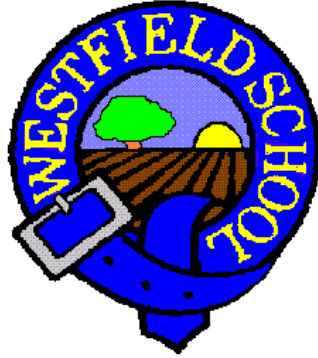


WELCOME TO WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE



Your child will shortly be starting in our Early Years Foundation Stage and the aim of this booklet is to tell you about our school.

Together we have an equal and complementary part to play in the education of your child. It is in your child's interest that we both play these parts to the best of our abilities. This will ensure your child is happy, ready to learn and able to reach their full potential.

Transition to starting school

Before your child starts school, their teacher will arrange a visit to meet you both in your home and all the children will have the opportunity to spend a short time with us in school. You will also be invited to an open evening, during the Summer term, to meet the staff and view the area in which your child will be taught and find out about the day to day routines. The purpose of these visits is to prepare both you and your child for starting school, to settle them quickly and happily into school life and to answer any questions that you may have.

Positive Relationships between School and Home

Your child may be feeling excited about starting school, nervous or apprehensive. We are here to support you and your child and will therefore always strive to do what we can to make school an exciting, rewarding and happy experience for them.

There are many ways you can help your child to settle into school:

- ◆ Talk often to your child about this new adventure and encourage them to look forward to learning lots of new and exciting things.
- ◆ Assure them that their toys and belongings will be looked after. Children often worry that younger brothers and sisters may spoil their things while they are away at school.
- ◆ Do be at school on time to meet them. If for any reason you know you will be late, please contact the office and in emergencies we will make arrangements to look after your child until you arrive.
- ◆ Talk positively about school and their work. We all want your child to succeed and enjoy their life in school.

Please do not hesitate if you feel that you need to have a conversation with the teacher or teaching assistant about your child. We have an open door policy and pride ourselves on being able to have open and honest conversations with our parents in which they feel their concerns have been listened to and addressed. We ask that these conversations take place preferably at the end of the day because at the beginning of the day our priority is to get children into school and settled for the day ahead. Alternatively, please arrange a suitable time for a phone conversation or face-to-face conversation through speaking to the teacher or ringing the office.

When your child is absent from school, please telephone to let us know the reason.

To help us to support you and your child please:

- ◆ Support the school's aims and objectives
- ◆ Encourage self-discipline in your child by reinforcing the school's code of conduct
- ◆ Ensure your child attends school regularly and on time and notify us of any reason for absence
- ◆ Keep us informed of anything at home that might cause changes in the behaviour of your child e.g. illness or bereavement in the family, divorce
- ◆ Support extra-curricular activities such as homework, concerts, open days, sports days and parents' evenings



Early Years

When children first come to school, the experiences they are given are based on:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Art and Design

All experiences involve the children learning through play, practical activities and group work.

First Lessons

We plan for the children to have first-hand experiences and endeavor to engage them in fun, exciting activities which capture and spark their interests and give a context for their learning. Our curriculum ‘themes’ will be shared with you throughout the year.

Reading

We introduce reading, writing and spelling by first using ‘Jolly Phonics’ alongside ‘Letters and Sounds’ to support children in learning letter sounds with an accompanying action to help them remember the sounds. Children will begin with sound games, followed by learning the letter sound and names and progressing to reading 2 and 3 letter words.

The first reading book your child brings home will not contain words. These picture books help to develop the child’s story telling skills as they simply describe what they can see. Your child will receive a sound wallet which has a range of letter cards in it. This is to support you in helping your child to begin reading words. As they become confident with their letter sounds and first words, they will bring home books with simple sentences. It is very important that you and your child enjoy reading books together and talking about the pictures and what has happened in the book.

Mathematics

Initial Mathematics consists of recognising, counting, ordering and writing numbers to 20, simple addition and subtraction, 2D and 3D shape, measure and pattern work.

Technology

The children will be introduced to computers and iPads at an early stage. This is to help encourage and develop the skills needed to access learning with the support of technology. Usually, the children acquire their confidence with this technology quickly – we usually find adults are more worried by technology than the children. We place emphasis on safety and this is discussed with the children too. A range of other interactive software will be accessed by the children.

Share-a-Skill and Share-a-Story

The best and most interesting way for a young child to learn new skills is through play and interacting through conversations.

Share-a-Skill gives children the opportunity to learn and develop new skills by sharing games and a variety of different activities at home with their families. The children will be able to pick from a variety of games and jigsaws on a rota basis for each nurture group throughout the year.

Each activity is numbered and stored in a plastic zip up wallet. The wallets can be kept at home for a week and parents are encouraged to share the games with their child, then fill in a comment sheet.

Please check the number of parts/pieces before returning the game or puzzle to school, as we would not want to let another child take an activity home which has pieces missing.

Share-a-Story gives children the opportunity to pick a book from our school collection and share it at home. The children will do this each week, so they are immersed in a range of different texts whilst in their first year at school.

Classes

The children are organised into 2 classes both led by a teacher. We split these 2 classes into 4 nurture groups, each with a key worker, which are led by the class teacher and teaching assistants. The aim of the nurture groups is to help children settle in small groups of 12-15 rather than a class of 30. We want all children to have a voice and be given time to talk. The groups are used for registration, circle times and some story times.

Organisation

Morning session: 8.55-11.55am

Lunchtime: 11.55am-1.15pm

Afternoon session: 1.15-3.30pm

The children should arrive at school before the bell. Please try to make sure that your child does arrive promptly. The children will have a fixed playtime during the morning sessions and have opportunities to engage with structured play throughout each day.

Meeting your child from school

As they are so young, we expect the children to be met from school by a parent or named adult. We ask that if other relatives/friends are collecting your child from school, parents need to inform the class teacher or school office. This is in the interest of safeguarding.

Lunchtime

School lunches are cooked fresh on the premises and are served in the KS2 Hall. They have the option of choosing a hot dinner, jacket potato or school sandwich. A menu is provided in advance and specific dietary needs are catered for. Alternatively, a packed lunch can be brought from home. The children can purchase a fruit drink at lunchtime at a cost of 30p. Children may bring their own drink in a suitable plastic bottle.

If your child goes home for dinner, they will exit the building via the main entrance and you must sign them out in the lobby area and sign them back in when they return (between 1.00pm and 1.10 pm).

At lunchtime, the children are in the care of our senior lunch time supervisor, Mrs Barker, and her assistants, all of whom have had First Aid, Child Protection and Safeguarding training. A number of our Year 5 and 6 children volunteer to be playtime pals for our younger children. This means they will play and link up with our children and initiate playground games at lunchtimes.

Clothes

Do you have problems getting your children dressed?

Then imagine the scene in a classroom after a P.E. lesson when 30 four and five years olds are trying to change!

You can do a great deal to help:

- ◆ Teach your child to fasten buttons
- ◆ Make sure your child can take a sweatshirt on and off
- ◆ Show them how to turn clothes the right way out
- ◆ **Put names in *all* clothes and footwear (including hats, scarves & gloves)**
- ◆ Encourage them to dress themselves
- ◆ Provide a PE bag with their name written on it
- ◆ We would prefer it if the children ***did not*** come to school in lace-up trainer boots, which they find very difficult to take off and put on, and tie up themselves

For indoor P.E. lessons, the younger children are expected to change into a white t-shirt and black shorts. There is no need for shoes to be worn. For outdoor P.E. lessons, in the summer, trainers are required.

Children must have a suitable coat and pair of outdoor shoes for the different times in the year. When the children are inside, they will wear their indoor shoes. We recommend Velcro trainers, but sandshoes or plimsolls are also okay. Children must bring a hat to wear in hot weather.