Welcome Guide

Starting school at

Harvington C of E (Controlled) First & Nursery School

Village Street, Harvington,
Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 8NQ

Tel: 01386 870412

Email: office@harvington.worcs.sch.uk

www.harvingtonfirstschool.co.uk

'Together we love, learn and grow'

Welcome to Harvington C of E (Controlled) First and Nursery School

Dear Parents

This book has been designed to help you prepare your child for school.

Hopefully this book will explain the routines and the learning environment in the Reception Class and enable you to encourage your child in their school life.

Should you have any questions after reading this booklet and the school handbook please do not hesitate to ask your child's teacher or make an appointment to see the Headteacher.

Starting school is a big step for both the child and you the parents. Some children adapt easily while others take time to adjust. Some become upset and after they have been in school for a while and suddenly realise it's for good! If your child gets upset the best thing to do is leave them with their class teacher and go as quickly as possible. It usually only takes a few minutes to settle the children down and soon they are happily smiling and occupied, while their parents are at home worrying! If you are worried about your child give the school a ring to find out if they have settled.

In the first few weeks, the main aim is for your child to settle in and feel happy. A happy child who is confident about coming to school will learn far easier than a child who is worried and unhappy.

Remember

- Your child will get tired when they first start school, especially as the term progresses
- Avoid putting too much pressure on them
- All children are different and each one has their own rate of development in different areas
- Avoid comparing your child with other children in the same class or with their brothers and sisters



The School Day

Times

8:30-8:40am	Registration
8.40am	Morning sessions begin
12.00pm	Lunchtime
1.00pm	Afternoon sessions begins
3.00pm	Home time

The school gate is open at 8.30am, the Class Teacher will greet the children at the Reception gate and the children will come into registration.

The Reception class will attend whole school collective worship once the class has settled. Every other Friday you are welcome to join us for the 'Celebration Assembly' – this starts at 2.15pm. We will let you know when Reception children begin attending Celebration assembly.

Morning Routine

When your child arrives in school each morning they need to:

- Hang up their coat
- Put their lunch box/drinks bottle on the shelf
- Put their book bag in their tray
- Put their Message Book in the box

This seems a lot but don't worry and your child will soon get used to it! Please do not put drink bottles in book bags.

You may bring your child to the Reception gate and then as the year progresses, you will be encouraged to leave them at the main gate to come in independently.

Lunchtime

Children have lunch with the rest of the school in the hall. Initially Reception children will have their lunchtime play in a separate outdoor area. After the initial settling in time the children will not have to stay in this area and can join the older children in the main playground.

Dinners are cooked in our purpose-built kitchen and three hot food choices and a packed lunch option are available each day. Menus are available so you know what choices there are but children will choose themselves during registration. There is also a full salad bar and a choice of desserts. Children in Years R, 1 and 2 are entitled to a free meal as part of the Government's Universal Free School Meals initiative. Meals are served on a tray, please send a named bottle with water or squash.

If you choose to provide a packed lunch then please ensure products do not contain nuts as we are a nut free school.

Snack time

During snack time, your child will have the opportunity to have some fruit and a cup of milk, this is free until their 5th birthday. After this time milk can be purchased – please see the information on our website. Fresh drinking water is available at all times.

The children will be encouraged to try the different fruit and drink some water if they prefer this to milk. A different fruit is usually available each day: an apple, a banana, a pear, a tomato or an orange. The fruit is free to every child in the Reception class and Years 1 and 2 and is provided by the Government.

Toilets

We have our own toilet area within the Reception classroom space, children will be allowed to go to the toilet when they need to.

We understand that children develop at different rates and may still require some support in this area. Please speak to us to ensure your child's needs are met sensitively and safely.

Home time

At home time the children will get all their belongings – coat, book bag, lunch box etc and they will be helped to organise themselves. At 3pm the children will come out to meet the adults waiting on the playground. You may have arranged for someone else to collect your child, if so please ensure your child knows and also inform the class teacher. If you are going to be late for any reason please ring the school. Your child will not be allowed to leave school if there is no one to collect them. Should your child forget something then please come in to collect it. If you want to know how they have been during the day or you are concerned about something then please do not hesitate to see the class teacher.

You can help your child by:

- Naming **all** articles of clothing (Wellies need to remain in school all year – sizes should be checked regularly!)
- Naming drink containers/lunch boxes etc
- Encouraging them to do the morning routine by themselves once they know what to do
- Ensuring they have the correct clothing according to the weather
  In the winter – warm outdoor clothing, hat, gloves and scarf
  In the summer – apply sun cream to them before they come to school and make sure they have a sun hat
  In wet weather – a coat so that they can use the outside learning area
- Ensuring they know how to use the toilet independently
- Ensuring they can wash their hands
- Ensuring they know who is collecting them
- Encouraging them to leave their toys at home

The Admission Form
Many of you will have filled out this form in advance and as a result it is important to check it to ensure that the information is up-to-date.

Things to check are:



Your address and telephone number

Your mobile phone number

Another contact number, it is very important that we can contact someone if you are unavailable should your child become ill or have a serious accident in school

Medical information, is this up-to-date?
The school needs to know as much information as possible about your child's health, allergies etc and physical development

Once your child has started school please ensure that their Class Teacher or the school office is informed of any changes to this information.

School Nurse
Sometime during your child's first year in school the school nurse will check your child's height and weight. If you have any concerns about your child's health you can always arrange to see the school nurse.
During the year your child's vision will also be checked by an Orthoptist.
You will be informed of these visits beforehand.

Head lice
These are often found on the heads of young children, as they can be spread around easily as they work and play together with their heads touching! The school nurse no longer does regular checks for head lice therefore it is your responsibility to check your child's hair. This should be done regularly as this helps to prevent your child from becoming infected. The best way of doing this is after you have washed your child's hair, comb it using a special fine tooth detector comb. Putting conditioner on your child's hair makes it easier to comb. The comb should be checked after each stroke to see if there are any lice. Should you find head lice the following action should be taken:

- Check your own hair, the rest of the family's and inform other adults who may have had close contact with your child eg grandparents, childminder
- Treat your child's hair – you may either use a special lotion, the chemist will be able to advise you which one is in current use as they are changed from time to time. Or you can use the wet combing method.
- Inform the school

If your child has hair longer than shoulder length please ensure that it is tied back. **Remember** anyone can get head lice, do not keep it quiet if you find some in your child's hair. **The best way to stop infection is to do detection combing regularly.**

Forest School

Forest school is a great opportunity for the children to explore and experience the natural world. Forest school also provides opportunities for children to develop confidence and self-esteem while exploring the natural world around them, helping them to become more independent through hands on experiences. They learn many skills as they play and discover things together. We are very fortunate to have a lovely area on site that is used for forest school. Forest school takes place during one afternoon a week. We will provide children with waterproof trousers and a jacket. Please ensure all children wear trousers for this session.



Teaching/Learning

During the day the children will spend time working as a whole class, with an adult in a focus group or participating in child-initiated activities.

Focus groups are activities that are led by an adult, for 10-15 minutes depending on the activity and the concentration of the children. These groups are changed throughout the day. When the children are not in a focus group, they will take part in different activities both inside and outside of the classroom, these have been carefully planned to help your child learn and are chosen to reflect all styles of learning. Play is vital as the children are able to develop many social, linguistic, numeracy, physical and creative skills as they explore the world around them with their friends and try to make sense of it whilst having fun! These activities are observed by one of the adults, and any 'significant' learning is recorded. These observations help with our assessments of the children, helping us to take their learning forward. The adult, who observes, may also intervene at an appropriate time to help develop skills and learning.

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage lasts from birth until the end of the Reception Class. The children then join Key Stage 1 and follow the National Curriculum. The school year runs from 1st September to 31st August. Even if your child has a late August birthday they will still leave the Reception Class and move up into Year 1 of Key Stage 1 at the end of the academic school year.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is divided into seven areas of learning:

Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive arts and design

Communication and Language

This area of learning includes: listening, attention and understanding and speaking in different situations and for different purposes. Throughout the school day your child will be developing these skills as they learn to communicate with other children and adults they come in contact with. Role-play and imaginary play all help to develop your child's language. Your child will also read stories, poems and rhymes and sing songs during the day, many of which they will learn and join in with.

You can help your child by:

- Singing songs and rhymes with repetition
- Sharing a wide range of books, stories, poems
- Modelling good listening, playing listening games
- Talking to children about what they have been doing and help them to reflect upon and explain events.
- Giving children clear directions.
- Sharing a wide variety of experiences such as shopping, cooking, visits etc
- Using props, toys, puppets etc to retell stories.
- Talking through activities and sequencing them together.
- Building vocabulary by giving choices, e.g. '*apple or satsuma?*'
- Modelling building sentences by repeating what your child says and adding another word, e.g. child says 'car', say *'mummy's car' or 'blue car'*.
- Showing children how to pronounce or use words by responding and repeating what they say in the correct way, rather than saying they are wrong.
- Giving children 'thinking time'. Wait for them to think about what they want to say and put their thoughts into words, without jumping in too soon to say something yourself.
- Adding words to what children say, e.g. child says '*Brush dolly hair', you say 'Yes, Lucy is brushing dolly's hair.'*
- Talking with children to make links between their body language and words, e.g. *"Your face does look cross. Has something upset you?"*
- Introducing new words.

- Using more statements and fewer questions. When you do ask a question, use an open question with many possible answers.
- Showing interest in the words your child uses to communicate and describe their experiences.

Physical Development

This aspect of learning involves improving the skills both fine motor skills and gross motor skills. Gross motor skill movements such as running, jumping etc will be developed during PE lessons, as well as forest school, outdoor activities and during dinnertime when your child is moving around the playground with their friends.
Fine motor skills – handling small objects, threading beads, pencil and scissor control etc will be developed as they play with a variety of small objects and experience different textures such as play dough, water, wet and dry sand.

You can help your child by:

- Taking them to parks, indoor activity centres where they can experience different apparatus to climb on etc
- Encouraging them to pick up large heavy objects ie logs, bricks
- Playing ball games
- Encouraging them to ride a bike
- Taking them swimming
- Allowing them plenty of paper and materials to draw with
- Showing them how to use scissors correctly and letting them cut out
- Encouraging them to pick up and handle small objects
- Allowing them to 'paint' outside with large brushes and water
- Developing different small muscle groups through activities such as pegging washing

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This is a very important area of learning and is ongoing throughout the school day. This is developed as your child works and plays with the other children in the class, learning to share, take turns and help one another. Your child will also be encouraged to become independent and responsible for their own belongings and as they mature they will begin to organise themselves. Time is also spent talking about emotions and helping them to deal with problems that they may come across during the school day.

You can help your child by:

- Naming all clothing and items brought into school
- Allowing them time to get dressed on their own. (This is especially useful when they have to get ready for PE and forest school). They will be helped while they get use to changing in school, many children soon get very quick at getting ready for PE and forest school
- Showing them how to turn their clothes the right way
- Playing games with them, encouraging them to take turns
- Encouraging them to share toys etc
- Encouraging them to help you do different tasks
- Developing and modelling respectful relationships

Literacy

Your child will also be encouraged to write in many situations and for a variety of purposes. Children go through many different stages before they learn how to write recognisable letters and words. In school they are encouraged to be independent and try and write on their own. To help them with this process we spend a lot of time playing games and talking about letters, learning to recognise their shape, name and sound. Your child will experience many activities that develop their fine motor skills and develop their handwriting. Correct letter formation is also important as your child develops.

Reading is also very important, your child will bring home two books for you to read with them. One book is your child's reading book the other is a library book for you to read to them. They will also have a Message Book. This book is filled in by all the people who have anything to do with your child's reading. Your child's books need to be brought to school everyday. Lots of experiences and activities within Year R are based around stories, rhymes, poems and texts.

You can help your child by:

- Talking about the pictures and story/text
- Reading books
- Reading signs when you are out and about
- Making a scrapbook
- Learning nursery rhymes, songs and poems
- Talking about and recognising rhyming words
- Playing games such as pairs which will help to train their memory
- Matching pictures
- Making jigsaw puzzles
- Looking at words and letters
- Borrowing books from the library
- Encouraging them to draw pictures, write letters etc using crayons, felt tips, pencils, coloured pencils, chalk and paint
- Encouraging them to colour in pictures
- Helping them to trace pictures using tracing paper or greaseproof paper
- Helping them to learn the shape, name and sound of letters
- Helping them to form their letters correctly
- Playing with foam, plastic or magnetic letters
- Helping them to write their name when they show an interest. **Using capital letters only at the start** of their name **not** for the whole of their name, as many children find it difficult to correct later.
- Encouraging them to invent their own spellings once they have started writing letters – children who are constantly told spellings are seriously inhibited from trying to work out our spelling system
- Helping hold their pencil correctly – habits are very difficult to correct

Mathematics

There are many different types of mathematics which your child will experience. In the Reception Class the pupils develop practical skills and have many opportunities to apply their learning in 'real' contexts such as shops. Your child will spend time counting, recognising numbers, learning about numbers, pattern, size, money and time. During the child initiated activities a lot of mathematical language is developed. Stories and songs are also used to help develop your child's mathematical skills.

You can help your child by:

- Helping them to count
- Learning to recognise numbers
- Getting them to find the correct number of objects 6 cars, 3 dolls etc
- Looking at numbers when you are out and about – house numbers, car registrations etc
- Sorting objects according to shape, colour, size
- Matching objects eg pairs of socks/gloves
- Helping them to learn the name of 2D shapes – circle, square, rectangle and triangle
- Looking at and exploring 3D shapes – cylinders, cones etc
- Looking at patterns on clothes, inside and outside the house
- Dividing up cakes
- Sharing out sweets
- Playing dice games
- Weighing out ingredients to make cakes, biscuits
- Using language such as more, less, tall, short, wide, narrow etc
- Looking at money and helping them to recognise the different coins
- Talking about the various times of the day eg morning/night

Understanding the World

In this area of learning your child will develop knowledge, skills and understanding that helps them make sense of the world. This will form the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography and Computing. This work will again be very practical, your child will be given the opportunity to explore and investigate a variety of materials in a fun way. They will look at factual books, watch videos and spend time talking about what they have discovered.

You can help your child by:-

- Talking about objects and what they are made from
- Going on walks and talking about the things you see – old/new houses, trees, flowers
- Collecting things such as conkers, acorns, shells etc
- Planting seeds, bulbs and watching them grow
- Talking about the seasons, watching them change
- Looking at and talking about the weather. What do people wear when it is hot/cold?
- Talking about and naming the parts of the body
- Exploring the 5 senses – sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell
- Looking at maps and talking about different places
- Looking at and talking about different natural features, eg hills, rivers
- Talking about time – referring to things they did in the past and things they will do in the future
- Looking at and talking about old objects, houses etc

Expressive Arts and Design

This area of learning includes Art, Music, Dance, Role-Play and Imaginative play. Your child will be given many opportunities to develop their creative side. They will listen to a variety of music, move/dance to the music and play percussion instruments. Throughout the year they will experience a large range of craft materials and activities. They will also have the opportunity to play with a variety of different toys such as farm/wild animals, cars and constructional apparatus all of which helps develop their imagination. They will be encouraged to use the role-play area, which has different themes throughout the year, linking in with the terms topic.

You can help your child by:

- Playing them a variety of music
- Encouraging them to move to the music
- Allowing them to experiment with sounds
- Giving them the opportunity to explore colour
- Giving them the opportunity to paint/draw/cut and stick
- Giving them the opportunity to play and use their imagination
- Allowing them the opportunity to role-play