



The Willow Primary School Reception Parents/Carers Handbook

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Welcome to Reception at The Willow Primary School

**A time of excitement,
apprehension, joy and
nervousness.**

**We are here to support you
every step of the way.**





What does a typical year look like for a Reception aged child ?

(9 months of the year are spent in school and 3 months are holidays)

Autumn Term - Sept. to Dec.

(settling, very little carpet time/sitting down)

Spring term - Jan. to March

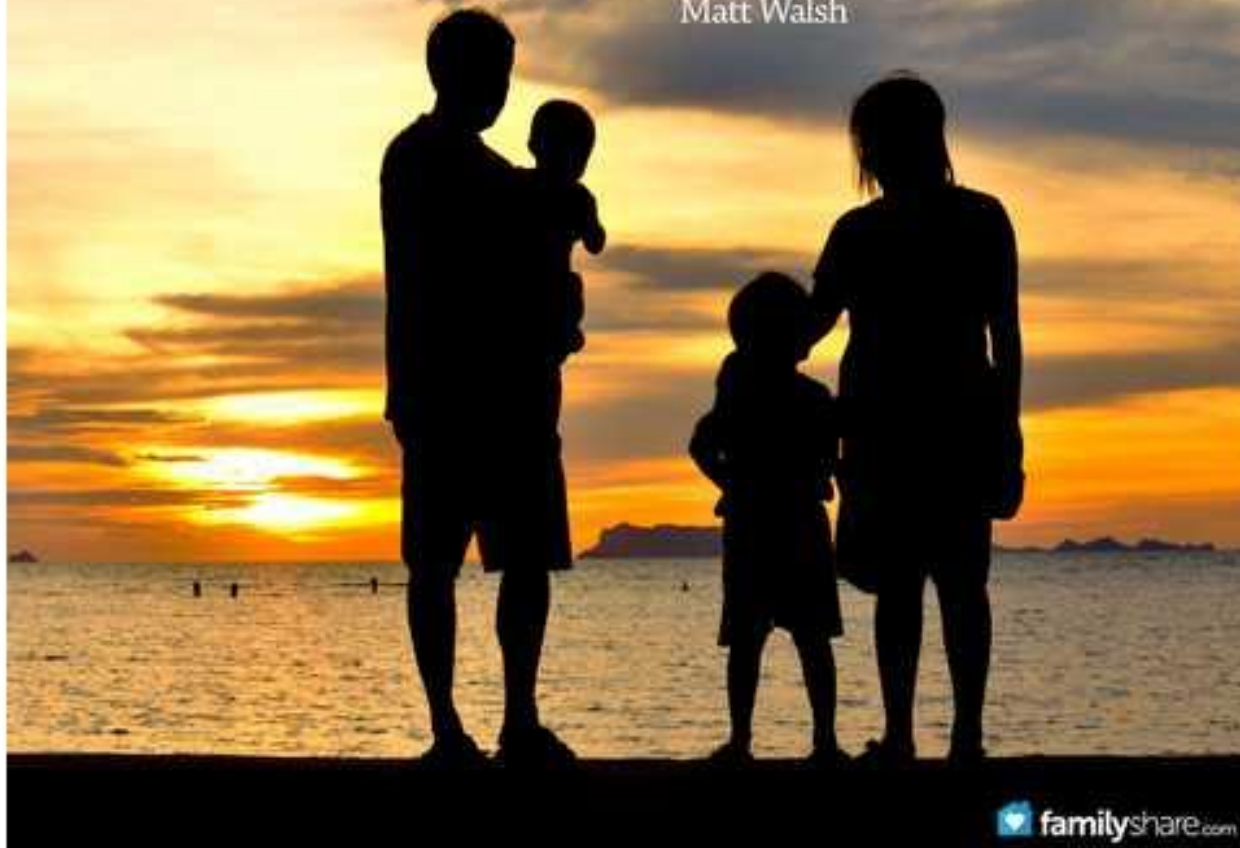
(attending assemblies/split into groups to learn reading/writing skills - Read Write Inc RWI)

Summer term - April to July

(preparation for Year one- the hardest transition)

Parenting is the easiest
thing in the world to have an
opinion about, but the hardest
thing in the world to do.

Matt Walsh





Preparing your child for school

By now you may have heard people saying to your child “Ooooh, you're starting BIG school” and your child will nod back. But they can't yet understand what actually happens at Big School



Here are some hints and tips to help make your child's transition to The Willow as easy as possible;

- * **Play Schools !** Remember how you used to play 'school' when you were little? Now is a wonderful time to revisit that old favourite. If you can ask another family member such as Dad or Granny to join the game, it's even better. Start with you being the teacher and ask everyone to sit on a rug or blanket. Most reception classes use the carpet for teaching time and story time, and the desks for individual or group activities. Your child might be reluctant, which is where Dad or Granny comes in...your child won't be able to resist Mum and Dad playing school!
- * **Reading Books and Watching DVDs** – Reading books and watching DVDs about starting school is a good way to teach your child about the reality of school life. We particularly like these books: **Starting School by Allan Ahlberg, Going to School, Usborne First Experiences, I am Absolutely Too Small for School by Lauren Child, Topsy and Tim Start School by Jean Adamson**
- * **Talk about school** – We suggest you don't do it in a "I want to talk about something serious" kind of way, but instead find a time when you are snuggling up together to talk about the emotional side of big school. Explain that the teachers are there to help and be your child's friend and that they can always ask *any* grown up at school for help.
- * Explain that the other children will all be new to Big school too.
- * Explain that you will be there at the end of your child's school day to talk about things
- * **Tell them that if anything goes wrong, or they are worried, you as the parent/carer can always go and speak to the teacher...that you *and* the teacher are working together to look after your child**
- * **Talk about when you were a little girl/boy at school.** The friends you made, the things you liked best, the games you played, the teachers you remember fondly. Maybe find a photo of you when you were at school.





And remember learning is not just for school...



- **Read to**, and with, your child as often as possible.
- Story CDs are also useful in helping your child to learn to concentrate.
- **Children love repetition** so do not be afraid to repeat books, rhymes and made up stories as often as you like (in any language).
- Encourage your child to look out for labels, shop names, road signs – play the first one to spot a shop such as Tesco! Watch out for the names on delivery lorries on a car journey. All this helps them realise that words show meaning.
- **Play “I spy”** with letter sounds rather than names.
- Make them aware of all **the different colours** in the world around them.
- **Set up a writing table – don't worry if they are not forming real letters/words, 'mark making' is an important first step toward s writing.** Let them use a wide variety of pencils, colouring pens etc and different types of paper. They could make 'pretend' shopping lists. Similarly children love painting, drawing and using modelling materials.
- **Cooking** is an excellent way to reinforce numbers – making small cakes allows them to see how a 'whole' (the mixture) can be divided up into smaller amounts. The change from sloppy mixture to firm cake helps them begin to understand scientific change.
- Help them to be familiar with **the different coins in your purse** - talk about the different colours and shapes.
- **Sort toys and everyday objects by size, shape, colour, weight etc so they begin to understand mathematical vocabulary.**
- Allow your child to **explore 'textures'** even if it means making mud pies!
- **Constructional toys and jigsaws** will all help their hand and eye co- ordination.
- Imaginative play is very important for a child's development and a **dressing up box** is a quick and easy way to help them.



Parents/Carers as Partners



We believe that children benefit most from Early Years care and education when parents, carers and school work together in partnership.

- * **Staff are always available for discussion (after school ideally) with parents/carers with arrangements being made for more private discussions should the need arise.**
- * Information provided by parents /carers about their children will be kept **confidential**.
- * **Regular newsletters** will be issued to keep parents/carers up to date with information.
- * Information regarding the children's activities throughout the day is always available to parents/carers on a daily basis **by verbal communication upon collection of the child.**
- * Arrangements are made for **termly parent/carers consultation evenings**, giving the opportunity for more formal discussions regarding children's progress and achievements.
- * If we should have any concerns about a child's well-being during the day every effort will be made to contact the parents/carers or their emergency contact.
- * We provide opportunities for parents/carers to contribute their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the school.
- * We encourage and support parents/carers to play an active part in the life of our school and help promote events such as: fundraising, social evenings etc.
- * **When possible, to further encourage children's development, parents/carers will be asked to send in objects from home, e.g. photographs, items for topic work.**
- * We inform all parents/carers of the systems for registering queries, complaints or suggestions. Parents/carers are requested to keep us informed of any changes to personal circumstances which may have an effect upon a child, e.g. change of address, telephone number, doctor, emergency contact.
Parents/carers are also requested to keep us informed of any circumstances which could have an effect on a child's emotional well-being, e.g. bereavement, separation or illness in the family.





INDEPENDENCE



It is not what you do for
your children,
but what you have taught
them to do for themselves,
that will make them
successful human beings.

Ann Landers

lovethispic.com



EATING, TOILETING, DRESSING AND SELF CARE





The Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage is based on four overall principles

- * *A unique child*
- * *Positive relationships.*
- * *Enabling environments.*
- * *Learning and development.*

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum sets out 7 areas of learning , 3 prime areas; Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Communication and language and 4 specific; literacy, mathematics, expressive arts and design and understanding of the world.





Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area of learning relates to how your child;

- * **Interacts** with others.
- * Deals with **emotions**.
- * Manages their own **personal hygiene**.
- * Views their own **behaviour** (and that of others), and recognises that this does have **consequences**.



How you can help at home;

- * **Play games** which encourage taking turns and sharing.
- * **Talk about feelings** and how different things make others feel.
- * Encourage your **child to dress themselves** and put their coat on independently.

THEN...AND NOW





EMOTIONS – Anger, Frustration, Annoyance

What do you do?

Are you aware of this dynamic?

How do you break the cycle?

Do you have one child who complies, one who doesn't?





COMMUNICATION – CHOICE, CLASSROOM

Change, accept, reject and always give a choice

*Providing young children opportunities to **use their voices, make decisions, develop ownership, and solve problems** are great ways to **bond with them**. It also:*

- *builds respect,*
- *strengthens community,*
- *invites co-operation,*
- *develops problem-solving skills, and*
- *Supports children's' human need for power and control.*



What should a child ready for reception be doing? Cultural, Age, Siblings?



Communication and Language

HI FIVE! The five principles of good communication in class are.....

This area of learning relates to how your child;

- * **Communicates** with the other children and adults, **both verbally and non-verbally.**
- * **Listens** effectively when appropriate.
- * **Responds** to what they have heard with relevant comments.
- * **Follows** instructions.



How you can help at home;

- * **Chat, speak and whisper to your child!**
- * **Explain new words** which your child hasn't come across before.
- * **Make play phones** from cups to encourage speaking and communicating.



Literacy

This area of learning relates to how your child;

- * Can **blend sounds** in regular words to read them.
- * Show an **understanding of what they have read**, or have had read to them.
- * Use their **phonic knowledge to write words** and begin to show an awareness of sentence structure.



How you can help at home;

- * **Share the books sent home** from school with your child (not just once!).
- * Take trips to the **library**.
- * Encourage your child to **write cards or messages to people**.
- * **Talk about stories**, what your child likes and dislikes about them.
- * **Talk about words** in the environment, such as road signs & symbols.



Mathematics

This area of learning relates to how your child;

- * **Shows an understanding of shapes**, both by naming and beginning to describe simple properties of them.
- * **Recognises, counts and forms numbers to 20.**
- * **Understands the vocabulary involved in simple calculations.**
- * **Uses their maths in problem solving.**



How you can help at home;

- * **Sing number rhymes**, such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- * **Play board games such as Snakes and Ladders** to practice counting.
- * **Ask your child to help you solve problems** e.g. I have 2 apples, but there are 4 of us, what shall I do?
- * **Cooking.** Uses lots of numbers.
- * **Look at numbers on doors whilst walking.** Get your child to tell you what number the doors have on them.



The Reception Day



- * Children and parents/carers can wait directly outside Reception classrooms from 8.30 am. At 8.45 am the teacher comes out and leads them into the classroom. **After school is an important time for parents/carers to share important information or arrange a more convenient time to discuss any issues. In the morning, only share urgent information so as not to delay the registration process.**
- * **Children sit on the carpet for registration and then have a short literacy session.**
- * They then **choose from a range of activities set up both indoors and out.**
- * Half way through the morning there is a **short break**, during which children **drink their milk (ordered through the school) or water.** They will also be given a free **piece of fruit or vegetable under a Government Scheme to encourage children to eat healthily and a bagel piece as part of our magic breakfast provision.**
- * After this break there may be a **numeracy or PE session.**
- * Lunch is from 11.45 – 1.15 pm. Children either have a hot (free) dinner or bring a packed lunch from home. They are **not allowed to have fizzy drinks, sweets or nuts** (especially important as we have children with nut allergies in the school) **in their lunchboxes.** You can also choose to bring them a hot lunch, or packed lunch each day but this must arrive by 11.30am at the main office.
- * In **the afternoon they learn about the world around them and take part in creative activities.**
- * Some activities will take place outside and it is important that the **children have suitable clothing for outdoor play e.g. a sun hat in summer and a jacket/coat in winter with sturdy shoes!**
- * Children are encouraged to **tidy up after each session.**

COMMUNICATION

you and your child/children





Parent/Carer Friday

Every Friday morning in Reception you are invited to join us for the start of the day. Sometimes this will be to read with your child, sometimes to share the work your child has been doing, (and their learning journey) and sometimes to get involved in the learning taking place. We have held *workshops about phonics, reading, writing and maths in these sessions* so please try to attend as many as you can to support your child's learning.





Notes/Questions?

