



## EYFS Information Booklet



Growing together, learning together



### Welcome to The Willows Family!

We are delighted you are joining our school and want you to feel welcome and part of our school family. Care is at the heart of our school values. Our school ethos is based on a nurturing environment where we strive to always make sure our children feel safe and secure. In order to learn effectively children must first feel settled and happy in their environment, our aim is to make your child's transition into our school family as smooth as possible.

Our most recent OFSTED report recognised this stating:

*'Pupils enjoy attending this school and are overwhelmingly happy. They value the school's welcoming nature. Pupils shared that the best thing about the school is that they can be themselves. Everyone is treated fairly and with respect.'*

### School readiness

To help your child prepare for school life here are a few things to practice over the summer:-

- Wash and dry my own hands
- Wipe my own nose
- Put on/ fasten my own coat/shoes.
- Use the toilet and wipe myself
- Be away from my parent/carer, knowing they will come back soon
- Use a spoon, knife and fork
- Drink from a water bottle/ open cup
- Open my own lunch box and try to open packaging on my food.
- Ask an adult for help
- Follow simple instructions
- Share and take turns with others
- Recognise my own name
- Enjoy listening to stories and rhymes.
- Sing nursery rhymes
- Use please and thank you

## The First Day

We know that starting a new routine can be daunting for both adults and children and we will work together to make this as smooth as possible. Please be reassured that your child may be a little anxious initially or even have a few tears and this is natural on the first few days.

In order to help your child with their new routine please spend time preparing them by practicing getting ready for school in the days before they start.

- Try on the uniform
- Do a walk to school
- Talk about what will happen on their first day
- Show them where they will go into school and where you will collect them from.

To support your child's separation from you into school be clear and use positive language (both verbally and with your actions) For example;

- Give your child a hug/ kiss and say goodbye.
- Tell them it is time for school and to have fun
- Reassure them by telling them who will collect them.
- It is important that you don't stay after you have said goodbye, this tells your child you do not feel sure about leaving them and your child will pick up on this anxiety.

We will always phone you if they do not settle and will work with parents to provide extra support where needed. Please talk to a member of staff if you need any help preparing your child for their first day, we are here to help.

Nursery parents take their children into the classrooms to settle them in an activity and then leave. In Reception parents leave their children at the EYFS gate, where they will be greeted by the EYFS team. Children in Reception gain independence by organising themselves and their belongings.

At the end of the day children should be collected from the EYFS playground at 3.15pm. (Please note we open the gate for collection from 3.10pm to allow parents who need to collect older siblings' time to get to the other collection points). The children can only be collected by adults (18 or over) who have been authorised by you. If you wish someone else to collect your child you must send in a written letter or email. All adults collecting children from EYFS must give the password when asked by a member of staff (even parents) without this we cannot release children.

## The School Day

### Nursery

Nursery sessions - 8.45am - 11.45am and 12.15pm - 3.15pm  
If your child stays for the full day they will need a packed lunch.

### Reception

The Reception Day starts at 8.45 am and ends at 3.15 pm

Lunchtime: 11.45 am – 1.05 pm

Reception children all receive a free school meal at lunchtime that is chosen at home using an online system (details available from the office)

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance at school is important to support your child's learning, if your child is absent please email the school office. It is also very important to children that they arrive on time each day so that they can be welcomed and introduced to the learning for the day with their friends. A calm settled start to the day makes school life even better.

## School Uniform



All our School uniform and accessories can be ordered online at [www.myembroiderysupplies.co.uk](http://www.myembroiderysupplies.co.uk)

You can also contact them directly via the contact form on the school website.

The PTA also runs a second hand uniform shop – please contact Mrs Pashley via the school office.

We would like all children to have a book bag and a separate drawstring bag containing spare clothes (including underwear and socks). The children will be using the outdoor environment to develop their learning and we ask that you provide a pair of wellington boots and waterproof trousers (available from the link above) to be kept in school in order to allow continuous access to our outdoor area whatever the weather. Please send these items into school on your child's first day.

**PLEASE label everything!** You would be amazed how easily children can lose their shoes, water bottles and clothes, even vests! There are links on the school website for places you can buy labels/stamps and raise money for the PTA at the same time. Please ensure wellingtons and shoes have a label in both feet and if possible a named peg on the wellington boots.

**Reception only** requires a PE kit, yellow polo shirt and green/black shorts or tracksuit bottoms. We will inform you which day PE kit is needed when this begins and children can then wear this all day with trainers. A clearly named water bottle filled each day with water, we will refill but please send it to school filled each day (water only please).

## A Day in Early Years

No two days are the same in Early Years and every day is a fresh start with new and exciting learning opportunities. All children are different and learn in their own unique ways, some love to be outside, enjoy exploring and being imaginative on a large scale, others like to be inside being creative and prefer quiet activities. There is no right or wrong way to learn and at The Willows we encourage children to be themselves and learn in their own way.

A day in Nursery or Reception will involve a small number of whole class short direct teaching sessions followed by extended periods of time in our continuous provision (discovery time) where children can choose where they play either inside or outside. During this time adults interact with children to extend their understanding through questioning and conversation. In Reception children will also work in groups on occasions to read and for more focus tasks and this increases through the year. More information about our curriculum will be sent out in September.

For further information on what to expect in EYFS see website

<https://foundationyears.org.uk/files/2021/09/What-to-expect-in-the-EYFS-complete-FINAL-16.09-compressed.pdf>

## Early Years Fund

Our curriculum is planned to be exciting and interesting and it is flexible to allow us to follow the interests of the children. Often we need to buy little extras to enhance the learning, for example, ingredients to make dough, cooking ingredients, extras to enhance a theme, special books, extra fruit etc. We ask each family for a weekly voluntary contribution of £1 or you can make a half termly donation if you prefer.

Payment details:

Account Name: The Willows Primary School

Number: 03114620

Sort code: 30 90 16

## Communication

We use an online system to share children's learning with parents, there is also a facility for parents to add comments and to send in photos or videos from home. In order to use this system, you will need to complete and return a permission form. If more than one parent would like access to the system, please both sign the forms and supply both email addresses. We also use this to post a weekly newsletter to inform parents about the activities and the learning for the coming week. There is also a regular school newsletter emailed to parents and more information on our school website.

We operate an 'open door' policy at the Willows so parents are able to talk to staff (with brief messages) during drop off and pick up. If you need to talk with staff for a longer period or in private, please arrange a meeting with the appropriate member of staff (email the office to make an appointment). We encourage parents to share any concerns/ changes to home life with us as early as possible so we can work to resolve matters and/or offer support.

All children in Reception are required to complete the government Reception Baseline within the first 6 weeks of starting school, more information will be sent to Reception parents in September. Staff make regular observations of children throughout their time in EYFS and use these to plan for individual next steps in learning. At the end of the EYFS the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) is completed for each child and a copy is sent to parents at the end of the school year.

Parents have the opportunity to meet more formally with the class teacher to discuss their child's progress at parents' evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms (dates to be confirmed) and receive a written report at the end of the school year.

## Meals and Snacks

All children in infant classes (Reception through to Year 2) are entitled to a free school meal. Please note Nursery children are required to bring their own packed lunch. School lunches are cooked on the premises and there is a range of choices. If your child has a particular dietary requirement the cook will happily speak to parents to confirm exact requirements. The meals are absolutely delicious as well as nutritious, and we are proud that the majority of children in school have 'school dinners'. Please note parents select children's meals in advance using an online system (details will be sent to all Reception parents)

If your child brings a packed lunch from home, we find it helps to keep to familiar foods at first and pack a quantity you know your child will eat. We promote healthy eating and ask you to support this in your selections. Please be aware we are a nut free school.

Reception and Nursery children are brought to the main school hall at lunchtime to eat in the dining room and are well looked after by the cooks and midday staff. We aim to make it a pleasant social occasion, encouraging quiet chat and good table manners. In addition, during the day, the children will be offered a piece of free fruit as part of the government's free fruit scheme.

## **Behaviour**

We encourage the children to have good manners, respect for others and the sense of right and wrong. Here are our school's Golden Rules which are introduced as the children settle in to the routines:

- Be friendly and polite
- Follow instructions the first time
- Look after personal and school property
- Walk around the school quietly
- Be kind and helpful to those in need
- Keep unhelpful hands, feet, objects and comments to ourselves
- Be honest

We reward positive behaviour as much as possible and use redirection and distraction if a child is having difficulties in following the rules. We would discuss any continuing problems with you and agree on an action plan.

**We can't wait to meet you and welcome you to our lovely school community!**