Arnold Mill Primary School and Nursery

Starting in Foundation 1 (F1)

2026-27

Our Foundation Unit

Our school building allows us to have a single Foundation Unit which encompasses three to five year olds. The children begin in Foundation 1 (Nursery) when they are three and transfer into Foundation 2 (Reception) in the September of the academic year during which they will be five.

Our building is divided into areas to create spaces for the children to explore and work. Each group has a base with a large carpet area – we have one Foundation 1 base and two Foundation 2 bases. Each has an interactive whiteboard. Outside we have a large play area that incorporates safety surfaces and grass. There are opportunities to climb, balance, ride bikes, make dens and lots more.

The School Day in Foundation 1

Usual sessions times:

Morning Nursery – 9.00am – 12.00noon

Afternoon Nursery – 12.30pm – 3.30pm

30 Hour Placement: 9.00am-3.00pm

(With the option to pay £2.50 for an extra 30 minutes from 3.00-3.30pm).

30 hour children's lunch time will be 12.00pm-1.00pm.

Children can attend either:

- 15 hours (five morning or five afternoon sessions), or
- 30 hours (full-time, all day)

30 Hours' Entitlement in Foundation 1

We offer a limited number of 30 hour places to children who are eligible (please see https://www.gov.uk/30-hours-free-childcare for details of eligibility). These places are offered first to the older children in Foundation 1 in preparation for them moving into Foundation 2.

If your child is entitled to a 30-Hours Nursery place, then they can stay for their lunch from 12pm-1.00pm. If you choose for your child to stay for lunch, then they will need to bring a packed lunch to eat.

What your child will do at Nursery:

During each session, children will take part in a range of activities including:

- Choosing their own play, both indoors and outdoors
- Working in small groups with an adult
- Joining whole group carpet sessions
- Enjoying stories and singing

Children may also:

- Attend whole school assemblies
- Take part in P.E. lessons in the hall

Snack and Drinks

- Children will have time for a snack and drink during each session
- School provides one snack per day
- Please send a water bottle from home
  Children can also have milk:
- Milk is free until age 5, but must be ordered online as part of your admission paperwork
- Order here: https://www.coolmilk.com/parents/

Helpful Hints:

- **P.E. Days:**
  P.E. takes place every Thursday morning and Friday afternoon.
  Please ensure your child arrives at school already dressed in their P.E. kit, including Velcro trainers to support independence.
- **Spare Clothes:**
  Your child should bring a bag every day containing at least one full set of spare clothes.
- **Pull-Ups:**
  If your child wears pull-ups, please ensure their bag contains:
  - Pull-ups
  - Wipes
  - Nappy sacks
- **Labelling:**
  Please clearly label ALL clothing and belongings, including bags, coats, hats, and shoes.
- **Wellies:**
  Each child will need a pair of wellies to keep at school, with their name clearly written inside.
- **Water Bottle:**
  Please send a labelled water bottle to school each day.
  🚫 Only water please – no juice or flavoured drinks.
- **Snacks:**
  You may provide a snack from home, but this must be:
  Fruit or vegetable sticks
  🚫 No chocolate, biscuits, or cereal bars.
- **Milk:**
  Your child will receive milk daily if you have completed the sign-up form.
- **End of Day Options (30-Hour Children):**
  End of 30-hour session is 3.00pm. 30-hour children may stay until 3:30 pm to align with siblings or childcare needs.
  Cost: £2.50 per day
  Please choose a consistent collection time:
  3.00 pm, or 3.30 pm
- **Lunch (30-Hour Children):**
  Children staying for the full 30 hours will need to bring a packed lunch.
- **Communication (ClassDojo):**
  We use ClassDojo to share updates and important information.
  Please ensure you are signed up — the QR code is available on the classroom door.

⚠️ Please discourage children from bringing toys to school, as they can easily become lost or broken, which may cause upset.

Dressing for F1:

We want your child to feel happy and comfortable at Nursery, so please dress them in sensible, practical clothing. We have lots of fun in F1, and many of our activities can be messy, so please bear this in mind when choosing outfits for each session.
If you would like your child to wear school uniform at Nursery, it is available to purchase from the school office. When your child moves to Foundation 2, they will be expected to wear school uniform every day.

- **Labelling**
  - Please label all clothing and belongings, including coats, shoes, wellies and hats.
  - Check regularly throughout the year to ensure names are still clearly visible.

- **Outdoor Learning**
  - Children have daily access to the outdoor area during *'Discover and Do'* time, which takes place in all types of weather.
  - Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately each day.

✅ **Daily Checklist**

Please make sure your child:

- Always brings a coat
  (Even on sunny days, a lightweight raincoat should be kept in their bag.)
- Has a scarf, hat, and gloves for cold or snowy weather
- Has a sun hat and sun cream during hot weather
  (Please apply sun cream at home and provide written permission for staff to reapply if your child stays all day.)
- Has spare clothes in their bag in case they need changing
- Wears clothing they can manage independently when using the toilet
  (Avoid stiff buttons and dungarees, as these can be difficult.)
- Is wearing shoes that can try and take off and put on independently
  (preferably no laces)

Important Reminder

- **Please make sure your child brings home their own clothing at the end of the day.**
- **If your child has borrowed spare clothes from school, please return them as soon as possible.**

Starting in the Foundation Unit

We are a warm and welcoming school, and we want to make sure your child has a happy and positive start.
Before your child begins attending independently, we will invite you to visit the Foundation Unit together. We will stay in regular contact with you throughout this time, so please ensure you are signed up to ClassDojo and we always have your up-to-date email address and phone number.

What to expect:

Before your child starts, you will be invited to take part in the following:

- Open Evening
  You will be invited to an introduction evening where you can:
  - Meet the Foundation team
  - Find out about the school
  - Ask any questions
  - Have your child's birth certificate checked

- Visit to the Foundation Unit (30 minutes)
  You and your child will be invited to:
  - Visit the setting
  - Meet the staff in F1
  - Learn about daily routines and expectations

- Stay and Play Sessions
  Your child will attend two short sessions (around 1 hour each) where they will:
  - Play alongside current Nursery children
  - Begin to feel comfortable in the environment
  - Practise being dropped off and collected

- Start Date
  You will be given a confirmed start date for your child during this time.

Working Together

During this transition period, we will work closely with you to ensure the best possible start for your child.
We encourage you to:

- Get in touch by email or phone
- Share any concerns or information
- Help us adjust plans if needed

We are looking forward to welcoming you and your child into our Foundation Unit.

Learning to be with others

One of the main aims of Foundation is to help children learn the social skills required to co-operate with others. Lots of children, especially when they first start Foundation, may have difficulty sharing. This is not unusual, and we are used to this! We provide lots of experiences where groups of children take turns, co-operate, share and compromise under supervision – we are firm but kind!

We encourage children to think about their own behaviour and hopefully become responsible for the best way of interacting with others in awkward or confrontational situations. Some children prefer to play alone, whilst others need company. We offer opportunities for all these needs, but carefully monitor what is happening, encouraging different experiences.

The Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the curriculum for children from birth to five years. It provides a high-quality framework to support children's learning and development during their early years.
The EYFS recognises that every child is unique and a competent learner, and is delivered through a carefully planned play-based approach that supports all areas of development.

Why is the Foundation Stage Important?

Children start in the Foundation Stage having already learned a wide range of skills and experiences from home and previous settings. Our aim is to build on this learning, helping children continue to grow in confidence and ability.
We provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment where children feel safe, valued and ready to learn.
We believe children learn best when they are:

- Engaged and motivated
- Actively involved in their learning
- Enjoying what they are doing

Through play, children begin to understand the world around them, develop important life skills and learn how to manage new experiences and challenges.

Indoor and Outdoor Learning

The EYFS places equal importance on indoor and outdoor learning. Children have daily opportunities to learn in both environments, whatever the weather.
Outdoor learning supports:

- Physical development
- Exploration and curiosity
- Confidence and independence

How Children Learn

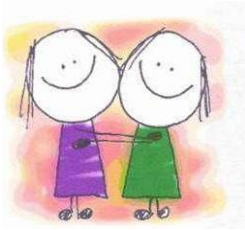
Children are provided with a balance of adult-led activities and child-initiated play, allowing them to explore, practise and extend their learning.
Through these experiences, children develop the ability to:

- Socialise and communicate with others
- Ask questions and think critically
- Develop early reading and writing skills
- Express themselves through creative activities
- Explore mathematical and scientific ideas

Areas of Learning

The EYFS supports development across seven areas of learning, all equally important and often linked together:

Prime Areas:



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

These are the foundations that help children learn and form relationships.

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Activities are carefully planned so children can develop skills across multiple areas at the same time.

Preparing for the Next Stage

In the final year (Foundation 2), there is a gradual increase in teacher-directed activities, with a stronger focus on Literacy and Mathematics. This helps children develop the key skills they need to be ready for Key Stage 1.

All learning supports children in working towards the Early Learning Goals, which mark expected development by the end of the Foundation Stage.

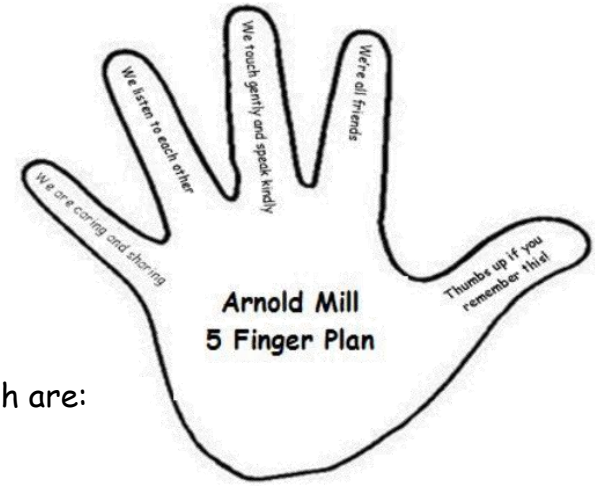
Working Together

The EYFS encourages a strong partnership between school and home. By working together, we can support your child's learning and help them reach their full potential.

Practitioners observe and assess each child to understand their strengths and identify any areas where they may need additional support.

If your child has Special Educational Needs or a disability (SEND), activities can be adapted and targeted to ensure they make the best possible progress.

On entry to the Foundation Stage, the children are taught the 'Five Finger Plan'. This is a child friendly way of teaching our expectations.



The Five Finger Plan consists of:

- We are caring and sharing
- We listen to each other
- We touch gently and speak kindly
- We are all friends
- Thumbs up if you remember this!

These then form the basis for our school rules, which are:

- Touch gently, not roughly
- Be polite and respectful
- Look out for each other – be friendly to others
- Look after our school and keep it tidy
- Try your best!

Recording your Child's Progress

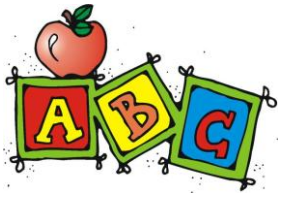
We carefully track and support your child's progress throughout their time in the Foundation Stage.

- We keep a record of your child's development as they learn and grow
- You will have opportunities to discuss your child's progress at two parents' meetings
- You will receive an end of year report before they move up to F2

Your child's journey begins with the "All About Me" profile, which is completed before they start in Foundation 1. This forms the starting point for their records and is built on throughout their time with us.
In their final term in Foundation 2, your child will be assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELGs) and supported as they prepare for the next stage of school.

Learning Journeys

Each child has their own Learning Journey, which shows their progress over time. These include:

- Photographs
- Examples of work
- Special moments and celebrations

At the end of each year, your child will bring their Learning Journey home to share with you and your family.