

Walsingham CE Primary School

EYFS PROSPECTUS FOR PARENTS AND CARERS



Joining the federation family

Welcome to Walsingham CE Primary School, part of the Pilgrim Federation of Church of England Primary Schools. Walsingham is one of 4 Norfolk schools who work together for the benefit of the children in all 4 settings. We like to think our schools are branches of one big family tree and we warmly welcome you and your child/children to our school.



Getting started

Before your child starts school there are a number of forms that need completing to ensure their transition is a smooth one. These will be provided in the coming weeks. Some of the forms include;

- Ordering your child's uniform
- Medication forms (as required)
- Admission form

The transition process

Your child will have the chance to visit us on 4 moving up to school sessions. For the first afternoon parents/carers can stay with their child, during the last afternoon you can stay for lunch too, then we ask you to leave your child with us and return to collect at the specified time. If you wish, the class teacher can visit your child both at home and at their preschool setting to discuss the child's needs with you and your family and the preschool staff, who will already have many insights about your child's needs. These are optional and parents and carers do not have to have a home or preschool visit for their child. However if you do decide to take this option do let us know as early as possible so we can arrange visits to suit yours and the preschool's convenience. During the summer term each school has a sports day and parents with preschool children joining us in September are welcome to come along, there may even be a special race just for our newcomers. Parents and carers are very welcome to contact the class teacher at any time about their child's transition to school and a parent's and carer's meeting is available during one of the transition afternoons to hear more about what to expect and to ask any further questions from the reception class team.

Early days

For the first week you are welcome to come into class and help your child hang up their things; however we ask that from week 2 children come in on their own from the playground along with the other children and the member of staff on duty in the morning. A child's first days in school can be a worrying time for parents and many of our staff have experienced this themselves with their own children. In our experience children settle much quicker and far better when the change of moving up to 'big school' is used as a vehicle to introduce new ideas such as Mum and Dad won't be staying with you, or being away from home all day. This new situation means the children have no prior knowledge of what happens once you are a big school child and will usually accept the changes quite readily. We often find when parents linger that this extends the upset for both parent and child and that the child often relaxes within minutes of the parent leaving. Children are very good at tugging at your heart strings and we are here all the way to help the children, and you, have the smoothest transition. Staff are always happy to give you a call once school has begun to let you know how your child has settled and that they are o.k. Alternatively you can speak to staff at any time by phoning in and we will return your call if we are not available immediately. You may prefer to speak to staff after school, just ring the office and we can arrange this for you. Staff may be available at the start of the day but we respectfully ask that this is avoided where possible as staff will be setting up the day's activities and want to be fully ready for your children.



Practical matters

Your child will need to come to school wearing the uniform listed below. In addition to this a P.E. kit will be needed and should be in school every day, although obviously this may be taken home on Fridays to wash. The contents of the kit are also listed below. There are set timetabled P.E. lessons but timetable changes in a busy school are not uncommon and we need to be able to move lessons around should a member of staff be ill for example.

Your child will have been issued with a book bag either on a home visit or during a moving up to school transition session. They will need this every day and will be given their first home/school reading record in their first week. This book is where you write down how reading at home has gone. Likewise we will write to you in the book about reading at school.

Lunch - There are a range of lunch options available from a school hot/packed lunch, to your child bringing in their own lunch. A copy of the school lunch menu will be given to you. Children in reception have universal infant free school meals. Although the children are very small we ask that parents get their child used to telling the teacher what they want for lunch during morning register. They get very good at this very quickly and lots of time can be lost if we have to call home to find out or read menu selections sent in from home. We thank you in advance for your support with this as it is obviously important that your child receives the lunch you wanted them to have!

Health - please make sure we are up to date with any medical issues relating to your child so we can ensure their needs are met in school.

Medication - if your child needs medication whilst at school please complete a medication form available from the office. We are unable to administer medicine without written authority from you on a completed form detailing the nature of the illness and the dose to be given.

Illness - If your child is ill please keep them at home. Illness quickly spreads among small children and staff! If your child has experienced sickness and or diarrhoea they must be kept off school for a full 48hours.

Head lice - It is quite common for children to experience head lice during their early school days and sometimes even beyond! Please be vigilant and check your child's hair regularly. If you find head lice your local pharmacist will be able to advise on treatments. We have many years of experience with this as parents ourselves but unfortunately we cannot recommend any specific brands or treatments to parents.

Uniform

Uniform can be ordered from the school office and must be worn. Please ensure everything is labelled! We do struggle to reunite children to clothing when it isn't labelled as it is obviously the same type of items in very similar sizes. It also clears up ownership disputes very quickly.



School timings

Children may arrive on site after 8.40am where a member of staff will be on duty on the playground. The member of staff on morning duty brings the children into school at 8.50am where learning time begins. School ends at 3.15pm and parents and carers collect children from the playground. Please come inside the school gates to collect your child as taxi's and cars pull in and out of the main gate. Buses and taxis are available for eligible children living further away; please speak to the transport department at county hall for more information. An application for transport can be made when you register your child for school.

The school day

Once in off the main playground at 8.50am, reception children choose from a small selection of play opportunities for the first 20 minutes of the day while their older classmates complete morning work. We have register followed by phonics. First lesson is usually literacy, followed by maths and a topic subject (geography, history, music etc) in the afternoon. Parents receive a curriculum leaflet at the start of each term containing some examples of what children will be learning. For EYFS children these subjects are organised into areas of learning as follows:

- Communication and language
- Literacy
- Mathematical development
- Expressive art and design
- Understanding the world
- Personal, social and emotional development



Reception children join the rest of the class for the start of the lesson and then go off to do their focussed adult led task with a staff member (sometimes the teacher, sometimes the teaching assistant). This is regularly swapped around so the teacher has worked with all children regularly and has a good overview of how everyone is getting on. After their 10 minute adult led activity on the subject of the lesson in hand they go for learning play. Learning play is where two thirds of the EYFS curriculum is delivered. It consists of a range of play opportunities carefully planned by the teacher to further explore the subject and themes of the topic, the areas of study that week, the children's particular educational needs and the children's own interests where possible. The member of staff

working with the children will take observational notes and photographs of what the children are learning through their play and this goes into the learning journey which tracks their development across their foundation year. Children then rejoin the class at the end of the lesson for the round up and to see how everyone has got on with the learning.



Learning play

Expect your child to spend long periods of time outside accessing learning opportunities both indoors and out. We go out in most weathers and although we do have waterproofs and some spare wellies, we do ask that you child has a warm coat that can be worn beneath the waterproof and if possible bring in a pair of wellies (labelled) we can keep at school.

Reading and phonics

Teaching children to read is not an exact science and can be an area of much anxiety for parents. Children read every week 1-1 with an adult. This is usually twice a week or more if we can. Daily reading is incorporated into literacy lessons and phonics sessions and a 'little and often' approach is used.

Reading 1-1 is recorded in the home link book your child will receive during their first week. This is also for you to write in when you read with them at home. You will receive a pack of information on phonics and reading support at the transition meeting prior to your child starting, or shortly after arriving in school if you were unable to attend this opportunity. Children also receive guided reading in groups as part of literacy lessons. There are opportunities to come into school and learn about phonics with your child's class teacher if you are unfamiliar with this or curious to know more.

Reading progress

Through the progression in phonics children learn the sounds and their corresponding letters to sound out words. This aids reading enormously and has been given greater significance on the curriculum in recent years. Children start to learn to read by simply enjoying books, sitting and looking and listening to a story shared with an adult. From there they learn to read the pictures and work out what might be happening from the illustrations. Many children will receive picture only books as they start in reception to build these vital comprehension skills. Phonic knowledge then begins to develop and

children will begin to sound out very simple words. They will begin to bring home first word and short caption books at this time. Phonics leaflet books with simple word and caption build up practise also come home. Please try to read with your child at least 3 times a week to support their early reading. Experience tells us that only through regular reading at home and at school do children make good progress. It is the experience of trying new skills with both the teacher in the focussed environment and at home where the brain will assimilate what it has learnt throughout the day, which secures the learning. There is often great anxiety about what level book a child is on and how that compares to other children in the group. Reading is exceptionally important but it is also exceptionally variable and we know and respect that all children learn and develop at their own pace. We urge parents to relax and allow their child to develop at their own rate. Moving a child on to a harder level too soon can lead to significant damage in the child's confidence and their ability to develop their reading skills. Patience is the watch word!

Preparing for school

You have already laid the important foundations for your child's learning by bringing your child to the induction sessions, engaging with the transition process and by caring for and supporting your child through their preschool years.

There are no set things your child should be able to do by the time they enter formal schooling. However, it would benefit your child and help them get off to a good start if they already possess some basic skills.

- Dressing and undressing themselves, including shoes. Shoes which don't have laces are best!
- Managing themselves on the toilet.
- Managing their own food and drink; using a knife and fork properly.
- Managing their own personal hygiene such as nose wiping and hand washing.
- Recognising and writing their own name.
- Counting to 5 or even 10.

If your child has not mastered these skills then not to worry, we will get straight onto it, but it would give them the best start if they can and saves a lot of learning time that we could use for curriculum delivery.

Emergency contacts

Please keep our records up to date with your current contact details and that of anyone you wish us to call in an emergency. We also respectfully request that if you intend your child to go home with someone else that you let us know in advance. We take the safeguarding of children in our school very seriously and no child will leave us with another adult unless we have direct permission and instruction from a parent. So if you make an arrangement at the school gate in the morning for a tea time play date the same day, please give us a ring and let us know.



And finally...

We are here to answer any questions you may have regarding your child's transition. Please contact your child's class teacher Miss Cox or Mrs Myhill (EYFS leader) at any time. Useful contact numbers are below. We share the aim - to make your child's time with us as happy and successful as possible! We look forward to working with you to help your child reach their full potential.

Our school staff

Miss Josie Cox Class Teacher

Mrs Hilary Myhill leads the EYFS across the 4 federation schools.

Mrs Victoria Guymer is our teaching assistant for this class. She is always on hand to help both parents and children with any worries.

Mr Marshall Schaitel is senior teacher at Walsingham.

Miss Helen Frier is our deputy head teacher and visits all four schools in turn throughout a week. To find out when she is in Walsingham please ask at the office.

Miss Mary Dolan is our executive head teacher and visits all four schools in turn throughout a week. To find out when she is in Walsingham please ask at the office.

Useful contacts:

- Contact Miss Cox, Miss Dolan and Helen Frier Special Needs Co-ordinator on the office number 01328 820265
- Contact Mrs Myhill our EYFS leader at our Kelling site on 01263 588230

