

Churchill Street

Rochdale

OL12 7DJ

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Vyse

[www.meanwood.rochdale.sch.uk](http://www.meanwood.rochdale.sch.uk/)

**Tel:** 01706 648197

**Email:** [office@meanwood.rochdale.sch.uk](mailto:office@meanwood.rochdale.sch.uk)

Meanwood

Primary & Nursery School



A parent’s guide to

Starting School

# Nursery and Reception

Making The Difference

Making The Difference

# Welcome to Meanwood Primary & Nursery School

Dear Parents and Carers,

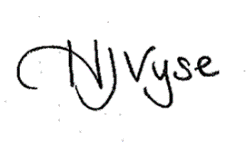
We are delighted that your child will be joining our school’s EYFS unit at Meanwood this academic year and we are looking forward to getting, or in many cases, continuing to get to know them!

Starting school or nursery should be a happy and exciting time for both your child and for you. We know that you will have lots of questions to ask us and the purpose of this booklet is to begin to answer at least some of those questions.

We hope that you are looking forward to joining us and taking part in all that we can offer your family. We will do our very best to make you and your child feel comfortable, secure and valued. Our aim is to provide your child with the very best care and education and we hope that you will work with us, in partnership, to achieve this aim.

Please do not hesitate to talk to us if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs HJ Vyse

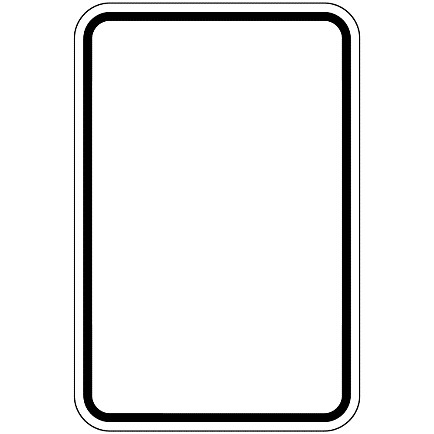
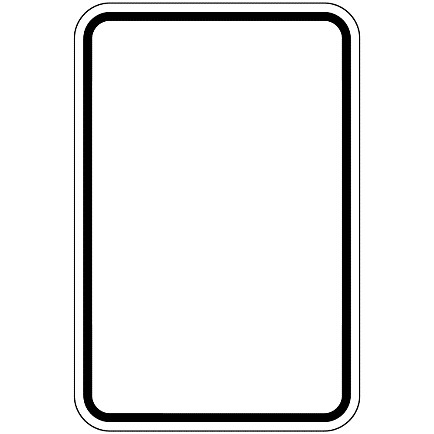
Headteacher



Making The Difference

# Our Team

**Nursery**







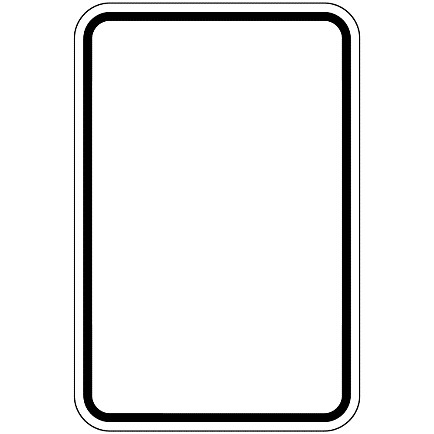
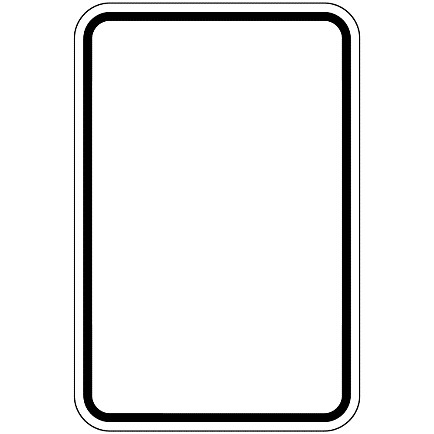
**Miss Smith**

**Teaching Assistant**

**Miss Gartside**

**Teacher**

# Reception





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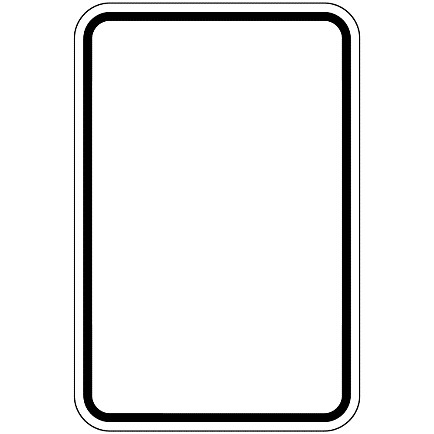
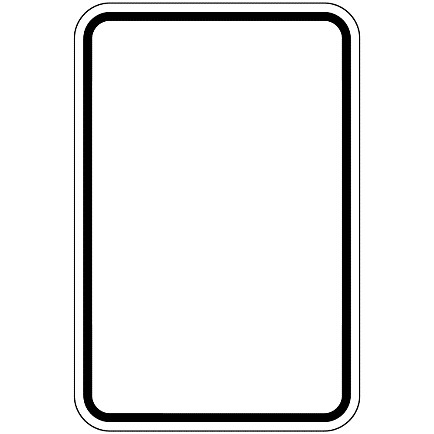
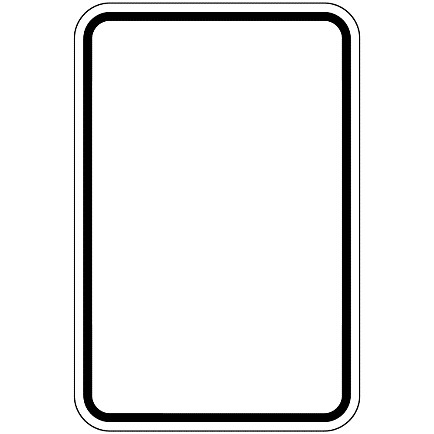
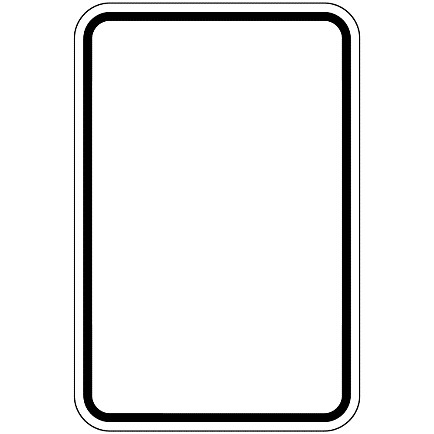
**Mrs Bradley**

**Teacher/**

**EYFS Lead**

**Mrs Wright**

**Teacher**







**Miss Wolfenden**

**Teaching Assistant**

**Miss Hurn**

**Teaching Assistant**

**Ms Mahmood Teaching Assistant**

**Miss Lawlor**

**Teaching Assistant**

Kindness - Respect - Responsibility

**Which class is my child in?**

Our Reception unit has places for 30 children per class and is organised into two registration classes. We are a team teaching school, which means that all the children will work with a number of teachers and teaching assistants both indoors as well as in the outdoor classroom and garden. This allows teachers to share their curriculum expertise and also encourages children to develop confidence and resilience as they learn to work with a range of different children and adults.

We are very fortunate at Meanwood that we also have a nursery. There is a qualified teacher in the nursery and a Level 3 teaching assistant.

Other adults are added where children with additional needs are identified. There are 26 part time places for 3 and 4 year olds each morning from 8:45 – 11:45.



**What happens before my child starts school in Reception?**

You will have received information about transition visits for Reception. This programme of events gives the teachers an opportunity to establish partnerships with parents and to answer any questions and hear any concerns. It is important that you take every opportunity for your children to visit us so they can feel happy and confident about coming to school. If you have missed any sessions and would like to arrange another visit, please contact Mrs Bradley via the office.

Please have a look on our school Facebook page and school website for more information and updates. These can be found by Googling Meanwood Primary School for the website and putting Meanwood Primary School into the search bar on Facebook.

We are always available to answer any questions via email or phone.

Things to do:

* Read this starting school booklet which is also available on the school’s website
* Ensure your child can dress and undress independently and can manage cutlery to eat their lunch.
* Order uniform via Ziggy's and Monkhouse in Rochdale or buy this from a supermarket
* Grey trousers, skirt or pinafore
* White polo shirt (available with Meanwood logo – logo is not essential – plain is fine)
* Navy jumper or cardigan (available with Meanwood logo – logo is not essential – plain is fine)
* Book bag (no rucksacks please)
* PE kit (blue or black shorts, white t-shirt, pumps) in a PE bag

**From Wednesday 6th September 2023:**

* ****All Reception children are due to start
* New nursery starters will be contacted with a start date.

### What do I do on the first day?

On the first morning, please arrive at school calmly and happily, ready for school to begin at 8:45am. Bring your child into the Reception playground where a member of the team will welcome you and direct you to your child's class. Please say goodbye and leave quickly and calmly!

In Reception and Nursery, a fruit snack is available when your child needs it throughout the day. Therefore, your child will not need to bring in any snacks from home. A water bottle containing fresh, plain water should be provided from home and brought into school every day. Children are encouraged to drink plenty of water.



At the end of the day; 3:15pm for Reception and 11:45am for Nursery you will need to collect your child from their classroom door. To begin with, ensuring that all of the children go home with the correct adult will be quite slow as we want to be sure that all of our children stay safe.

Please be patient and this will speed up as we get to know everyone. Please let us know if someone else will be collecting your child as we cannot let them go with a stranger to us.

### What happens at lunchtime?

We are committed to promoting healthy lifestyles for our pupils and our school kitchen supports this by providing freshly cooked, healthy hot meals. Pupils are encouraged to try new foods and are seated in groups to help promote good social habits. The class teachers and teaching assistants will support your child as they settle into the lunchtime routine. A copy of the menu can be sent home each term.

The children choose from 3 options each day. There is always a vegetarian and a halal option.

Some children choose to bring a healthy packed lunch instead; sweets and fizzy drinks are not allowed and you are reminded that we aim to be as nut free as humanly possible.

### Will my child be allowed to go to the toilet?

We will offer your child the opportunity to go to the toilet regularly and allow them to go when they feel it necessary. We encourage children to be independent, particularly with their hygiene needs, such as washing hands, but will support them when needed.

### Will my child be safe?

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure; when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. At Meanwood, we take all necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in our care. We promote good health, manage behaviour effectively, ensure the suitability of staff, provide a safe and stimulating environment. Our Early Years teaching staff are appropriately qualified and experienced to work with very young children and the areas we use are regularly monitored for safety and security.

**Please feel free to read the relevant policies and information leaflets that are available on our website or from the school office.**

### What will my child do all day?

We believe that pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn best through play-based activities and first-hand experiences that are both enjoyable and challenging. We aim for them to become self-motivated, independent learners through a balance of child initiated (where children decide what they want to do) and adult led experiences.

We provide and are continually developing a high quality curriculum in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. The curriculum is wide and varied, and builds on your child’s existing knowledge, skills and experiences.

‘Learning through focused play!’

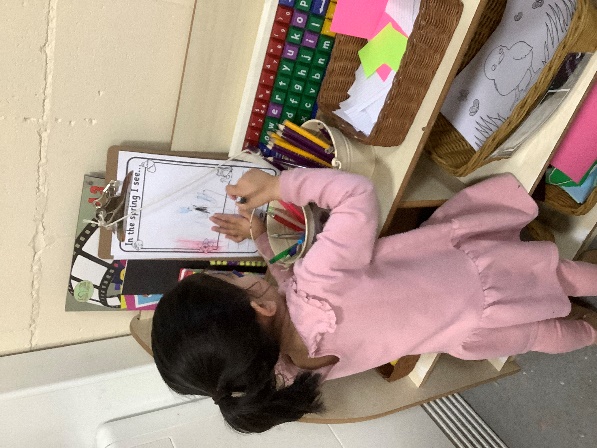
If at the end of a day your child tells you that they have *“just played”*, rest assured that your child’s day will have been well planned and purposeful!

Our curriculum is based on seven different areas of learning:

1. **Personal, social and emotional development** – this concentrates on children developing a positive respect for themselves and others; building self-confidence, making new friends, interacting with adults and gaining a positive disposition to learn.
2. **Communication and language** – this covers important aspects of language development; communicating, speaking and listening.
3. **Physical development** - this concentrates on developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments; including fine motor skills: use of pencil, scissors and other tools. It also includes establishing positive attitudes towards a healthy and active way of life.
4. **Literacy** - this is the foundations for reading and writing. Activities include learning alphabet sounds, developing handwriting skills and a love of books, both fiction and non-fiction.
5. **Mathematics** – this covers important aspects of mathematical understanding; recognising numerals and using them in practical situations and provides the foundations for calculating and shape, space and measures.
6. **Understanding of the world** – this concentrates on developing knowledge and understanding of the environment; other people and cultures; and features of the natural world. It provides the foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning.
7. **Expressive art and design** – this develops the children’s imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways including through music, drama, art and role play.

### How will I know how my child is doing?

Assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) takes place through observations of what the pupils can do and what they say. During the first few weeks of school, we will be assessing the knowledge, skills and understanding of your child using a wide range of tasks covering the EYFS curriculum. This provides the teaching staff with a valuable insight into the pre-school experiences of each child and helps to mould the educational programme or provision for each individual. The results of these informal assessments will be shared during Parent Consultations, which will be held during the Autumn Term and then again in the Spring Term.



We offer regular opportunities for you to find out about your child’s learning through ‘stay and play’ sessions. These are great opportunities to see what is going on in the classroom and for your child to show you themselves! We look forward to welcoming you to those sessions.

### What should my child wear to school?

The children of Meanwood Primary & Nursery School wear a simple uniform of grey or black school trousers, shorts, or skirts and white polo shirts with navy sweatshirts. School sweatshirts with our embroidered school logo can be purchased via Ziggy's or Monkhouse in Rochdale or a plain navy jumper or cardigan can be purchased from any supermarket. During warmer weather, girls may wear blue checked dresses. It is important that the children are dressed appropriately for school; we would therefore ask that no jeans, tracksuit bottoms or leggings are worn. PE kit consists of a plain white t shirt and blue or black shorts and pumps.

Footwear should consist of a sturdy black shoe with a closed toe and no heels.

#### Jewellery is NOT APPROPRIATE for school and any long hair MUST be tied back.

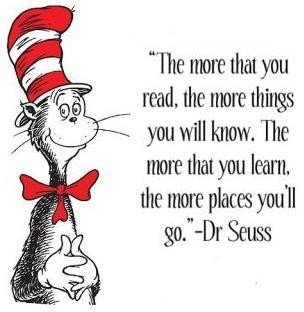
The school uniform is not compulsory for nursery children, although they do look very smart.

### How can I help my child look after their belongings?

You will definitely hear this a lot: please, please, please clearly name all belongings - it is very hard to know which child owns which sweatshirt or which lost black shoe!

### PLEASE ENSURE ALL UNIFORM IS CORRECTLY NAMED!

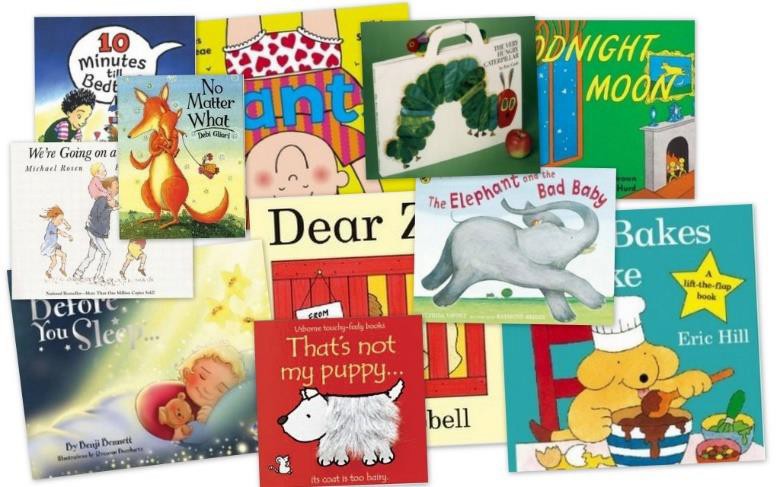
**Will my child bring a reading book home?**

In Reception, to support your child’s reading development, we provide a wide selection of home reading books that are changed regularly.

Children will be encouraged to choose their own story or picture book which an adult will need to read for or with them (e.g. The Gruffalo). Some books may have no words to begin with and are designed to help children become familiar with key reading skills such as turning pages, gathering information from pictures and sequencing events. As your child’s phonic knowledge develops, their choice of home reading books will also widen in line with the sounds that they have learnt.

Book bags are really handy to carry reading books and are available at the uniform shop - please bring this each day. It is not only for carrying reading books but also for any other paper based information that we may need to send to you or vice versa.

Our home reading system is designed to support the very structured nature of learning to read and the Reception team will monitor this through a Reading Log that will travel between home and school. These diaries make a positive contribution to our Home-School Partnership and are an important part of our school routine. Please encourage your child to bring their diary home each evening and return it each morning.

At Meanwood we firmly believe that ALL children should be taught the basic skills of reading - your child will be given a wide variety of experiences to promote these skills.

Learning to read will involve both learning key words and learning the sounds that individual and groups of letters make (phonics), which are essential skills for word building.

Through sharing stories and playing games we will encourage your child to develop a love of stories and books.

### How can I best help my child?

As a parent, you will want to provide the best for your child and support their learning in school.

***“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.”***

The greatest support that you can give to your child is to:

* + **build their confidence** and independence;
  + **listen to your child** and have **high expectations** that are reasonable and achievable;
  + expect your child to **share things**;
  + **be interested** in your child and their experiences;
  + help your child to learn to **dress independently**, putting jumpers on and doing shoes up;
  + make sure your child feels **confident to use the toilet** and wash their hands;
  + **read to them**… often;
  + **get involved** in the life of the school.

When concerned about your child, even over the smallest issues, please speak to one of the Nursery or Reception team first. In partnership, we can provide experiences so that your child can gain maximum benefit and enjoyment from school. Every child is an individual whose learning is unique and personal. Parents and school staff need to work together to ensure that they provide the opportunity and motivation to promote learning and the acquisition of new skills.

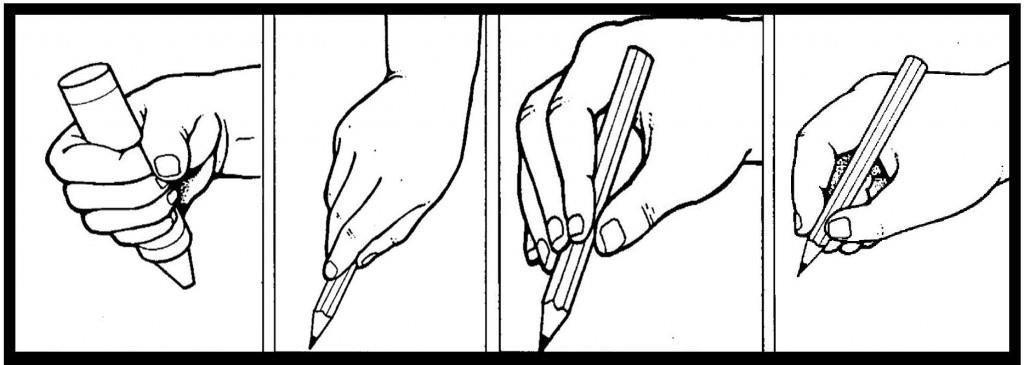
### Learning to count

It is extremely helpful if children have had the opportunity to count and recognise numbers before starting school. Simple ‘games’ and exercises like counting steps as you go up the stairs or reciting countdowns for a rocket blasting off into the sky for example, are all incredibly valuable experiences.

**0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9**

### Can I help my child write their own name?

There is only one way to form letters and that is the correct way! However, even more important than letter formation, learning to hold a pencil, brush or crayon correctly is vital if your child is to master the art of writing.



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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1 – 1 ½ years**  **Cylindrical Grasp** | **2 – 3 years**  **Digital Grasp** | **3 ½ - 4 years**  **Modified Tripod Grasp** | **4 ½ - 7 years**  **Tripod Grasp** |

As your child enters our Reception class, they will be encouraged to develop their pencil grip. Above is an image to show how their pencil grip should change as they develop from ***mark-makers*** into ***early writers***.

There is no requirement for your child to be able to write their name before joining our Reception class. They should however, be **able to recognise their name** when it is written *for* them. If your child does show an interest in writing their name then please feel free to encourage them using the letter sounds rather than letter names, and the script below. Please teach your child to **use a capital letter at the beginning of their name and lower case for the remainder!** If in doubt, please ask.

## a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z

**We look forward to welcoming you to Meanwood**

**School Holiday Dates – 2023/2024**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Half term 1 | Inset days – School closed to children | Monday 4th September 2023 & Tuesday 5th September 2023 |
| First day back at school | Wednesday 6th September 2023 |
| Last day at school | Friday 20th October 2023 |
| Half term holiday – School closed | Monday 23rd October 2023 – Friday 27th October 2023 |

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| Half term 2 | School re-opens | Monday 30th October 2023 |
| Last day at school | Thursday 21st December 2023 |
| Inset day – School closed to children | Friday 22nd December 2023 |
| Christmas holidays – School closed | Monday 25th December 2023 – Friday 5th January 2024 |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Half term 3 | School re-opens | Monday 8th January 2024 |
| Last day at school | Friday 16th February 2024 |
| Half term holiday – School closed | Monday 19th February 2024 – Friday 23rd February 2024 |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Half term 4 | School re-opens | Monday 26th February 2024 |
| Last day at school | Thursday 28th March 2024 |
| Public holiday – School closed | Friday 29th March 2024 & Monday 1st April 2024 |
| Easter holidays – School closed | Tuesday 2nd April 2024 – Friday 12th April 2024 |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Half term 5 | School re-opens | Monday 15th April 2024 |
| Public holiday – School closed | Monday 6th May 2024 |
| Last day at school | Friday 24th May 2024 |
| Public holiday – School closed | Monday 27th May 2024 |
|  | Half term holiday – School closed | Tuesday 28th May 2024 – Friday 31st May 2024 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Half term 6 | School re-opens | Monday 3rd June 2024 |
| Last day at school | Friday 19th July 2024 |
| Inset days – School closed to children | Monday 22nd July 2024 & Tuesday 23rd July 2024 |
| Summer holidays – School closed | Wednesday 24th July 2024 – Date TBC |