Lancasterian Primary School

Welcome to Reception

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Starting school is an exciting milestone for both children and their families. At Lancasterian Primary School we aim to make this transition as smooth and positive as possible. Our Reception team works closely with parents and carers to ensure that every child feels happy, safe and confident as they begin their school journey.

This booklet provides an overview of life in Reception, including how children learn, what a typical day may look like and how we can work together to support your child's development. If you have any questions, please speak to a member of the Reception team or contact the school office.

Our Vision and Values

At Lancasterian Primary School, our vision is to help create a fairer society where every child has the opportunity to succeed. We want all children to develop the confidence, knowledge and skills they need to pursue their ambitions and contribute positively to the world around them.

We aim to create a school where children enjoy learning, feel proud of who they are and leave with happy memories and a strong sense of possibility for the future.

Our work is guided by our core values:

- **Inclusion** – celebrating diversity and ensuring every child feels valued and supported.
- **Lifelong Learning** – encouraging curiosity and a love of learning that continues beyond school.
- **Growth Mindset** – helping children understand that mistakes are part of learning and progress.
- **Integrity** – promoting honesty, responsibility and doing the right thing.
- **High Aspirations** – encouraging children to aim high and believe in their potential.
- **Respect** – showing care and consideration for others and the world around us.

Our Reception Classes

We have two Reception classes, each led by a qualified class teacher and supported by an experienced nursery nurse or early years practitioner. Our staff are committed to creating a warm, welcoming and nurturing environment where children feel safe and valued.

The Reception team works closely together to ensure that all children receive the care and support they need as they begin their school journey.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Reception follows the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is the national framework for children from birth to five years old. The framework recognises that young children learn best through exploration, play and meaningful experiences.

Children develop across seven areas of learning. The prime areas are Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Communication and Language, and Physical Development. These areas form the foundation for learning in Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World, and Expressive Arts and Design.

By the end of Reception, children work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals in these areas.

Settling Into School

Starting school is a big step for children and families. To support this transition we use a gradual, phased approach.

Children begin in small groups so that staff can give them the attention and reassurance they need. After attending for a few days, children will usually begin staying for lunch and leaving at 1:15pm. When they are ready, they will attend the full school day.

Children settle at different rates, and we adapt the process if needed to support each child's wellbeing.

The Key Person System

Each child is allocated a Key Person who helps them settle into school and build a sense of security. The Key Person observes your child's learning, plans next steps and acts as your main point of contact.

Although each child has a Key Person, all staff in Reception work together to support every child. This helps children feel comfortable and confident with the whole team.

Learning Journals – Tapestry

We use Tapestry, an online learning journal, to record children's learning and development. Through Tapestry we share observations, photographs and videos that show your child's experiences at school.

Parents and carers are encouraged to upload photos and comments from home. Sharing these experiences helps us build a fuller picture of your child's interests and development.

How Children Learn in Reception

Learning in Reception takes place through a balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities.

During child-initiated learning, children choose activities independently and follow their interests. This helps them develop confidence, independence and problem-solving skills.

During adult-led learning, teachers introduce new skills and ideas through small group teaching. Staff support children's thinking by asking questions, modelling new skills and extending learning through discussion and guided activities.

Play-Based Learning

Play is central to learning in Reception. Through play, children explore ideas, develop language, practise new skills and learn how to work with others. Children have daily opportunities for structured and carefully planned play, designed to support key skills across all areas of learning. Staff observe, interact and extend children's thinking to ensure play is purposeful, engaging and developmentally appropriate.

Both the indoor and outdoor learning environments are used throughout the day, alongside regular carpet sessions that include phonics, literacy, maths and circle time. This balance of structured teaching and child-initiated play helps children develop independence, curiosity and confidence.

Phonics and Early Reading – Sounds-Write

Learning to read is one of the most exciting parts of Reception. At Lancasterian Primary School, we follow the Sounds-Write phonics programme, a highly structured and systematic approach that helps children develop strong early reading and spelling skills. Through daily phonics sessions, children learn to recognise letter sounds, blend sounds to read words and begin writing simple words and sentences.

Reading is further supported through daily story time, high-quality texts, and opportunities for children to explore books independently throughout the day.

Literacy – Talk for Writing

In Reception, we use Talk for Writing approach to develop children's early literacy skills. This method helps children internalise language patterns through storytelling, role-play, actions and shared writing. Children learn stories orally, explore vocabulary, and then innovate familiar texts before creating their own simple pieces of writing.

Mathematics – Mastering Number

For early maths, we follow the Mastering Number programme, which supports children in developing a deep understanding of number, counting, subitising and early calculation. Through short, focused sessions and practical activities, children build strong number sense, helping them become confident mathematicians who can explain their thinking and solve problems.

The School Day

The school day in Reception begins in the morning with a calm start to learning and play. Throughout the day children take part in a variety of activities including group learning sessions, adult focused activities, play-based learning, outdoor exploration and story time.

A typical day includes:

9.05am- School starts (Gates open at 9.00am)

9.05am Phonics & early reading session

9.35am- Child-initiated play indoors and outdoors

11.05-Literacy story and language sessions

11.30am- Lunch

1.15pm Maths carpet session

1.35- Child-initiated play indoors and outdoors

3.00pm Topic carpet session

3.35pm- Home time (Gates open at 3.30pm)

Drop-Off and Collection

A calm and consistent routine helps children feel secure when arriving at school.

In the morning, children enter the Reception playground where staff will greet them. We encourage parents to say goodbye confidently and keep goodbyes brief, as this helps children feel reassured and confident.

At the end of the school day, children are collected from the Reception classroom door. Please queue to collect your child. If someone different is collecting your child, please inform the school in advance.

Supporting Independence

Developing independence is an important part of learning in Reception. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for small tasks such as hanging up their coats, organising their belongings and tidying away resources after activities.

We also support children in developing self-care skills such as dressing themselves, managing their belongings and trying new activities confidently.

Encouraging these skills at home can help children feel more confident at school.

Toileting

Children in Reception are expected to be toilet trained. Staff will of course support children if they need help, but it is important that children are able to use the toilet independently as much as possible.

If there are any ongoing concerns regarding toileting, please speak with a member of the Reception team so we can work together to support your child.

Home–School Reading

Children will receive a free book bag, reading book and reading diary. The reading book will match the phonics sounds your child is learning in school and is designed to be read with your support.

Teachers will record comments about your child's reading in the diary, and parents are encouraged to add their own comments or observations.

Children will also be able to choose a book from the class book area to share at home. Sharing stories together is one of the best ways to develop a love of reading.

School Uniform

Reception children are expected to wear the school uniform. This helps children feel part of the school community and encourages a sense of belonging.

The uniform consists of:

- White polo shirt
- Black tracksuit bottoms, trousers, skirt or leggings
- School sweatshirt or cardigan
- Velcro trainers or shoes (no laces)

School jumpers and cardigans can be purchased from **Star School Uniform, 32 Church Road, N17 8AQ.**

Clothing and Outdoor Learning

Children in Reception regularly take part in activities such as painting, water play and outdoor exploration. While protective aprons are provided, clothing may sometimes become messy during the day.

Children have access to the outdoor learning area throughout the year, so it is important that they have appropriate clothing for different weather conditions. On wet days they should bring a waterproof coat and Wellington boots. During warmer months children should bring a named sun hat.

Please ensure that all clothing is clearly labelled with your child's name.

Lunchtime

Reception pupils are currently entitled to a free school meal each day. Children may either have a school lunch or bring a packed lunch from home.

Packed lunches should be clearly labelled and contain healthy food. Please do not include nuts, fizzy drinks or sweets.

Children eat in the dining hall and are supported by the school's mealtime supervisors.

Health, Safety and Absence

If a child becomes ill during the school day they will be looked after by a trained first aider and parents will be contacted if necessary. It is very important that the school always has up-to-date contact numbers.

If your child is absent from school, please contact the school office on the first day of absence to inform us of the reason.

The school can only administer prescribed medication, and a parental consent form must be completed before medication can be given.

Working in Partnership with Parents

We believe that strong partnerships between home and school are essential in supporting children's learning and wellbeing.

Throughout the year we hold parent meetings and workshops to help families understand how children learn in Reception and how they can support learning at home. These sessions often focus on early reading, phonics and supporting children's independence.

We encourage parents to speak regularly with their child's Key Person about their child's progress or any concerns they may have.

Preparing Your Child for Reception

Starting school is an exciting step for children and families. There are many simple ways you can help your child feel confident and ready for this new experience.

Developing a few everyday skills can make the transition to school smoother and help children feel more independent in the classroom.

Encouraging Independence

Children in Reception are supported to become increasingly independent. You can help prepare your child by encouraging them to practise some everyday skills at home, such as:

- putting on and taking off their coat
- using the toilet independently and washing their hands
- getting dressed with minimal help
- recognising their own belongings
- tidying away toys and resources after playing

These small routines help children feel more confident and capable when they start school.

Talking About School

Talking positively about school can help children feel excited about starting Reception. You might like to talk together about what school might be like, read books about starting school, or practise the morning routine before the first day.

Let your child know that it is normal to feel a little nervous about new experiences and reassure them that their teachers will be there to help them.

Developing Language and Communication

Children's language skills grow through everyday conversations. Talking together, asking questions and listening to your child's ideas all help to build confidence and communication skills.

Sharing stories together is particularly valuable. Reading regularly helps children develop vocabulary, imagination and an early love of books.

Play and Exploration

Young children learn best through play. Activities such as drawing, building with blocks, playing outdoors, role-play and creative play all help develop important skills including problem-solving, coordination and social interaction.

Providing opportunities for your child to explore and be curious will help support their development and readiness for school.

Routines and Sleep

Having a regular bedtime and morning routine can help children feel well-rested and ready to learn. As the start of school approaches, gradually adjusting routines to match the school day can make the transition easier.

Contacting the School

Starting school is an important step in your child's life and we want the experience to be as positive as possible. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the Reception team.

You can also contact the school office by email at
admin@lancs-pri.haringey.co.uk

We look forward to welcoming your child to Lancasterian Primary School.