this booklet you have any queries, please do not hesitate to discuss them with us. We are very proud of our Early Years Unit and hope that your child will be happy and excited to be joining us.

## **Our Aims**

Starting at school is a very important milestone in your child's (and your) life. We aim to provide a safe, stimulating and positive environment to help and support your child at this crucial stage in their development.



## **The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

‘Early Years’ refers to the educational provision and learning opportunities provided for children aged 0-5 years.

At first glance, it can appear that the children are ‘only playing’. However, the best Early Years Education is based on the understanding that whilst children are playing, they are engaged and learning. Your child will begin their learning journey by working on a range of practical and play based activities. During the day there will be a mixture of adult initiated, child initiated and adult led learning opportunities as well as whole class, small group and individual activities.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is based on four themes and seven areas of learning.

These are:

## **1. Communication and Language**

- Listening, Attention and Understanding - Speaking

## **2. Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

- Self-regulation - Managing self - Building relationships

## **3. Physical Development**

- Gross motor skills - Fine motor skills

## **4. Literacy**

- Comprehension - Word reading - Writing

## **5. Mathematics**

- Number -Numerical problems

## **6. Understanding the World**

- Past and Present - People, Culture and Communities. - Natural World

## **7. Expressive Arts and Design**

- Creating with Materials - Being Imaginative and Expressive



Each learning area has a number of stages which children work through; with the Early Learning Goals being the end of year assessment in Reception. We create a safe, welcoming and engaging learning environment where children become 'confident' to try new activities. We support and nurture children in their learning, we celebrate 'mistakes and praise resilience' and children who 'have a go!'. We foster an 'I can' attitude. All experiences are planned to ensure that progression is made and speech and language is promoted through children discussing experiences across their time in Reception.

### **Assessment in Early Years**

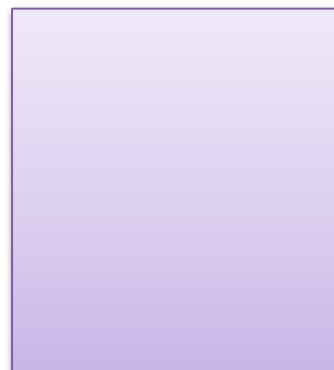
Within the first few weeks of starting Reception your child will be part of an extensive assessment programme. This will be mostly through on going, informal observations as well as the Governments own baseline assessment that all schools follow.

## Meet the Staff

**Mrs Vicki Cadman**  
Early Years Lead and  
Teacher for EY unit.



**Mrs Michelle Frith**  
Early Years Teacher.



**Mrs Lorna Cole**  
Teaching Assistant



**Miss Veronika Kielar**  
Teaching Assistant



## Our Reception Day for Term 1

### AM Session

**8.40am:** Reception doors opened.

**8.40-9.am:** Children enter the classroom, self-register and choose an activity.

**9am– 9:10am:** Registration, morning board and exercise time.

**9.10 – 9.30am:** Phonics in small groups.

**9.30 – 11.15am:** Children access free flow learning including snack and adult led activities.

**11:15 – 11:30am:** Thematic learning/ time to talk session.

**11:30am** Get ready for lunch.

**11:45 – 12:30pm** Lunch

### PM Session

**12:30-12.45pm** Dough disco/ learning letter join handwriting movements.

**12.45-1.15pm:** Maths in small groups

**1.15pm-2.45:** Children access free flow learning and adult led group time.

**2.45-3.00pm:** Song and story time.

**3.10pm** Doors will open for collection.

## Handy hints to help your child settle in to Reception

**There are many practical ways in which you can help your child before starting in Reception.**

**These include:**

- Talking to your child in a positive way about school in general, and what to expect.
- Introducing “school vocabulary” e.g. “classroom”, “playground”, “register” etc
- Helping your child to become more independent in activities such as dressing, putting their coat on, wiping their nose, going to the toilet, hand-washing, eating etc.
- Start getting them ready to eat lunch at school i.e. using a knife and fork independently or opening packets by themselves.
- Making sure that your child knows what is his or hers (lunchboxes, clothing etc) and making sure that it is clearly named.

**Clothes:**

- Help your child become independent, let them get themselves dressed even if they get muddled up.
- **Velcro shoes are best**, children can manage these by themselves.
- Getting changed can be very hard and clothes get muddled up please label absolutely everything, including shoes! We are not responsible for un-named lost clothing.
- **Please provide your child with a pair of wellies** so that we can access our outdoor area all year round. Children will get messy – it is fun and part of the curriculum!

**Phonics:**

- We teach the children the sounds of letters **not** letter names to start with. Alphablocks on CBeebies use the same pure sounds that we teach:  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/alphablocks-watch>
- Please make sure you use lower case letters when writing your child’s name e.g. Fred, Bobby, and Joe, not FRED, BOBBY and JOE.

### **Home Time Procedures**

At home time children are supported by two key adults. One adult to supervise your child, and one adult to supervise the exit door. The adult on door duty is responsible for calling your child's name.

We politely ask you to be patient waiting for your child, as we call a few children at a time to allow your child to leave safely. We also ask that if you need to speak with a member of staff that you wait until all the children have been called, again, this ensures that all the children remain safe and that you have the full attention of the staff member.

For your child's safety we will ask for a list of named people who have your permission to collect your child from school and we ask that you let us know if your child will be collected by a person different from those already stated. We use Tapestry to share information. If you have photographs of family and friends who will be on your child's contact sheet, then please upload a photo for us. It helps us know who is who.

### **How can you be involved in school life?**

We appreciate that no-one understands and knows your child as well as you do, therefore we place great importance on home and school links.

We actively involve parents in their child's learning and include these contributing to each child's learning journey.

We use an online profiling system called 'Tapestry' in which you can upload photos of your child onto a secure system for us to see. Across the year we will post on Tapestry asking for photo's, pictures, items to support your child in school as we just love to see what wonderful things your child has been doing at home.

Parents' evenings are held twice a year and these are an excellent opportunity to discuss progress as well as new targets. We will offer workshops and class events to show you what your child does during their time in school including stay and play sessions. We will continue to keep you informed of what is happening in school by using Newsletters, Twitter, Facebook and Tapestry.

## Reading and Phonics

### Phonics

Being able to read is the most important skill children learn during their early schooling and has far-reaching implications for lifelong learning, confidence and well-being. High quality phonic teaching is the prime means by which, we teach children how to read and spell words.

**At Highlees, we follow the 'Little Wandle' phonics programme.** We will hold a phonics workshop in the Autumn term. Our Reading scheme, Big Cat Collins, supports early reading and synthetic phonics. The books match the phonemes that the children are learning in their phonics lessons.

### Home Reading



At Highlees, we expect our children to read at home every day. Additionally we will also encourage children to share a 'Reading for pleasure' book once a week. Reading at home is a vital part of education as it builds a wealth of vocabulary as well as supporting retrieval and inference questioning. When your child reads in school we will record this in their reading record book and would like you to do the same when they read or share a story with you at home.

Tips to support your children with reading at home:

- Set reading time aside and ensure you have no distractions when reading.
- Ask your child to choose a book as it will support children's recommendations and the idea of book talk.
- Discuss the illustrations, as this will support inference questioning.
- Encourage your child to talk about the book.
- Make it fun!

### School Uniform

**The school will provide your child with a book bag, you do not need to purchase this.**



- **White T-shirt Logo/plain, Red Jumper or cardigan logo/ plain**
- **Black jogging bottoms or leggings**
- **Black trainers – Velcro**

The Reception uniform reflects our busy and hands on curriculum. The children will be out in all weathers. Please ensure that your child has a coat and wellington boots in school every day.



- Your child may get wet in the water tray or might not make it to the toilet in time, so spare clothes in their bag is essential.
- We encourage all Reception children to go to the toilet across the session. Although children that are just getting used to a new setting may have occasional accidents. We are happy to assist your child where necessary. Please ensure they always have spare clothes in a named PE bag on their peg.

**Please name everything, especially shoes!**

**If you do not name your child's clothing, we cannot return this to you.**

Uniform can be purchased at;

<https://www.chromasport.co.uk/shop/highlees-primary-school>

### **What should I bring to School?**

The Early Years Foundation Stage team place great emphasis on the value of home-school links. We encourage children to become independent once they have settled into their new learning environment.

### **Weather appropriate outdoor clothing**

Warm waterproof coats, hats, scarves in winter.

Sun hats and apply sun cream before school during the summer.

Please be aware that your child will have continuous access to our outside provision during all weathers.



**Spare clothes in a named bag that can be left in school.**

This is essential for all children, even if you know that your child no longer has toileting accidents. All children will have access to water, mud and paint every day!

**A Book Bag-All children** will need a book bag. This is to take home reading for pleasure books, school reading books, key word cards and any other information.

**The school cannot accept responsibility for any toys or personal objects that are brought into class. It is an impossible task for staff to keep track of all toys that enter the classroom, please encourage your child to leave their things with you at the door, or place in their book bag**

**Snack**

In Reception children are introduced to new and exciting foods, often linked to our topics or a celebration. We use snack time each day to promote eating a healthy and varied diet. The children have a mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack of fruit and milk which they are encouraged to make themselves.



Please sign up to the Cool Milk scheme on line;

<https://www.coolmilk.com/>

**Children in EYFS are entitled to free milk up until their 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday.**

**Lunchtime**

Meals are freshly cooked daily, with a variety of meat and vegetarian selections and meet the required national nutritional standards, providing a varied and balanced diet for the children, through both hot food and packed lunch options.

You will need to use our online system to book school lunches. You will be given a username and password before your child starts school.

All children in Reception are entitled to a free school meal, both a hot or cold food choice.

### **Children bringing a packed lunch from home.**

Lunchboxes must contain healthy food options such as:

Sandwich, crackers etc

Cheese strings

Yoghurt

Fresh fruit

Please do not include sweets or fizzy drinks, thank you.



### **Attendance Policy**

Families, parents and children, learn quickly about the expectations of school attendance. It is important that it is given priority in daily life. Regular and punctual attendance enables children to succeed, develop social relationships and to develop effective life skills. The importance of regular attendance is explained on the home visit and forms the basis of the Home School Agreement. All parents and carers will be expected and encouraged to ensure their child achieves the maximum attendance possible. We understand that there are times when circumstances impact on attendance. Staff will support parent/carers in cases of difficulty by discussion of strategies or timings.

We also acknowledge that children are susceptible to childhood illnesses. If your child is suffering from a sickness bug then they can return to school after a period of **48 hours** from the last time they were sick. Parents/Carers must inform the office if a child will be absent.

**If your child is ill or unable to attend school for any reason please ring the school office on:**



[01733 264294](tel:01733 264294)



**Please leave a message on the school answer phone if you are unable to speak to someone.**

Monitoring attendance at school will support the safeguarding of children. Unexplained absences, holidays during term time and attendance that falls below 95-90%, will trigger actions by staff. Staff will contact parents and a meeting will be held to support children and families in ensuring children are in school on time, every day.

### **Behaviour and Relationships**

We acknowledge that children within the Early Years Unit are at different stages of development and understanding. All children have different experiences of relationships and behaviour. It is important to us that all staff support children as individuals and work with families to enable children to be resilient individuals, able to build relationships and work in the environment in a positive way.

We support children by acknowledging and allowing the feeling of the child, but ensuring we set the limit of acceptable ways of displaying the feelings. We see it as our role, to support our children, to understand their own emotions and the emotions of others, plus find positive ways to show how they are feeling. We believe children are able to cope better with emotion if they understand it, plus it supports self-regulation that will support them for the rest of their lives. We want to make it clear we do not condone unacceptable behaviour and the safety of all children is paramount.

It is important that all staff are fair and consistent with their expectations and of behaviour, and are also consistent when dealing with behaviour.

We use a three step approach Steps do not necessarily go in the same order each time, all children and situations are different.

The level of understanding a child has is an important factor when dealing with behaviour. Communication is adjusted accordingly, such as body language, tone of voice and level of language being used. We value the importance of supporting other children to understand the communication behind any behaviour to help them recognise why a child may have reacted in a certain way. We believe this helps children build positive relationships with others and helps them to recognise the feelings of others, plus help them to feel safe and be able to cope with unpredictable behaviours.

Acknowledge the feeling of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name it</li> <li>• Sympathise with the child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You look a bit cross/sad</li> <li>• I don't like seeing you cross</li> <li>• I wonder what made you so cross/sad</li> <li>• I wonder whether you are sad because ..... is playing with.....</li> <li>• It's not nice when you can't have something, it can be difficult to share</li> </ul>
Set the limit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it clear it is acceptable to feel cross/sad/angry/, however the way in which they chose to show it was not acceptable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I know you are sad that .... is playing with.... , but we can't hurt our friends.</li> <li>• I know you are cross about the train, but we don't throw toys, it could really hurt someone</li> <li>• I know you are really sad today, but we can't throw things-you might hurt somebody, or even yourself, we don't want that.</li> </ul>
Problem solve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider positive ways of showing emotion</li> <li>• If another child involved, how can we make them feel better?</li> <li>• Find a solution to the problem</li> </ul>	<p>I wonder what you could do when you are cross next time? Go play somewhere else? Go outside and run around? Stamp your feet?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor _____, she's hurting now, I wonder what we could do make them feel better? Give hug, checks she is alright?</li> <li>• If you can't have the bike now, maybe ask if you can have it next? Find another bike? Do something different whilst you wait?</li> </ul>

When children become very frustrated and clearly unable to move on from a situation, staff will move the child away in order to help them to calm down. A staff member will remain with the child until they are calm. If the child is able, the adult might share a book with them, play a game or carry out an activity to enable the child to refocus their energy elsewhere.

Strategies that involve shouting, humiliating children or punishment are not used at Highlees. We recognise the importance of supporting and working with our children to understand the boundaries in school, at home and the wider world in order to build successful and positive relationships. It is important to us that children understand why a boundary is in place and why certain behaviours are not acceptable.

On occasions where the child is unable to calm down or repeated poor behaviour choices are made which involve threats or actual violence to others, then the child will be given thinking time to calm away from the other children to prevent further harm.

We acknowledge that some children find attending school with other children a challenge, sharing resources, being away from home, along with barriers to development in the form of language can cause children to become physical and/or display challenging behaviour. It is important to us to understand the triggers for certain behaviours to be able to successfully support that child to understand how they are feeling, help them to understand the impact their behaviour has on others, and consider alternative reactions. Behaviour is often used as communication and we will use records of incidents to help support the child in being able to communicate in more appropriate ways.

To help us with our understanding and to enable us to best support them we will complete a behaviour chart that allows us to see patterns in behaviour and gain an insight into what that child is trying to communicate to us through their behaviour. Communication with parents is essential to make sure that effective ways forward are planned. This may be in the form of daily feedback from your child's key person, or from time to time will involve the SENCo, Family Support Worker, Head of school or Executive Principal. If challenging behaviour is seen consistently then staff will speak with parents about making referrals to support services and pre-five health team. We recognise that it can be difficult to accept that your child is finding certain aspects of school difficult, however we want to assure you we want to work with you and your child to enable them to be happy and thrive. Being happy and secure in the setting enables development in all areas.

## Ofsted

The school is rated **Good** and you can use the following link to view the Ofsted report.

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50011590>

We are really looking forward to you and your family  
being part of  
Highlees Primary School.

