

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Elm Class!

A very warm welcome to you and your child as they begin their exciting journey at Kirkham and Wesham Primary School.

Starting school is a very special milestone, and we are delighted to welcome you and your child to our Reception class. The first few weeks and months are all about helping the children feel happy, safe, settled and confident in their new environment.

Reception is such an important year in your child's education. Throughout the year, we will support the children to develop their independence, confidence and curiosity while building the foundations for their future learning. Through a mixture of play, exploration, adult-led learning and carefully planned experiences, the children will develop skills across all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

We want every child to feel proud of themselves and excited to come to school each day. We will celebrate their achievements, encourage them to have a go at new things and support them to develop positive relationships with their friends and adults in school.

At Kirkham and Wesham Primary School, we believe that children thrive when school and home work together. Your support at home will make a valuable difference to your child's learning and development, and we look forward to working closely with you throughout the year.

PE

Our PE lessons take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Children should come to school wearing their full uniform as we promote independent and self-confidence by getting changed in school. PE kits should include the following:

- White PE T-shirt
- Red shorts (weather permitting)
- Black trainers

Please ensure that all clothing is clearly labelled with your child's name. PE kits will be kept in school and sent home every half term to be washed.

PE in Reception will focus on developing children's fundamental movement skills, including balancing, running, jumping, throwing, catching and moving safely in different ways. These skills support children's physical development, coordination, confidence and independence.

Healthy Snacks and Water Bottles

As a Healthy School, children are encouraged to enjoy healthy snacks at school.

Please ensure your child brings a named water bottle to school every day. Water is available throughout the day to help children stay hydrated and ready to learn.

Please make sure that all water bottles and clothing are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Reading

Reading is one of the most important ways you can support your child's learning in Reception.

Throughout the year, we will develop children's love of books, listening skills, vocabulary, comprehension and early reading skills. We will share a wide range of stories, rhymes and high-quality texts in school.

As your child develops their phonics knowledge, they will bring home phonetically decodable books to practise the sounds and words they have been learning in school.

Please try to:

- Read with your child regularly.
- Encourage your child to talk about the pictures, characters and events in stories.
- Ask questions about what they have heard or read.
- Encourage your child to have a go at sounding out words independently.
- Re-read familiar books to help develop confidence and fluency.
- Record your child's reading in their reading diary.

Remember, reading to your child is just as important as listening to them read. Sharing stories together helps develop vocabulary, imagination and a lifelong love of reading.

Phonics

Your child will begin their formal phonics journey in Reception. We will be following the FFT Success for All Phonics programme.

Children will learn to recognise and pronounce sounds, blend sounds together to read words and develop their ability to segment words for writing.

Regular reading and practising the sounds your child has learnt at school will help to reinforce their learning and build confidence.

Please don't worry if your child is still developing these skills. Every child learns at their own pace, and we will work closely with you to support their progress.

Writing and Mark Making

In Reception, we will encourage children to see themselves as writers from the very beginning.

Children will have lots of opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and practise mark making through drawing, painting, writing, play and practical activities.

We will work on developing:

- Pencil control and grip
- Fine motor skills
- Letter formation
- Phonics and spelling
- Vocabulary and sentence development
- Confidence in expressing ideas through writing

At home, you can support your child by encouraging them to draw, make marks, practise writing their name and talk about the things they have created.

Maths

Maths in Reception will be explored through a combination of practical activities, play and adult-led learning.

We will develop children's understanding of number, counting, sorting, matching, comparing, patterns, shape, space and measure.

We encourage children to use mathematical language throughout their everyday experiences. Simple activities such as counting objects, comparing amounts, spotting shapes and looking for patterns at home can make a big difference.

Learning Through Play

Play is an incredibly important part of learning in Reception.

Through carefully planned play experiences, children will develop their communication, language, social skills, creativity, problem-solving and independence.

You may hear your child talking about things they have been "playing" with at school, but behind their play is a wealth of learning and development!

We will provide opportunities for children to explore both independently and alongside their friends, allowing them to follow their interests while being supported to develop new skills and knowledge.

Independence

One of our key aims in Reception is to help children become increasingly independent and confident.

We will encourage children to:

- Put on and take off their own coats.
- Manage their belongings.
- Look after their classroom and resources.
- Use the toilet independently.
- Wash their hands.
- Make choices and express their needs.
- Have a go at new and challenging activities.

Please encourage your child to practise these skills at home too. Giving children time to have a go for themselves is one of the best ways to build confidence and independence.

Communication

My aim is for every child to feel happy, safe, valued and successful in Reception.

If you have any questions, worries or concerns throughout the year, please do not hesitate to contact me via Class Dojo or arrange an appointment through the school office.

We know that starting school can be a big change for both children and parents, so please remember that we are here to support you. There may be bumps along the way as your child settles into school life, and we will always work together to help them feel secure and confident.

Please remember that teachers operate 'quiet hours' during evenings and weekends, so responses may not always be immediate.

Thank you for your continued support and for trusting us with such an important part of your child's journey.

We are looking forward to a wonderful year of learning, playing, growing and making memories together. Most importantly, we hope your child leaves Reception feeling proud of how much they have achieved and excited for the next step in their school journey.

Kind regards,

Miss C Ingham

Reception Teacher