

# Starting School at Melbourne Infant School



**September 2025**

# Our Vision

To inspire, motivate and engage all children to become life-long learners, who reach for the stars.

## Our Values

Our school values are reflected through our STAR Standards:



Melbourne Infant School

STAR Standards

- S** - Show resilience, and work together.
- T** - Try our best, and solve problems.
- A** - Always make good choices, looking after our school and each other.
- R** - Rise to challenges, and learn from our mistakes.

We aim to achieve our vision by working together as a team – staff, parents, governors and local community – to enable our school to **SHINE**.

We offer a **S**upportive, fun and caring atmosphere, where children access an ambitious, globally diverse, purposeful and creative curriculum where achievement in all areas is celebrated

Create a Happy, safe and stimulating environment where all individuals are valued, diversity is embraced, and STAR potential realised

Foster self-belief and a positive self-image, which encourage  
Individual talents to shine, and children engage collaboratively with  
our school community

Provide opportunities to **N**urture curiosity and exploration so that children develop emotional literacy and a lifelong love of learning

Respect ourselves and each other, **E**nabling us to be active participants in the world around us.

## Our Motto

Shine brightly together and reach for the stars.



# Our Reception Teaching team in September 2025

## **Seahorse Class**

**Class Teacher: Mrs. Reed**

*SLT, Literacy, Phonics, Music and EYFS Lead*



## **Dragonfly Class –**

**Class Teachers:**

**Mrs. Gibbs**

*Headteacher*

**Mrs. Martin**

*Mental Health and Well Being and RE Lead*





# The school day

## Arrival and collection

Children arrive at school between 8.45am and 8.55am. They arrive with their parents at their classroom door, where a member of staff is waiting to welcome them.

School finishes at 3.20pm. Parents should line up to collect their child from outside their classroom, and we ask that parents are patient whilst each child is allocated to their respective adult.

## Morning session

Once children have arrived at school, the morning session will commence with self-registration and a selection of morning activities. The morning will then involve a short, whole class learning activity, followed by a period of continuous provision where children will be involved in free-choice, play-based activities.

Children will play both indoors in their classroom, and outside in the EYFS outdoor area. They will also work with an adult in group activities throughout the week, focusing on reading, writing, mathematics and topic-based skills.

Adults will support the children in their learning, being involved in their play and observing what they are doing.



The session will end with another whole class learning activity, before preparing for lunch time.

# Afternoon session

After lunch, the children will return to their classroom for the afternoon session. This will involve a short, whole class learning activity, and periods of indoor and outdoor continuous provision.



The afternoon will end with a story, singing and snack time, before getting ready to go home.

## Time to eat!

### Snack time

Children will have a snack in the morning and also one in the afternoon. Children bring in one snack from home in a named container, and we ask that this is fresh fruit or raisins. The other snack is a piece of fruit provided by school.



Children need to bring a named, non-spill drinks container each day, filled with water only.

### Lunch time

At lunch time, Reception children eat in the school hall. All children at Melbourne Infant School are eligible for a free school meal each day.

Alternatively if you prefer, you can bring in a packed lunch from home. We ask that parents choose one or other option, and do not frequently switch between the two.



# Learning Landscape

## Classrooms

Our Reception unit is set out in a way that allows children to access resources independently. We promote collaboration and self chosen purpose. We have a large area, covering two classrooms and an outdoor area. We offer children effective continuous provision that is open-ended, accessible, flexible and skills-driven. We use natural materials to enhance their sensory development and so they can use their own imagination and creativity to learn. Our snack area is open all day and children can access fruit and water whenever they would like to. Children can choose where they will explore each day and have access to all areas of the Early Years environment. Our learning landscape enables children to bring their magic with them into the environment and shape it themselves.





# Learning outdoors

We spend lots of time learning and playing outdoors. We have our very own outdoor garden, which is just for us! We are outside every day, so children need to come to school with clothing that is appropriate for the weather.

In cold and wet weather, children must bring a suitable coat, and hats, scarves and gloves when it is very cold. In summer, children need to have sun cream applied before school and bring a sun hat each day.

We ask that all children bring a pair of wellington boots to leave at school for use during outdoor play.



## Learning through Play

*"Children are magic. They live in a world that overflows with exploration, connections, dreams and imagination. They are trying to share this world with us all the time, because they want us to step through the door that leads there and join them."*

Greg Bottrill





Our Early Years Curriculum is taught through a 'hands on' practical approach, embracing and encouraging the children's interests. The children learn through purposeful play, using a range of resources that ignite their curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. We strive to create a 'play-culture' where the adults become co-players with the children. Co-play is the key to adventuring with children into play, where we are as much as part of it as they are and the environment around us. Through co-play we are able to get to know each unique child, understand where they are in their learning and can identify and address next steps. It is through the children's play that we can develop skills, support the children and ensure each child is making good progress. Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning and therefore deserves to be a high priority within the learning landscape.



# The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

In Reception we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, developing children's skills across seven defined areas of learning. These areas are all of equal importance and are divided into two groups:

## **PRIME AREAS OF LEARNING**

- Communication and Language (Listening, Attention and Understanding; Speaking)
- Physical Development (Gross Motor Skills; Fine Motor Skills)
- Personal, Social and Emotion Development (Self-Regulation; Managing Self; Building Relationships)

## **SPECIFIC AREAS OF LEARNING**

- Literacy (Comprehension; Word Reading; Writing)
- Maths (Number; Numerical Patterns)
- Understanding of the World (Past and Present; People, Culture and Communities; The Natural World)
- Expressive Arts and Design (Creating with Materials; Being Imaginative and Expressive)

There are seventeen Early Learning Goals your child is expected to achieve by the end of EYFS. The aim is for all children to achieve 'a good level of development' by the end of EYFS. This means achieving the Early Learning Goals in prime areas of learning and Literacy and Maths.

# THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The EYFS framework identifies three characteristics of effective teaching and learning:

- Playing and Exploring (investigate and experience things, and 'have a go').
- Active Learning (concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy activities).
- Creating and Critical Thinking (having and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things).

Facilitated by an engaging environment and nurturing adults, we encourage these characteristics, enabling children to extend vocabulary and develop communication skills. Therefore becoming confident, independent and resilient learners.

## Phonics

Children will access Phase 2, 3 and 4 phonics in reception through Bug Club. Children learn phonemes (sounds), graphemes (letter shapes) and actions. Letters are quickly blended together to make words.





## Wordless books
























During the first part of the autumn term, your child will bring home wordless books. Sharing wordless books is a fantastic way of building important literacy skills, including listening skills, vocabulary, comprehension and an awareness of how stories are structured. Wordless books are told entirely through illustrations and engage children in prediction, critical thinking, meaning making and storytelling.

## Bug Club


Bug Club is our reading program to help develop confident and motivated readers. It combines physical books, interactive eBooks and an online reading world. There is a range of books, offering variety to keep children engaged and develop a love of reading. The books use familiar characters and are levelled to provide manageable steps in reading progression. This creates a sense of ongoing achievement.

**Phase 2**

### Sound Mat

s	ss	a	t	p	i	n	m	d
								
g	o	c	k	ck	e	u	r	
								
h	b	f	ff	l	ll			
								

Sun, Dress, Apple, Tap, Pan, Insect, Nest, Mat, Dog, Goat, Octopus, Cat, Key, Sack, Elephant, Umbrella, Rat, Hat, Bag, Fan, Muffin, Leg, Doll

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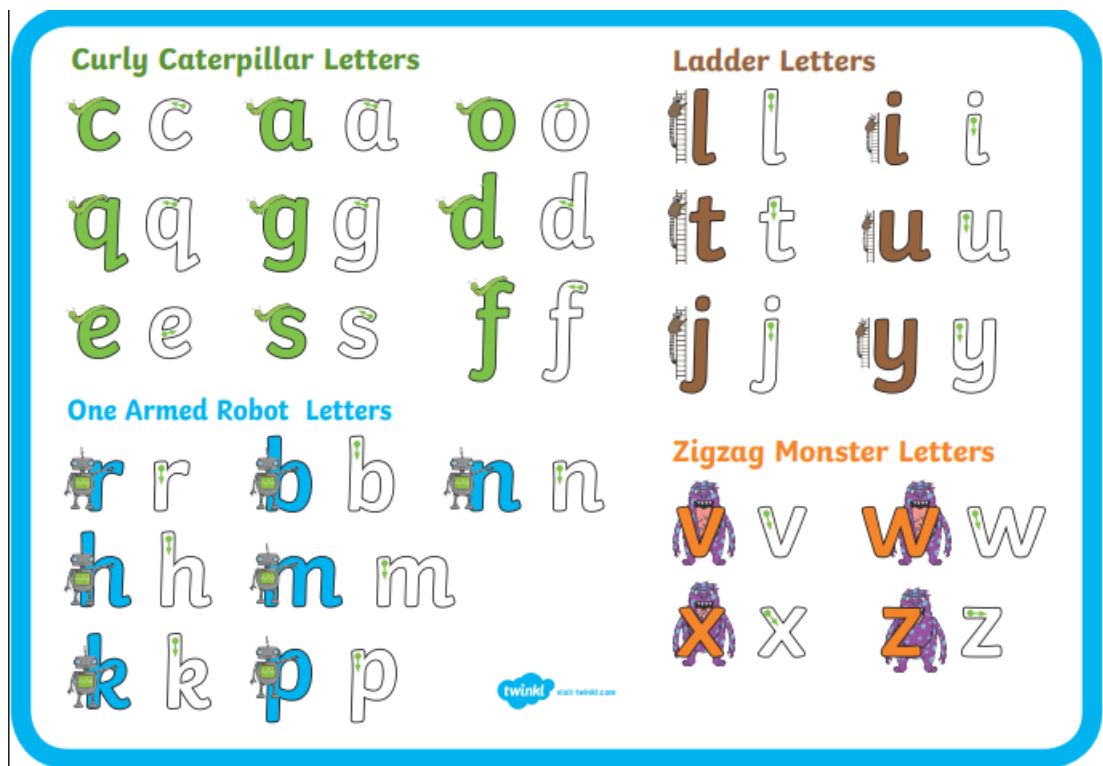
## Drawing Club

Drawing Club is an approach designed by Greg Bottrill that immerses children into a world full of imagination. We fully embrace drawing club and can see the joy it brings to our children. It is through drawing club that we open up the magic world of tales and story to children whilst at the same time enriching their language skills, developing their fine motor and share a really special time with them. Drawing Club is a fantastic place to start a child's experience of school 'Literacy'. Drawing Club is based upon making conversation, mark making and mathematics. We use a book, traditional tale or an animation as a portal for the week. Children learn new, exciting vocabulary that we revisit each day of the week. We draw characters on a Monday, settings on a Tuesday and explore adventures on a Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.



## Letter formation

The letters of the alphabet can be broken into different colour-coded groups: 'Curly Caterpillar Letters', 'Ladder Letters', 'One Armed Robot Letters', and 'Zigzag Monster Letters'. Each of these groups has visual features that are common across all the letters, such as all the 'Ladder Letters' containing a straight vertical line. In this way, children can learn to recognise the overlapping characteristics of letters, and breaking the alphabet into these smaller groups.





## Maths

We use Mastering Number in Reception four times a week. It aims to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children from Reception through to Year 1 and Year 2. Children in Reception will have a daily teacher-led session of 10 to 15 minutes, designed to ensure that pupils develop fluency with, and understanding of, number that is crucial to future success in maths. We also teach Shape, Space and Measure using the White Rose Scheme.



# Preparing for School and Settling in

We have a phased start to the school year, to help children to settle in gradually to school life. Your child will feel part of the school family in no time at all!

The following suggestions may help your child with the settling in period and make their transition into Melbourne Infant School easier. Please also refer to the Derbyshire 'Ten keys for school readiness'. This document can be found on our website.

Please encourage him/her to:

- Play and share with other children
- Go to the toilet independently
- Hang up his/her own coat
- Dress and undress independently
- Eat with a knife and fork and use table manners
- Tidy up toys and games.
- Communicate his/her needs and feelings to a grown up
- Follow verbal instructions when given.

To help your child's day run smoothly:

- Please label all items entering school with their name.
- Please send in reading books, snack and a named water bottle every day, along with appropriate clothing for outdoors.
- Please arrive on time, and collect your child promptly, ensuring their journey to school is as relaxed as possible.
- Please make drop-offs quick, even if your child is upset when leaving you- they will calm down much quicker once you are out of sight!

# What to bring:

Each day children will need:

- A bookbag or rucksack which is big enough to hold an A4 reading wallet, and other items
- A4 reading wallet containing reading books (this will be provided by school)
- Named non-spill drinks container filled with water only
- Fresh fruit or raisins in a plastic container for snack time
- Coat/rain coat
- Hats, scarves, gloves/ sun hat
- Spare uniform / underwear left in your child's bag in case of accidents

At the start of each term children need to bring in a pair of wellington boots for outdoor learning. These can be taken home in the holidays to be size-checked.

**All** items brought into school need to be **labelled** with your child's name.

# What to wear:

At Melbourne Infant School, the uniform is as follows:

- Royal blue sweatshirt/ cardigan or jumper
- White/blue shirt or polo shirt
- Grey skirt/ pinafore dress or trousers
- Grey/ black/ white tights or socks
- Black sensible shoes



In summer, items as above or:

- Blue and white gingham dress
- Grey mid length shorts
- Sensible sandals (worn with socks).

All uniform items need to be labelled with your child's name.

As a school we understand that school uniform can be expensive. Therefore, our uniform does not need to have the branded logo on. You can buy the uniform from a range of places including local supermarkets, as well as from Pupils Schoolwear: 35 West St, Swadlincote, DE11 9DN / [www.pupilsschoolwear.co.uk](http://www.pupilsschoolwear.co.uk) (please note Pupils Schoolwear operate on a 2-3 week lead time which can increase during very busy periods).

On days when your child will be involved in lots of physical activity, they will come to school in PE uniform (white t shirt, black/navy shorts, Velcro fastening trainers. On colder days a black/navy zip-up hoody and joggers can be worn). Parents will be notified in advance of these days.

## Before and after school clubs:

We have a before-school club run by Premier Sports which takes place in the school hall. Children can be dropped off from 7.30am for breakfast and activities.

After school, there are a variety of paid clubs which children may sign up to which run until 4.30pm.

You can find more information on before and after school clubs on our website here: -

<https://melbourne-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk/parents/activities>

# Contact details

Should you have any queries, you may contact school using the following:

Tel: 01332 862325

Email: [enquiries@melbourne-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@melbourne-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk)

You may also find further useful information on our school website, including a virtual tour of the school:

<https://www.melbourne-inf.derbyshire.sch.uk/>



# Summer Activities

We have created a pack with some activities to complete over the Summer holidays. The pack includes:

- A personalised name card and a whiteboard pen to practice recognising, copying and writing your name.
- Letter formation sheet.
- Number formation sheet.
- A selection of Nursery rhymes to practice.
- A Memory Envelope, please collect any memories of activities your child has participated in over the holidays. You could include tickets, postcards, photographs, drawings etc. Your child will use their envelope to share their adventures with the class.
- A Little Bit Brave Book. We would like your child to take part in our Reception Reading Challenge. Please share this book over the holidays and return in September. Please take a photo of your child reading this book, it could be in an unusual setting or snuggled up with a parent. We will use this book in the first couple of weeks and make a display of your photographs. We really hope you enjoy sharing this story and look forward to seeing your photos.



**Thank you for your support!**