



# Welcome to **Reception**



THE  
ELMS

# The Elms Values



## Contents

<b>Welcome</b>	2
<b>Meet the Staff</b>	3
Heads	3
Class Teachers	4
Specialist Teachers	5
<b>Finding Your Way Around School</b>	6
<b>What To Wear</b>	9
<b>Lunch and Snack</b>	10
<b>EYFS Assembly</b>	11
<b>Specialist Lessons</b>	12
<b>School Trips and Visits</b>	14
<b>Events in School</b>	16
<b>Our Behaviour System</b>	17
<b>What is EYFS in Reception</b>	18
<b>Communication</b>	20
<b>Recommended Books for Starting School</b>	21



# Welcome

Dear Parents & Guardians,

We are very much looking forward to your child joining us in Reception, and welcoming you into our school community. This guide has been designed for you to share with your child before they join us in September. We have covered many aspects of school life, including what a typical day looks like in Reception, who the significant adults will be, as well as details of exciting things to look forward to. We hope that it addresses any questions that you may have, but if you are still unsure of anything or have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Starting school is a very special time for you and your child, our aim at The Elms is to make it as smooth and seamless as possible. We are really looking forward to working in partnership with you to make sure that your child flourishes in their learning.

Warmest regards,



Mrs Savage  
(Assistant Head EYFS and Infants)

## Meet the Staff



Head

**Faith Potter**

I have two grown up daughters and two very lively dogs so always have a reason to smile. I like swimming and hill walking. I dislike sitting still for too long as I get bored.



Assistant Head EYFS and Infants

**Lucy Savage**

I have two children; Isobel and Iwan. I love to dance and attend ballet and tap lessons every week. I have a large collection of children's books which I cannot wait to share with you! I like camping and going to the beach. I dislike brussel sprouts!

## Class Teachers

In Reception most of your lessons will be taught by a Class Teacher with the help of a Teaching Assistant. Find out more about our teachers here.



Class Teacher

### Mrs Stephanie Sherwood

I have a young daughter called Maeve and an English Bulldog called Bentley. I love walks in the countryside followed by tea and cake. I dislike polystyrene and olives.



Class Teaching Assistant  
**Mrs Veneta Newton**

I have four children who love to play football and rugby. I love to read books but I'm not very keen on parsnips.



Class Teaching Assistant  
**Mrs Lynn Clark**

I have two older children and five grandchildren. I love arts and crafts and can't wait to teach you some new skills. I dislike rats!

Can you spot the 5 other gerbils hidden in the book?

### Meet Our Pet

We like to look after, feed and clean out our pet gerbil in Reception! Throughout the year it becomes the focus of many children's art and writing! We also allow it to go on holidays outside of the school term.



## Specialist Teachers

In Reception we have specialist lessons taught by different teachers. Here are some of the teachers you will meet during your time in Reception.



Dance and Drama  
**Miss Lucy Colgan**



Music  
**Miss Tabitha Robinson-Plain**



French  
**Mrs Sophie Billingham**



Library  
**Mrs Rowena Dennis**



Forest School  
**Miss Olga Ski**



Physical Education  
**Mr Dan Oselton**

### Specialist Lessons

Find out more about our Specialist lessons on page 12.



# Finding Your Way Around School



## Classrooms

This is our classroom where we have register and carpet time. We work together and spend lots of time across the unit with all members of staff.



## Toilets

These are our toilets.



## Medical Centre

This is where we go if we are feeling poorly or if we are injured. A Reception adult will walk with you down the path and stay with you.



## The Prince Obolensky Building

This is where we eat our lunch. We collect it from the servery and carry our trays to our table. We eat with our class and put our trays onto the conveyor belt when we are finished. Our lunchtime supervisor is super helpful and rewards us with points and stickers.

## Cloakroom

This is where you hang your coat, blazer and school bag.



## Classroom trays

You will have a tray with your name on.



## Our Playground

This is the Pre-School and Reception playground.



## Year 1 and Year 2 Playground

This is the Year 1 and Year 2 playground which is used for After School Care (ASC)\*



### \*After School Care

First we play outside. Then we go inside around 16.00 to have a snack and play games until we walk to the Upper School at 16.50. At 17.00 we eat sandwiches and snacks, we then continue with fun activities. We are picked up from After School Care before 18.00.

# What To Wear



## School Uniform

**Summer uniform:** We wear dresses or shorts with short sleeved shirts.

**Winter uniform:** We wear a different uniform to keep us warm when the weather is colder. This includes trousers or a winter dress called a tunic.

Any parents who have queries about our uniform, should speak to Mrs Savage.

## PE Kit

Sometimes PE will be indoors and sometimes it will be outdoors. We wear different PE kit for indoors and outdoors PE lessons.

## School Bag - Packet

In your school bag you will keep your packet, which has your reading book and diary in. You will also have an Elms water bottle.

Please bring spare clothes, especially socks/tights and pants, in case you have an accident. Bring this in a small bag to hang on your peg.





## EYFS Assembly

Reception children and staff join the Infant children regularly for celebration assembly, in which pupils receive certificates to take home and 'growth mind-set blossoms' to place on the light-up tree in the Lower School entrance.

During this time we sing songs, listen to stories and rhymes, practise mindfulness techniques and discuss important issues such as worries or friendship.

## Lunch and Snack

### Lunchtime

The children will use the bathroom and wash their hands before leaving their classroom and walking down the path in pairs to the Prince Obolensky Building for lunch.

Children will see the dinner options available to them and make their own choices with guidance and support from their Class Teachers, Teaching Assistants and the Lunchtime Supervisor. Each day, they will choose from three hot meal options and a pudding, as well as a selection of salad, yoghurts and fruit.

Children with allergies or dietary needs will be supported and receive an allergy/dietary card on a pink lanyard. This will inform all catering staff of the child's specific allergy. Children will also be monitored and

supported very closely by teachers and lunchtime staff to ensure they receive suitable food choices and eat a reasonable amount. Children are always encouraged to try different foods and can receive lunch time awards for this. However, if a child tries a new food and does not like it, they will always be provided with an alternative.

Classes receive stickers and certificates from staff for a number of reasons; using their knife and fork, clearing their plate, trying new foods or being kind to their friends etc.

### Snack Time

We have lots of different, healthy snacks available. Sometimes we snack altogether in circle time and sometimes we select our own from the snack station during free play.



# Specialist Lessons



## Dance and Drama - Miss Lucy Colgan

We begin Dance and Drama lessons by working together in the home corner and deconstructed role-play area. Here we develop role-play skills and learn how to use our imagination. It begins to build confidence, demonstrates how to develop our ideas and use the space effectively. For the remainder of the year Miss Colgan works closely with class teachers to develop stimulating and exciting lessons to enhance stories and themes used in class. These lessons provide a safe space to express ourselves with our friends, we always have fun and Miss Colgan likes to give out special star stickers!



## Music - Miss Tabitha Robinson-Plain

In weekly music lessons we move to the beat, sing with our voices and play class instruments. Over the course of the year we meet a variety of musical styles and sounds. We experience each by playing games, singing songs and creating our own actions. While learning about pulse, rhythm and sound, children are encouraged to use their imagination, get creative and share musical ideas.

## French - Mrs Sophie Billingham

In weekly French lessons we learn French nursery rhymes, sing French songs and play French games, using a cuddly bear named Camembear. Sometimes we listen to French stories and join in with interactive children's programmes that help us to remember the French words we have learnt.

## Library - Mrs Rowena Dennis

In weekly library sessions we enjoy the comfortable space in the library and the huge choice of books! You have time to look through, read and choose a new book to take home. Then we always share a story together.

Below are some books that Reception have enjoyed this year:

- Ruby's Worry
- Press Here
- Oi Frog
- Story Path
- Kitchen Disco



## Forest School - Miss Olga Ski

In Forest School we enjoy spending time and having fun within our school grounds in all weathers. We play lots of games, go on different hunts, learn about nature and get creative with the things we find. We also enjoy a snack and warm drink.

## Physical Education - Mr Dan Oselton

Mr Oselton oversees PE at the Lower Elms to develop children's fundamental movement skills; agility, balance and coordination. Throughout the year, children will experience both indoor and outdoor PE, games and gymnastics. In the summer, Reception compete in the Infant Sports Day.





# School Trips and Visits

We are very lucky to be able to provide our children with so many real-life experiences in the form of visitors and trips. In Reception, we are always looking for ways to make our learning come to life so that it is exciting and, in turn, stimulates the children's desire to learn.



## School Trips

We try to link our trips to our learning and embark on these once a term.

Previous trips include:

- Stickman day at Beaumanor Hall – an outdoor adventure day, exploring the story of Stickman in the Woods.
- Bluebell's Farm – linked to our learning about animals and their lifecycles.
- Visits to our local care homes – to share songs and cards with residents.
- A walk to the local shops to buy ingredients, or a walk to the Post Office to buy stamps and post our own letters.
- A walk around the school site visiting people who help us behind the scenes.
- Splash Park – to explore risk management and water/sun-safety.

## Visits

Visitors are often encouraged into school if they are able to support our learning or inspire children in some way, such as:

- Diwali henna painting
- Firefighter/police service/ doctors – parents with jobs as 'real life superheroes' came to share their job and made it great fun with lots of props!
- Scientist for Science Week
- Author visits, e.g. Ellie Sandall - Every Bunny Dance



  
We are always looking for ways to make our learning come to life...



## Events in School

### Parents' Evenings

Parents will be formally invited to make an appointment for Parent Consultation Evenings, usually held in September and March. You will have a ten minute appointment to discuss your child's progress, however, we operate an open door policy and should you wish to discuss anything prior to this time, your class teacher will arrange a meeting before or after school. Likewise, if staff have concerns or wish to discuss matters with you, they will also contact you to arrange a meeting prior to these times, if needed.

### Sports Day (Infants)

Children in Reception take part in the Infant Sports Day in the Trinity Term. They practise their races in PE lessons and families are invited to watch the event.

### Performance

Children in Reception work hard in Dance and Drama lessons, to rehearse songs, dancing and speaking parts for an annual show.

### Class Assembly

Your child's class will perform a short assembly to demonstrate their learning and progress, usually later in the year. This often involves songs, actions, props and some speaking. Assemblies usually take place at 8:45am on a designated Tuesday within the year; parents and siblings are invited. You will be informed of the exact date in plenty of time.



## Our Behaviour System

### Positivity Jars

When children do something positive, they will receive a pom-pom to add to their class positivity jar. These jars are class incentives and the positivity can only grow! Children can add to their class jar when they are kind, hard-working, complete activities, as well as any other positive reason! When it is full the children can vote for a treat.

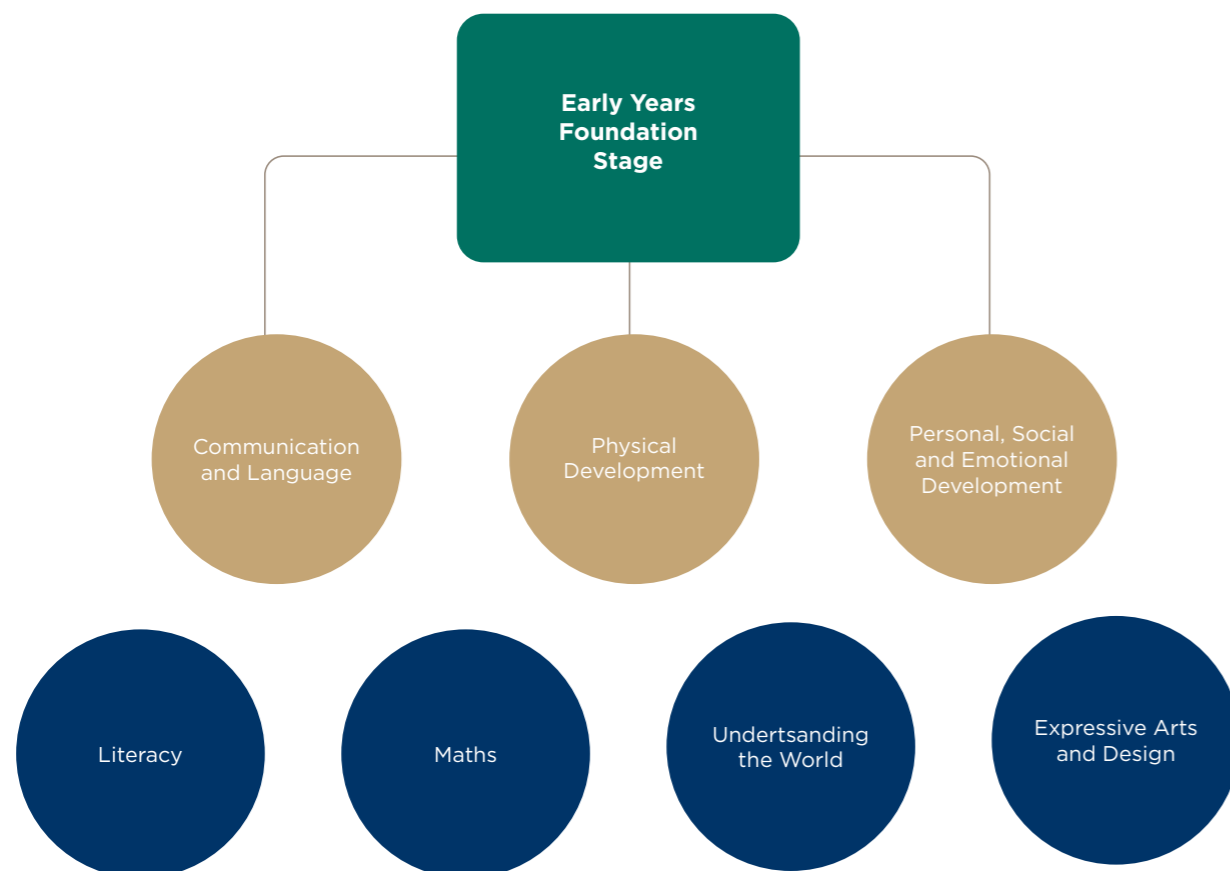


### Start/Stop list

Once the children arrive in school we ask them to create a list of behaviours they believe are good, we call them our 'Start Behaviours'. These might include; say thank you, share our toys, always try our best, listen to others, follow instructions etc. We then ask the children about the sorts of behaviours we do not want to see in school, these are listed by the children under 'Stop behaviours'. Stop behaviours might include: don't shout out, don't hit, don't snatch etc. These start and stop behaviours, created by the children, are then displayed in the classrooms and are regularly referred to.

# What is EYFS in Reception?

In Reception children work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the summer term. These goals span across seven areas of learning and aim to build a robust, independent, well-rounded learner. The three prime areas, in yellow, are focused on and must be developed prior to developing the specific areas, in blue.



Alongside this, we focus on the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which encourages life-long skills and behaviours such as perseverance, creativity, problem-solving, willingness to try and concentration.

## Teaching and learning in Reception will take place in many forms:

- Whole class input - a short time on the carpet as a whole class or cohort
- Teacher-led one-to-one
- Teacher-led small groups
- Differentiated streamed ability groups
- Outdoor learning
- Free-flow child-led play within continuous provision

As Reception teachers we like to make learning come to life! In doing this, we have lots of fun by sparking the children's interest and excitement by setting a scene or creating a 'hook'. This captures the children's imagination and drives them to begin their explorations.

Child-initiated, play-led learning is a key part of our work in Reception as it is important that children demonstrate their skills, vocabulary and knowledge independently within their play. Children will want to learn if it is fun and of interest to them, hence teachers will play alongside children to deepen and extend their learning. We encourage children to take ownership of their learning; this means they are fully invested in their play and will want to learn and ask questions!

## Across a Week Children Will Take Part in:

- Extended child-led play across the unit with planned continuous provision (daily)
- Read Write Inc. phonics lessons
- Maths teaching input and activities
- One-to-one reading time
- Outdoor play

## Specialist lessons:

- One French lesson
- One Dance & Drama lesson
- One Music lesson
- One Library lesson
- Two PE lessons
- One Forest School lesson

Break times are not scheduled in Reception. Children usually have a short playtime each morning. However, the Reception staff work very flexibly and children usually have access to the outdoors throughout their day.



# Recommended Books for Starting School

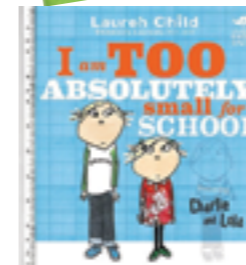
Our 'top picks' of stories you may want to share with your child that deal with the theme of starting school:



**Going to School**  
(Usborne) Sticker book



**Martha and the Bunnies - I Heart School** (Clara Vulliamy)



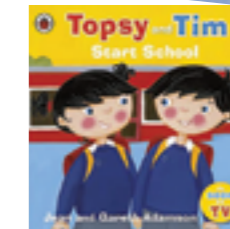
**Charlie and Lola - I am too absolutely small for school** (Lauren Child)



**Harry and the Dinosaurs go to School** (Ian Whybrow)



**Starting School** (Janet and Allan Ahlberg)



**Topsy and Tim Start School** (Jean and Gareth Adamson)



**Max and Millie Start School** (Felicity Brooks and Desideria Guicciardini)



**Going to School** (Rose Blake)



**Bobbo Goes to School** (Shirley Hughes)



**Never Take a Bear to School** (Mark Sperring and Britta Teckentrup)

## Communication

### Tapestry

Parents will have access to their child's ongoing, online learning journal through Tapestry ([www.eylj.net](http://www.eylj.net)).

This is a web and/or App based program with secure sign in through email and password secured accounts.

Teachers will regularly update and share things that your child has experienced, learnt or achieved during the school day. Photographs and videos are added, alongside assessment strands and teacher/child commentary.

Tapestry is a great link between home and school as parents can 'like' observations and discuss these with their child at home. Parents are also encouraged to upload and share things that have happened at home for school staff to see. The teachers regularly

encourage children to use their home Tapestry posts for 'show and tell' purposes to develop self-confidence and effective communication with peers.

### Reports

Parents will receive a short settling in and progress report via Tapestry at the end of the Michaelmas Term.

Later in the year, before we break up for the summer, you will also receive a downloadable report through iSAMS, detailing your child's progress and attainment against the Early Learning Goals.

More information regarding Tapestry will be shared during the Michaelmas Term.



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