



GATEWAY SCHOOL  
GREAT MISSENDEN



Welcome to Reception

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## Head of Early Years & Key Stage 1

You can contact our Head of Early Years and Key Stage 1 using the following email address:

Mrs Suzanne Kemp: [skemp@gatewaysch.co.uk](mailto:skemp@gatewaysch.co.uk)

You can see the Year Group Resources in the Parent Area on the school website: <http://gatewayschool-bucks.co.uk/login>

# Welcome

Reception at Gateway School offers a smooth transfer to more formal learning, from the Preschool setting, while still allowing children time to discover and learn through play.

Through play, children can explore, develop and represent learning experiences and practise and build up ideas, concepts and skills. In order to ensure a smooth transition between your child's nursery and Reception years, please make sure we have a copy of your child's nursery record. This enables us to focus on your child's personal next steps in learning.

The Reception year is the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage. There are seven areas in the Foundation Stage Curriculum.

## The Prime Areas

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

## The Specific Areas

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

The Foundation Stage Curriculum has been designed to support a rounded approach to the individual child's development. All the areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child initiated activities. As the children move through Foundation Stage there is a gradual move towards teacher led activities and lessons.

## Communication with Parents

A weekly newsletter is emailed to parents on Friday afternoon with reports and photos from each year group. A weekly communications bulletin is also emailed every Friday lunchtime with dates and reminders for the forthcoming week. You can also follow Gateway School on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Working with parents is paramount to the children's learning. We listen to what you tell us about the things your child enjoys and can do. This helps us plan interesting experiences and opportunities for each child.

Reception parents are welcome to bring their children into class for the first couple of weeks. However, the children themselves are responsible for unpacking their bags and hanging up their coats. After the first two weeks, please let your child enter the front door and shake hands independently. If you need to speak to the class teacher urgently they are available before school in the classroom at 08.25 - 8.40 or on the patio at 15.30. Please be aware that staff are also responsible for children at this time. If you wish to have a 1:1 meeting with staff please contact the office to arrange this, or email staff directly.

Your child will be given a "Marvellous Me" book, this will be used for homework. Your child will have a reading record book which is also our home school communication book. Please write in here when you have read with your child. Please also feel free to write in messages for your child's teacher to keep us up to date with how they are or if there has been a change of circumstance which may be worrying them. We may use the book as a means to communicate with you if we know we won't get to speak to you directly. Whilst we make every effort to be proactive in contacting parents where we have concerns, children will often mention things to their parents which they have not told their teachers. While some of these problems may seem small, they are often significant to the child and it is useful if we are made aware of them.

## Tapestry - an online Learning Journal

Tapestry is our online learning journal for home and school. Staff record children's progress and activities using tablet devices and PCs. Parents can view their child's journal on mobile devices and on their home computers, and can make observations of their own using a secure login system. This helps us build a picture of the child's achievements.

## Celebrating Children's Achievements

We celebrate each child's achievements by nominating them for a 'My Best' certificate. We recognise where children have demonstrated our ASPIRE values and celebrate their success in assembly.

## Early Years Curriculum

Further information about the Early Years curriculum can be found online:  
<https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>

## The Foundation Stage Curriculum

### Personal, Social and Emotional Development

During the year the children are supported in their personal, social and emotional development throughout the day; through providing a caring, secure environment we endeavour to build each child's self-confidence, social skills and a positive disposition to learn. Each child has a key person (the class teacher) who is responsible for their day to day care, to provide support for their emotional well-being and to nurture their ability to work as part of a group, considering the consequences of words and actions for themselves and others.

## PE and Sport

Reception has a PE lesson four times a week in the autumn and spring terms taught by specialist teachers. These provide the children with opportunities to enjoy the freedom of large-scale movement: running energetically, skipping and hopping, crawling and climbing; developing coordination, balance and body control. Children enjoy using a variety of equipment such as bats and balls, the parachute, hoops, quoits and bean bags to develop manipulative skills. The children also enjoy the physical challenge of the jungle gym and the climbing wall. Confidence in movement is developed in the controlled environment of the gymnasium using wall bars, benches, beams and floor mats. As well as physical progression, we also give attention to cognitive, emotional and social development by creating inclusive, play based learning environments.

## Swimming

Reception start their weekly swimming lessons in the summer term and will focus on water confidence and enjoying movement through the water. The children need a named school swimming bag, a named towel, a named costume and a named hat. Arm bands are provided. They will also have three PE lessons a week in addition to their swimming.

## Physical Development (Fine Motor Skills)

Fine motor control is developed through painting, drawing, cutting and pre-writing exercises. Playdough is also used to develop fine motor skills and an awareness of texture. Activities using the sand and water trays encourage the development of motor skills and spatial awareness. Construction toys, Lego, Magna Tiles, Mobilo and junk modelling, ensure gross and fine motor development. Fine motor skills are further refined by the use of jigsaw puzzles and iPads.

## Communication and Language

### Speaking, Listening, Attention and Understanding

During the year, listening and speaking skills are developed in a range of situations. Children are taught to take turns in a conversation, to show respect for others' opinions, to ask and respond to questions. Group discussions, including questions and answers, as well as shared stories and poems require their attention and appropriate responses. House poetry, celebration assemblies, the Christmas production and the end of year performance give

the children experience of speaking in front of a larger audience.

To practise these skills, weekly Show and Tell sessions enable the children to talk about an object of interest brought in from home.

This could be something to illustrate weekend activities (such as a guide book or leaflet, ticket, photo or souvenir) or something to reflect the child's interest (something they have collected on a walk, a badge or a certificate).

### Literacy

We listen to stories daily; some children like to bring in books to share with the class.

### Phonics

Phonics is taught four times a week in small fluid groups, using the Read Write Inc. programme. Using a number of kinaesthetic, auditory and visual activities in whole class or group situations, children learn how to build a variety of three and four sound words. We also learn the appropriate letter formation for each sound. More information on this and how to pronounce the sounds, can be found in the parent section of the school website -

<http://gatewayschool-bucks.co.uk/login>

### Guided Reading

We use books from the Read Write Inc. scheme as well as real books, for group activities, to develop both oral comprehension skills and writing. We request that you don't buy the Read Write Inc. books to use at home.

### Individual Reading

Initially, children take home sound cards and then move on to taking home a reading book from the school reading scheme. The process of reading involves decoding words, building fluency and developing comprehension. It will usually take a young child three readings of the same text to become proficient.

Once fluency is achieved, discuss the story: talk about the characters, their behaviour, the events, the setting. Help your child to suggest different characters they would like to introduce into the story or perhaps they can think of a different ending. Please initial your child's reading record book when you have heard them read and comment if you wish.

## Library

The children have a timetabled library lesson and are able to borrow a book to share at home.

## Reading lists

We would like to direct you to the Book Trust website

<http://www.booktrust.org.uk/> for up to date reading lists for your children.

Book Trust is the largest reading charity in the UK. Their website provides reading lists which are categorised carefully into age bands or interests. For example; there is a list entitled, 'Great Picture Books for Dads to Read Out Loud'. There is a short précis of each book and both a reading age and suitability age. The website has many other features which you and your children will find interesting: 100 Best Books, Best New Books (updated monthly), Tips for Reluctant Readers are just a few.

Please provide a named plastic wallet for reading.

## Writing

Having a purpose for writing, which is real and of interest to children helps them to understand why learning to write is important. Through teachers modelling, children develop their written communication and are taught its purpose. Teachers read and respond to the children's mark making to validate their early attempts at writing. Throughout all seven areas of learning, children are invited to write, whether it is during role play, writing about weekend news or labelling their drawings. Children learn to verbalise their ideas with partners, as talk for writing is vital to clarify their ideas. They develop their understanding of the conventions of composition, spelling, punctuation and handwriting within their own work. (Please refer to the school website for letter formation mnemonics.)

## Mathematics

Children in Reception follow the Pearson Powermaths scheme. This provides a wide range of adult-led, group and free choice activities. Linked to the learning are a variety of computer based programmes. These are used either by each child individually or as a group teaching tool. Children's learning is extended through the use of practical activities and personal exercise books to provide challenge, where the teacher caters for individual learning.

Throughout the year, all children will be extending their knowledge and

understanding of numbers to 20 and beyond. Concepts such as counting forwards and backwards, recognising and ordering numbers, and simple addition and subtraction will be continuously reinforced, as will the correct formation of numerals.

The ability to solve mathematical problems will be developed through a number of practical situations: recognising and creating sequential patterns, sharing or sorting objects using a given criteria and handling money in role-play situations. Children will collect information, make bar charts and learn how to interpret these.

Measuring will involve using arbitrary and standard units such as hand spans and centimetres. The concept of time is taught through the cycle of weeks and months. Analogue time is introduced with the focus on the hour and half hour. The children will explore the properties of two and three dimensional shapes. Positional language will also be extended.

(Please see our school website for ways to support your child at home.)

## Understanding the World

### Topic

Through the six, half-termly topics: Journeys, Toys and Play, Dinosaurs, Animals, Space and Beaches and Seas, the Reception children continue to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding which help them to make sense of the world around them. In Topic, ICT, RE and aspects of the specialist subjects, the children are given the opportunity to explore and question in order to enhance their learning.

### Science

Our Science activities provide a variety of opportunities for children to ask questions, and to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world effectively. Children will learn about similarities, differences, patterns and change in relation to places, objects, materials and living things - the focus being practical learning. Science-based activities will also support the development of the children's mathematical and literacy skills.

Over the course of the year Science will be linked closely to our topics. For

example, when we study Space, we will be looking at the importance of the Sun for plant growth. During our topic of Beaches and Seas, we investigate properties of sand, water, shells and pebbles. We also learn about water and sun safety. Forces are our focus during our Journeys topic. Using a variety of ramps and toy cars, children observe the differences that a variety of resistant materials make.

## Computing

Children in Reception learn to recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes. During their weekly ICT lesson children use iPads to access different apps. The teachers introduce a new app each week, some of the apps used include 'Puppet Pals', and Google Earth. They also begin to look at programming using 'Beebots'.

## Expressive Arts and Design

During the year the children are encouraged to express their creativity in a number of different ways. Role play enables the children to express themselves and explore a range of imaginary experiences. This also provides opportunities for them to develop their negotiating and sharing skills. They enjoy specialist taught Art lessons and experiment using various painting techniques such as printing, using rollers and paint flicking. During Art, children also explore technology skills, the children work with a specialist teacher exploring 3D work through modelling with clay or play dough, construction toys and junk modelling. In their own paintings and models they explore the use of colour, texture, shape and size.

Reception children have a music lesson as a class once a week and a singing lesson as a year group. We reinforce the concepts introduced in Nursery (loud, soft, high, low, fast, slow, following a beat, different timbres of instruments).

Action songs, rhythm games and using tuned and untuned percussion instruments are used as a platform to expand musical understanding and vocabulary. Children are encouraged to sing and/or play instruments independently in front of the group when they feel ready.

Children have access to materials and resources to support their creative choices during free play periods.

## French

French is taught twice weekly. The children are encouraged to enjoy their introduction to foreign language learning and other cultures. They are encouraged to develop good listening skills and mimic good pronunciation whilst absorbing some of the new and different sounds of the language. Lots of songs, rhymes and games (combined with actions, flashcards and regalia) are used to initiate a basic vocabulary with some questions and answers. Main themes include numbers, colours, animals, body parts, food, weather, clothes, days and months.

## Differentiation

Our planning provides opportunity for each child to learn. For example in Maths some children might be working with numbers to 5, others to 10 and some to 20. Our aim is to help each child take their next step in learning and make progress.

## Special Needs

A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if he or she has learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for him or her to learn than most other children and young people of about the same age.

Many children and young people will have special educational needs of some kind during their education. Early years settings and schools can help most children overcome the barriers their difficulties present quickly and easily. A few children and young people will need extra help for some or all of their time in Nursery and school.

So special educational needs could mean that a child or young person has:

- Learning difficulties - in acquiring basic skills
- Social, emotional or mental health difficulties - making friends or relating to adults or behaving properly in an early years setting or school
- Specific learning difficulty - with reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- Sensory or physical needs - such as hearing impairment, visual impairment or physical difficulties which might affect them in an early years setting or school

- Communication problems - in expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying
- Medical or health conditions - which may slow down a child's or young person's progress and/or involves treatment that affects his or her education

Children and young people make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best. Teachers take account of this in the way they organise their lessons and teach. Children and young people making slower progress or having particular difficulties in one area may be given extra help or different lessons to help them succeed.

You should not assume, just because your child is making slower progress than you expected or the teachers are providing different support, help or activities in class, that your child has special educational needs.

If it is identified that your child has a Special Need, staff will take a graduated approach that recognises that children and young people learn in different ways and can have different kinds or levels of SEN. So increasingly, step-by-step, specialist expertise can be brought in to help the early years setting or school with the difficulties that a child or young person may have.

The approach may include:

- An individually-designed learning programme
- Extra help from a teacher/tutor or learning support assistant
- Being taught individually or in a small group for regular short periods
- Drawing up a personal plan (EHC), including setting targets for improvement, regular review of progress before setting new targets

Staff will include you in any discussions, and consider your views in making any decisions about how best to help your child. They will keep you informed about your child's progress.

Please speak to your child's key person if you have any concerns about your child's learning or progress.

# Forest School

Reception spend a portion of each Thursday learning outside. The curriculum will include maths and literacy activities as well as activities to develop our understanding of and familiarity with nature, with entertaining challenges such as den building. Sessions will be fun, educational and health promoting. Please ensure your child has the red waterproof suit and a pair of wellington boots for Forest activities. Wellies should stay at school all term.

## Equipment

Children are not required to bring in their own pencils, pens or pencil cases to use during lesson time as these are provided at school.

Children will need to bring in their red book bag each day.

Children will need...

### **In my Red Folder:**

- A plastic reading folder
- A clear water bottle
- A healthy snack

### **In My Kit Bag:**

- A complete change of clothes (including socks)
- A named carrier bag
- Wellies
- Trainers
- Art Apron

Kit bags should be brought to school on Monday morning, with all items clearly named. They will be sent home at the end of the week. Art aprons will be kept in school and sent home at half term.

## Uniform

School shoes need to be smart flat black shoes which can be fastened securely with velcro or a buckle (no slip-on shoes or plimsolls.)

To arrange a fitting for uniform, contact Louise Blissett by emailing [louise@copperfieldsclothing.com](mailto:louise@copperfieldsclothing.com) or you can order new uniform through <https://copperfieldsclothing.com/>

## Homework

Children will receive 10 minutes of homework per night Monday-Thursday consisting of:

- Reading or pre reading (sound identification) activities
- A literacy / numeracy activity sheet for the weekend

Your child will bring their reading book home every night of the week. Each Friday your child will bring home a literacy and numeracy activity to share with an adult. This will be based on one of the themes or activities the children will have been looking at that week. We hope that your child will be excited to share some of their learning from school, and that the home activity will give you some insight about what they are learning. Children have a week to return the work.

Please refer to the school website for lists of High Frequency words and websites to support your child's learning.

## Trips and Visits

We have three main trips a year which are linked to our topic. These may include Bekonscot Model Village, Mead Open Farm, and a trip to Shortenills Environmental Education Centre. We will also have visits from members of the local community. Please let us know if you have a skill or interest you could share with the children.



## Risk Assessments

A daily risk assessment is carried out by early morning staff to ensure the safety of the children.

## Food and Drink

The kitchen provides pupils with a home cooked, well balanced four weekly menu, which can be accessed on the school website. The pupils will pre-order their lunch at home with you.

Children in Reception eat lunch in the hall with their class teachers. If a child has specific allergies or dietary needs please let us know and we will accommodate these.

Milk, crackers and fruit are provided at morning break. Children are allowed to bring their own healthy snacks for break and after school. Chocolate snacks, crisps and anything containing nuts are NOT allowed. Children staying for after school care from 4.45pm are provided with a snack.

## Profile

At the end of Reception your child will be given a Profile Report covering all the areas of the Early Years Curriculum. Please speak to your child's class teacher if you have any questions about your child's report.



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