

# Horsley C of E Primary School



'A House' by Nancy Walton, age 5

## A Guide to Reception

*July, 2021*

# Welcome to Horsley C. of E. School

## Welcome from the Headteacher

Horsley C. of E. (V.A.) is a very special place. The school is one of the oldest in Gloucestershire with a rich tradition that dates back to the mid eighteenth century. We enjoy strong ties with the church (the school is located within the grounds of St. Martin's) and the distinctive Christian ethos of the school underpins all that we do.

We are a small village school – there are around 100 children on roll - and the strong sense of community and family are an essential part of the school's identity. Our dedicated and committed team of teachers and support staff work tirelessly to provide the very best opportunities for all the children. We aim to provide a supportive, nurturing and inclusive environment where children feel safe, happy and valued and where they all have every opportunity to fulfil their full potential. We value the creative arts and sports, and provide a broad range of enrichment opportunities, enabling children to express their sense of self.

For us, the Early Years are the most important years of a child's life. In recent times we have invested considerably in our Early Years provision. Ensuring that children have the best start possible is key to a successful primary education.

## The EYFS Team



Miss Tilya Kibble, Class Teacher  
2020/21



Mrs Jo Everett, Class Teacher  
Maternity Cover 2021/22  
Early Talk Boost Trainer  
Emotional Literacy Support  
Assistant (ELSA)



Miss Sophie Leonard  
Teaching Assistant

## The Typical School Day

- 8.55 am **School starts.** Children should be brought in between 8.45 and 8.55 am; the day starts promptly. Please bring them via the decking gate. No children should be on site before then, as supervision cannot be guaranteed, but please make sure your child is on time to start the day smoothly. If you arrive after 8.55am please go to the front of school entrance and complete the late sheet found in the school foyer. Please, however, encourage your child to be punctual.
- 10.30 am **Mid-morning break.** The children are escorted up to the playground, where members of staff are on duty. A snack is given afterwards, consisting of fruit or vegetables provided by the school, and a drink of water or milk.
- 12.15 pm **Lunchtime.** All infant children are entitled to a free school meal, so you can choose whether you would like your child to have a hot meal or alternatively provide a sandwich box from home. We encourage parents to provide a healthy lunch if bringing in from home, which should include fruit/veg and not too much sugar/crisps.
- The lunchtime supervisors liaise closely with the class teachers so that any cause for concern or congratulations can be shared.
- 12.45 pm **Outdoor play.** This is supervised by lunchtime staff.
- 1.15 pm **Afternoon lessons begin.**
- 3.15 pm **School finishes.** Please wait for your child in the outdoor area (decking). If you are going to be late, please contact the office to ensure your child is not distressed. Any child who is collected late will be cared for in the school foyer or classroom.



## **Autumn Term Phased Entry**

In term 1 your child will be receiving a phased entry into school life at Horsley. The format for the first few weeks is as follows:

Week commencing: Mon 6<sup>th</sup> Sept - Home visits to be arranged.

Week commencing: Mon 13<sup>th</sup> - Fri 17<sup>th</sup> Sept - Mornings (no lunch) 8:45 - 12:00

Week commencing: Mon 20<sup>th</sup>, Tues 21<sup>st</sup>, Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept - Morning and lunch (8:45 - 1:30)  
Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> and Fri 24<sup>th</sup> - Full Time (8:45 - 3:15)

Week commencing: Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Sept onwards – Full Time (8:45-3:15)

This will give the children time to get used to new routines and life at Horsley. By the end of week three they will be quite tired. However, most children soon adjust to school life.

In the first few weeks you are welcome to come in to the class to briefly help settle your child, prior to registration and 'carpet time.' After a few weeks, however, we would encourage you to 'drop' your child at the decking gate and try to leave your child to hang up their coat, deposit their sandwich box/water bottle (if appropriate) and settle on their own, if they can. This can be hard for parents, but it helps to foster greater independence from early on.

The class teacher (Mrs Everett) and Teaching Assistant (Miss Leonard) are available most mornings for a brief chat to discuss any concerns prior to registration.

## **Sickness, absence and punctuality**

It is essential that your child arrives punctually. Persistent poor punctuality will result in a fine in line with our school policy.

If your child is sick and unable to attend school, please telephone the office by 9.30am, or earlier if possible. Select option one on the menu and leave a brief message stating your child's name, class and reason for absence. If your child has sickness or diarrhoea, please ensure they do not return to school for 48 hours. For Covid related absence, please visit the school website:  
<http://www.horsley.gloucs.sch.uk/covid-19.html>

In line with LA guidance and school policy, holidays during term time cannot be authorised. Should exceptional circumstances necessitate absence from school, e.g. to attend a funeral of close family member, please complete an absence request form. Forms are available from the office.





## Learning

The children follow 'The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum' and work towards Early Learning Goals.

### The main areas are:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication and language (speaking and listening)
- Physical development (fine, using fingers, and gross motor control as in PE)
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the world
- Expressive arts and design

There is plenty of emphasis on promoting personal, social and emotional development in the reception year. Children are taught to share and socialise, respect themselves, others and their surroundings and develop a positive sense of who they are. These are the foundations upon which their learning can excel.

Most of the learning during reception is done through structured play. Every half term we have an overarching topic to fit the children's interests. Some examples are 'All about Me', 'Once Upon a Time' and 'Superheroes'. There are also many opportunities for children to explore their own interests and ideas through child-initiated play, as exploring individual areas of interest is a key part of the EYFS Curriculum.

In the classroom we have an art area (paints, glue, different kinds of paper, junk materials and collage materials), a writing table (paper, pens, envelopes, stickers, paperclips etc.), an ICT area (interactive whiteboard, computers, iPads, calculators, programmable toys) and a funky fingers area to promote fine motor control. We regularly update our role play area to new and exciting themes to fit our topics, along with a book corner that offers a range of story and non-fiction books for children to browse, that link closely to our topic. Children have the option to go outside each day onto the secure decking area where they can explore with sand, water, PE equipment, large construction materials, mud kitchen and other resources. Some sessions are based in the playground where children have access to bikes and scooters, large outdoor play equipment and the natural area.

Children are encouraged to choose their own resources and develop their own projects as they play (e.g. making things they are interested in, role playing a story, mark making/writing the sounds we have been practising). Adults lead activities, e.g. mark making or exploring numbers, to extend the children's learning by asking questions or making suggestions; they observe and record what children are doing. Adults also hear children read, play games, and carry out more formal work, e.g. a set writing task or practising counting and calculating.

We try to discourage toys being brought from home into school as they can get broken and lost but children may bring in things related to the topic (we send details of this at the beginning of term). Where possible we plan from the children's interests, which is exciting and motivating for them.

Several outings take place to enhance our topic work, including walks in the local area, and we also have visitors into school to talk about health, safety and real-life skills.

### **Phonics**

Most days begin with a phonics session. We begin by learning initial sounds so that we can very quickly begin to blend the sounds together to read simple words. In this session the children play games and write letters and words on whiteboards. We will send home sounds, words, reading books and short homework activities, as we find that when children get into the habit of practising most days, the benefits are huge. We try to make the activities practical and fun and suggest short ten minute sessions at this stage. We plan to invite all of the parents in to a phonics workshop during the first term to give you the opportunity to observe how phonics is taught within our school and to hopefully pick up some useful tips to support your child with their reading at home.

### **Reading**

As well as the class book corner there is a fantastic school library from which you are welcome to borrow. Feel free to come into school at the end of the day and choose a story book to take home. This should be signed out and back in, when returned. Do encourage your child to keep the library tidy.

In class we have a colour coded set of reading books that follow our phonics programme. The children will bring these books home to read with you, that are suitable for their current level of reading, as well as sounds and words to learn. We cannot emphasise enough how important regular practise is. A reading incentive in Foxes works really well- we have a system whereby the children receive a small prize for every 5 times they read at home.

### **Writing**

Do encourage your child to explore mark making (e.g. creating shapes with their finger in sand, paint, etc.). Children learn to write at different rates and some children can find this quite difficult. We work with the children at their pace. As they go through their Reception year they will begin to write complete words and eventually simple sentences. Opportunities to write on topics of interest can be explored at home too. As the year unfolds we will encourage correct pencil grip and letter formation, but for some children this can take some time so please do not stress over this.

## **Maths**

Exploring and enjoying number is very much entwined within the EYFS curriculum. Children will have a deeper understanding of numbers to 10 and will be able to verbally count to 20 and beyond. Emphasis is placed on understanding number (i.e. the numerocity of number). By the end of the year the children will typically know and understand phrases such as 'one more than', 'one less than'. They should have a practical understanding of half, such as being able to identify half of a pizza. We encourage parents to reinforce these key ideas as they are introduced.

## **Physical Education**

During the year, PE takes place in the playground, school hall or village field. Children take part in gym, dance and games activities to build on gross motor skills. They also have lots of opportunities to develop fine motor controls through funky fingers.

Children also enjoy regular outdoor learning sessions to build their resilience and independence.

All children will need a PE kit. This consists of a yellow T-shirt, green shorts and slip-on daps (plimsolls). A more detailed school uniform list has also been provided in your pack. Please ensure all clothing is clearly labelled and sent in a small bag. The kit should normally be left in school and is sent home for washing in the holidays.

## **The Arts**

Throughout the school day there will be opportunities to make and create with all manner of materials. From early on in the year, the children can use a variety of mediums such as paints, clay and textiles. Opportunities to sing nursery rhymes are woven into the school day; for example, singing action or number songs. We incorporate Makaton signs to support our language development.

## **Collective Worship**

As a Church of England School, collective worship is an important part of daily life. Collective worship will take place in the church or in the class. At the beginning of the school Reception year, most collective worship takes place in class led by the class teacher, and will centre around Bible stories and the value of the term (e.g. courage, trust, etc.) The children soon attend Congratulation assemblies on Fridays to celebrate our successes.



## **Baseline Assessment**

In the first few weeks, the staff at Horsley will undertake a practical assessment of your child (called a baseline). This, along with the information provided by your child's nursery/pre-school (where relevant) will help to give us a picture of where your child is in their learning.

## **Reporting on Pupil Progress**

The children are assessed informally throughout the year. There are regular opportunities to be provided with information about their achievement, including parents' evenings.

At the end of the academic year you will be given a formal report of your child's progress and attainment. Attainment is categorised as 'emerging' or 'expected' in the early learning goals (see above). Most pupils typically receive a 'good level of development' (GLD) by achieving 'expected' in most of the key areas identified above.





## Communication

The children will sometimes receive letters to take home. These will be put in your child's book bag – please check it every day. Much communication, however, is sent electronically. Please ensure that the office has your most recent mobile phone numbers for regular text updates. The website is a key means for communication. Where possible, we minimise paper-based communication.

The school office is a mine of information. Julia and Lynn (Tues) are 'on hand' to provide you with support. Please note that the office is not managed full-time. We regularly pick up messages left on the answer machine and will endeavour to return calls as soon as possible.

You are welcome to email the office at:

[admin@horsley.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@horsley.gloucs.sch.uk) or [head@horsley.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:head@horsley.gloucs.sch.uk) these emails will be picked up daily. We do not encourage email dialogue with other staff. You can catch Mrs Everett at the beginning or end of the school day for a brief chat.

## Uniform

We expect all children to wear school uniform; this gives them a feeling of belonging to the school team. We would be grateful if you would encourage your child to adhere to the school uniform policy. Shoes are warmly encouraged (as opposed to trainers). Hats can be worn outside but should be taken off when in the school building and church. Please see the separate list detailing uniform items which can be ordered on line, by phone or by visiting Batemans, Stroud (01453 764320). The uniform policy can be viewed on our website.

Please do not allow your child to wear open-toed sandals in the summer (health & safety). During the summer months, please ensure you apply sun cream to your child before school, and also a sunhat that can live at school.

## Helping Your Child's Confidence and Independence

You can help your child to be confident at school by ensuring that they can do all of the following:

- dress and undress independently prior to starting school
- take off their coat, gloves and hat and hang up each item
- fasten their shoes
- go to the toilet independently
- wash and dry their hands and face
- open and close their lunchbox and drink bottle
- tidy and clear away toys
- use a handkerchief/tissue efficiently
- share toys and take turns
- act confidently and responsibly
- use cutlery to cut foods
- speak in full sentences/ ask a simple question (e.g. Can I go to the toilet please?)



## **Essential Equipment**

- reading book bag – provided as a gift
- water bottle (please take home daily and bring to school every day)
- lunch box (if not having a hot meal) and drink container
- PE kit in a labelled bag
- a raincoat
- a pair of wellies
- sun hat

All the above must be clearly named please.

## **Payments**

Payment is requested prior to educational and recreational trips and for some after-school clubs. All payments can be made online using 'ParentPay' our secure payment service. Details for setting up an account will be sent to you in due course.

## **Concerns or Worries**

In the first instance, always see your child's class teacher or teaching assistant. If you are not happy or are still concerned in any way, do make an appointment to see the Head teacher who is available to discuss any aspects of your child's education.

## **Peer Pastoral Support**

When starting in reception the children are getting used to mixing with lots of different children. At Horsley C of E the older children in the school are very caring towards the younger ones, and strong relationships exist in school. Each reception child is given an older "buddy" who helps to look after them in the playground, especially while they are settling in. We are fortunate to have two Emotional Literacy Support Assistants who can help with wellbeing across the school.