



Shadwell Primary School
Main Street
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Leeds
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Thursday 18th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re. Plan for Reception to transition to Year 1 in September 2020

As a Federation, we are very conscious of the need to support all our pupils as they transition into school in September. This is our plan for our youngest children who will be moving from Reception to Year 1. We are mindful of the disruption they have experienced and are committed to supporting them as fully as possible. We recognize the specific and unique needs of this year group and have worked closely as a Senior Leadership Team, with the Local Authority, Governors and as an Early Years Team to plan carefully for their return and in developing this strategic plan to recover their missed learning and love of learning in school.

We realise many of you would appreciate some explanations in why we have been forced to make the difficult decisions we have for our Reception children. There have been many factors which have sadly led to our physical inability to bring our youngest children back safely into their Reception setting in school this academic year: we have a significant reduction in staffing capacity due to some shielding staff; some support staff working part-time hours (and having their families at home too) and the requirement to prioritise the available staff for Key Worker provision. All of our teachers are now either teaching or assisting in the emergency aid for Years 1 and 6. We lack indoor building spaces and outdoor spaces which will withstand all weather conditions; we have insufficient facilities for our smallest children to be in school safely and to be taken care of in the way in which you and I would expect as parents, within a Primary School setting.

An initial plan was drafted for the Reception class to return however it had to be rejected upon the grounds that it would compromise the safety of the children, with particular regard to inadequate adult supervision, not least to mention that they would have to access the KS2 (unfamiliar territory) toilets and do this on their own and without any guidance and supervision. We felt that this (as just one example), was completely unsafe and therefore unacceptable – we couldn't guarantee the safety of the children in our care and certainly couldn't allow them to wander around school alone.

We did make a decision in the end however, not to leave the hall lying redundant and in a bid to ensure all children in all year groups can benefit from the available space, will have the opportunity to say goodbye to their current teacher and to meet their new teacher. I know this has been heart-breaking for many of you; it is a travesty that the children have lost this very special year to these circumstances however I hope the plans we have in place to recover lost time in school, help in reassuring you of our commitment to the children in Reception. We tried every permutation for staffing in trying to get Reception back in safely with enough staff but sadly it wasn't possible; If we could have managed this, we would have LOVED for them to have returned and we are really sorry this has been the case.

This plan is an outline of some of the things we hope to provide. It aims to show the possible outcomes of different scenarios around COVID-19 and how we will work to care for and nurture our youngest pupils.



Bramham Shadwell Federation
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Executive Head Teacher; Mrs S Richards BSc (Hons) PGCE
Executive Deputy Head Teacher; Mrs V Wilson BEd (Hons)



Before the end of this term your child/ren will be invited to spend the afternoon (1.00 – 3.30pm) in school to be with their current class teacher, Mrs Williamson (unlike other year groups, we will ensure we release another adult to be available for Reception children on these two afternoons for supervisory purposes eg. toilets). This will be a very special time and will be followed by another afternoon spent with both their current and their new Year 1 teacher, Mrs Barrett.

Mrs Williamson will be in touch with which 'bubble' (group) your child has been allocated to and which day to come. The planned dates for Reception are as follows:

Meet current teacher: **Monday 29th or Tuesday 30th June**

Meet new teacher (with current teacher): **Monday 13th or Tuesday 14th July**

Over the summer, the children will receive a video from their new teachers welcoming them into their classroom. We know from our communication with you that you are keen to support your children and want to be as involved as possible. These videos will enable you to start discussions at home about the changes that will happen in September, but also to highlight the things that are still the same such as some toys, activities, the outdoor area etc. We would suggest that you focus on these with children. We will use these familiar toys and activities to support the children as they settle back in.

Where possible, strategies will be re-established which were working well prior to lockdown, for example, the feelings station. This will give the children more familiar elements to the provision and a sense of comfort.

If Government guidance allows, we would very much like to initially welcome the children back into the Reception classroom. We would like to use the first week to gradually introduce the children to the Year 1 classroom, spending time in both rooms. This will be carefully planned to ensure there is a smooth transition and introduction to the teachers and the new setting. We hope that our Reception staff will be able to welcome the children, spend time with them and help them with this transition. Again, this will depend upon Government guidance and rules around staffing and mixing between groups and classes. We will be able to confirm these plans more definitely and definitively nearer the time, depending upon the situation with COVID-19 and as guidance is made available to us. Given the positive elements of being outside, we very much hope to make the most of our outdoor environment as a safe place for Reception staff to be with your children.

We are planning our Year 1 environment very carefully and will ensure that the Year 1 classroom has many familiar features and a strong "Reception" feeling.

Our emphasis will be around supporting the children's emotional well-being. Our principle aim will be for children to be feel secure and happy in their setting.

Planned Changes to Year 1 Provision

- The children will have access to areas of provision throughout the day in Year 1. Areas will be created that are familiar and exciting to the children for example the lego and small world areas, alongside lots of exciting new areas linked to previous and Year 1 curriculum work.
- The FS and new equipment outside area will be available during specific times of the day for the children to access.
- We have made the decision that Year 1 will continue to use Tapestry, which has previously always only been used in Reception. This will enable you to see the children's achievements throughout the year and to continue to be part of their exciting learning journey. We pledge to spare no expense to ensure these children have everything they need to regain lost time in school.



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- Reception staff will plan and work collaboratively with Year 1 for the first half term, by regularly speaking to the teachers and, if guidance permits, frequently attending sessions and learning. Alternatively, this has been planned to be done during the outdoor sessions.
- A clear handover will take place with regards to the children's achievements this year and next steps based on the teachers' knowledge of the children.
- Lessons will initially be short to ease the children back into the daily class focuses. Daily phonics sessions will continue, number work, reading and a gradual transition into Year 1 expectations and curriculum (with continual evaluation) will ensure each child succeeds from an individual starting point to make excellent progress throughout their Year 1 academic experience.
- If guidance allows, the shared area will be open for the children to access the sand, water and large construction area.
- Again, if guidance allows, a member of the Reception team will be with the children throughout the day in Year 1 (for the first 2 weeks), so that the children have someone that they know to support them throughout the day. At the very least, this will happen in the outdoor sessions.
- The Key Stage 1 Leader (Mrs Pelc, also an EYFS specialist) will work closely with Mrs Williamson, our EYFS Leader, to ensure careful monitoring of the children throughout this transition period and beyond.
- The current Reception class has been allocated a dedicated member of the Senior Leadership Team. Mrs Hall, will also work closely with Mrs Williamson and will spend a significant proportion of her week in Year 1, across both schools in overseeing provision, in reporting to our Early Years Governor, the wider Governing Body and in ensuring a clear link for parents to our leadership throughout the coming months and year.

I hope this helps to create a clearer vision for September with regards to the learning, areas of provision and support for the children. We always plan carefully to ensure a positive transition from Reception to Year 1, but this year has been unique and these plans are specific to the current situation. We have given a great deal of thought to this plan, which we have outlined for you here.

We would like to assure you that our priority in September is to help the children have a smooth transition to Year 1; to feel safe and secure as they return to school and to enjoy learning.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs S. Richards
Executive Head Teacher

Mrs S. Morgan
Chair of Governors

Mrs J. Hall
Assistant Head Teacher

Mrs S. Williamson
EYFS Leader

Mrs B. Mitchell
EYFS Governor



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