

West Melton Primary School



Off to a Good Start

The good quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures that children get off to a good start'.

Ofsted March 2010

'...children make good progress in all areas of learning.'

Ofsted October 2012

'Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and are well prepared for Year 1.'

Ofsted April 2014

Information for Parents of Children in Foundation Stage



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This booklet is to provide parents and carers with important information about our Foundation Stage class and our procedures. If you would like further information on any matter relating to your child, please speak to a member of staff. We are always willing to help.

School Information:

Session Times: **Foundation Stage One** - 8.30am - 11.30am
Or
-12.00pm - 3.00pm

Foundation Stage Two - 8.45am - 3.05pm

Foundation Stage One: Children enter FS1 in the September following their 3rd birthday. All children are entitled to a minimum of 3 terms in FS1. FS1 is advisable but optional.

Foundation Stage Two: Children start FS2 in the September following their 4th birthday; this used to be known as 'Reception'. FS2 is compulsory.

Welcome to Foundation Stage

We want your child to be happy in our Foundation Stage class. We also hope that you as parents/carers will feel welcome and that you will become involved in the work of the class. We want to build on the different experiences and the many things that you have already taught them.

Starting school is an important step in a child's life. We understand this and our aim is to provide a secure, stimulating and caring environment for all our children, where they learn through play, developing at their own pace and gaining confidence in their own abilities.

By providing a wide range of carefully planned, quality learning experiences we aim to ensure that all children will:

- Continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them
- Learn new skills
- Gain in confidence and self-esteem and move towards independence

What Happens When My Child Starts School?

Children are admitted into Foundation Stage the term after their 3rd birthday. They will spend approximately one year as an FS1 pupil attending school mornings/afternoon only (see session times). They will start school full time as an FS2 pupil in the September after their 4th birthday.

Towards the end of the term before they start, you will be invited to spend time in the foundation unit with your child. This provides you with an opportunity to meet the staff and discuss any concerns you have before your child starts school. This gives your child an opportunity to meet the adults who will be looking after them and ensure there are some familiar faces for them when they venture into the 'big school' for the first time. It also gives your child the opportunity to become familiar with the foundation stage environment and their classmates.

You will be informed of your child's entry date.

It is a good idea to prepare your child for school by getting them used to spending time with other adults, and by talking to them about the types of activities they will be able to do in school. It is also a good idea to make sure your child is toilet trained - if your child has any problems with this, please make sure that staff are informed so that an appropriate care plan can be arranged.

What Will My Child Learn at School?

The curriculum designed for 3 -5 year olds (children in the Foundation Stage) is based on Stages of Development (age-related in months) leading to Early Learning Goals

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

To give all our children the best opportunities to develop their personal, social and emotional skills, we include:

- Opportunities for children to work alone or in groups
- Development of independence skills e.g. dressing
- Positive imagery in books and displays
- Opportunities to give positive encouragement to children
- Positive role models by adults in school

Communication and Language

To give all our children the best opportunities to develop their communication, language and reading and writing skills we include:

- Speaking and listening activities with adults and each other
- Opportunities to share and enjoy a wide range of books
- Opportunities to see adults writing and for children to write for themselves e.g. shopping lists etc.

Mathematics

To give all our children the best opportunities develop their mathematical skills we include:

- Different activities which develop counting, sorting, matching, working with numbers, shapes, space and measures
- Activities which develop mathematical understanding through stories, songs and games

Understanding the World

To give all our children the best opportunities for developing their knowledge and understanding of the world around them we include:

- Activities which support children's work in science, history, geography, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT)
- Activities based on first-hand experience that encourage exploration, observation, problem solving, prediction, critical thinking and discussion

Physical Development

To give all our children the best opportunities for effective physical development we include:

- Quality time for children to use a range of tools to develop fine and gross motor skills and co-ordination, e.g. pencils, scissors etc.
- Space, both indoors and outdoors, to take part in a range of physical activities, e.g. ball games, tricycles etc.

Expressive Arts and Design

To give all our children the best opportunities to develop their creative skills we include:

- Opportunities to develop creativity and expression through music, art, dance, role-play and imaginative play
- Opportunities to use and explore resources from different cultures
- Time for children to explore, develop ideas and respond to these by using all their senses

What Do I Need to Know?

Children in Foundation Stage must be brought to school and collected by parents/carers or another designated adult (ie. over 16 years of age.)

On arrival at school:

Children enter school through their classrooms doors. When you arrive at school, please take your child into their classroom via the Foundation Stage entrance and make sure one of the staff knows he/she has arrived.

At home time:

Please be on time to collect your child from school. Young children need the security of knowing that you are waiting for them, and this avoids any unnecessary upset or worry.

If an emergency arises which causes you to be delayed, please ring school (see School Information) and let us know. We will then look after your child and reassure them until you arrive. If someone different is collecting your child, you must inform the staff beforehand. It is also a good idea to make sure your child knows too. We will not let your child leave the premises with anyone we do not know or have not been informed about.

Foundation Stage One Absence:

As a matter of courtesy, please inform the school office if your child is or is going to be absent from school.

Foundation Stage Two Absence:

All absences from school by children of compulsory school age are monitored closely both by the school and by the Educational Welfare Service, and absences without explanation are investigated. If your child is absent from school, you must inform the school office.

Illness:

Please consider very carefully whether it is appropriate for your child to be in school if they are ill. Young children are not happy in school when they are ill, and whilst good attendance is vital, it is also important that germs are not spread amongst other

children. This is particularly important with sickness and diarrhoea; children should be clear for at least 24 hours before returning to school, as it spreads very quickly amongst young children.

Please make sure we are fully aware of any medical conditions your child suffers from (e.g. asthma, diabetes, allergies etc.).

Obviously, it is better that children do not have to be given medicines during school hours. However, if your child does require any medication whilst in school, and you are unable to come in to administer this yourself, you must provide us with written permission, and include written details of the name of the medication, the dosage and the time it is required.

Head lice:

Unfortunately, incidences of head lice are a fact of life wherever children spend a lot of time in close proximity to each other. However, all parents/carers can help minimise this problem by regularly checking their children's hair and taking the appropriate precautions. Please remember that we in school are not allowed to check your child's hair for you - it is your responsibility.

School Uniform:

All children wear school uniform or clothing in the school colour (blue). Items of uniform with the school logo can be purchased and/or ordered from the school office or plain items can be purchased from high street retailers and supermarkets.

Clothing for Activities:

Many of the activities we do in Foundation Stage are quite messy! Although we provide aprons, we do ask that children do not come to school in their best clothes.

FS2 children have PE lessons twice a week. For this they need a PE kit in school consisting of a pair of black shorts, a white t-shirt and a pair of plimsolls.

To encourage children to become independent, it is also important that they have clothes which they can manage by themselves. Belts, buckles, dungarees, laces are very difficult for small children to manage, especially if they leave going to the toilet until the last minute!

We do have a small stock of spare clothes in case of accidents, and we ask that you wash and return these straight away if your child has to borrow any.

We are not allowed to administer sun cream to your child (in case of allergies) so it is important that your child is appropriately protected in the summer to prevent sunburn. Please ensure that shoulders are covered by clothing and a sunhat is provided for wearing outdoors.

Toys:

Children do not need to bring toys to school. Please leave them at home where they are safe from loss or breakage.

Snacks:

Children in Foundation Stage are provided with free milk every day until they reach the age of 5 and every child will be provided with a daily fruit snack.

We ask you to give 50p per week towards providing the children with additional snack for the afternoon.

Parents in Partnership

Joining In With Activities:

In our Foundation Stage class we like you to continue to be involved in your child's education and we actively encourage you to come in the classroom.

You are very welcome to stay at the beginning of your child's session and share the activities with them. This helps your child to settle into the routine and also shows the range of activities we provide for your child's development.

When your child has settled, you may like to get involved in helping us in other ways. There are many ways in which you could do this - sharing books and reading stories, making dressing-up outfits and dolls clothes, cooking and baking, sharing a special interest with us, accompanying us on a visit or walk. Please let us know if you are interested in joining in.

Sharing Information:

As parents/carers you will be formally invited into school on three occasions over the school year to discuss your child's progress and achievements. These take place at the start of your child's time in school, midway through and at the end of their time in the Foundation Stage class, before they move in to Year 1. During these meetings, it is very useful if you can inform staff of the progress your child has made at home in activities they have done out of school. It is also a good time to discuss any concerns which may have arisen at school or home regarding your child's progress in learning.

Foundation Stage staff also take the opportunity to speak to you often about your child's day to day activities and progress, and appreciate it when parents/carers take the time to do the same.

All children in school also have a Pupil Learning Log to support children's learning and to help teachers and parents to communicate on a regular basis.

How to Help Your Child Learn:

We actively encourage parents/carers to continue with relevant learning and play activities at home. Here are some ideas of what you could do:-

- Share books regularly - read stories and talk about them
- Have pencils and paper available, and praise and value any marks they make
- Count everyday objects e.g. buttons on a coat
- Match objects e.g. cutlery to the number of people
- Encourage use of correct language e.g. tall, short, empty, full
- Encourage your child to share and take turns
- Sing songs and nursery rhymes

Home/School Link Book

To get to know your child better and improve our partnership with you as parents we have created a Home Link Book. The Home Link Book is a scrap book which enables you to share and record your child's experiences away from the school environment. Please record any experience you feel shows your children's personal, social, emotional and academic development, this could be a short recount of an event, picture/writing, certificate or photograph. Any information you can provide is vitally important to getting to know your child and to gain a larger picture of your child's development.

We also ask that you take the time to complete the homework tasks set, and use the Learnign Log to let us know how your child has coped with the work.

Keeping your children Safe

We take the safety of your children extremely seriously, therefore

- Entry to school is monitored; gates are kept locked
- All staff and visitors to the school are vetted before being allowed access to your children
- Clear procedures are in place regarding child protection; any concerns will be investigated as per current legislation, including advice sought from or referrals made to Social Care as necessary

Last but not least, try to give your child:-

- Time to listen
- Time to talk and share experiences and ideas
- Time to play

A child that is given time, will reward you by being interested and motivated and will want to learn.

Childhood is a very important and special time. We hope that your child will be happy at West Melton Primary School, and that you soon feel part of our school community too.

Remember - parents/carers and staff working together play an important role in getting children 'off to a good start'.