Southwold Primary & Nursery School

Be all you can be and together we will shine.

Welcome to the Early Years

Information for parents



Southwold Primary and Nursery School
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HEADTEACHER: Mr Luke Graham
EARLY YEARS LEAD: Mrs V Bending

Meet our team

					
Mrs Graham *Headteacher*	Mrs Holloway *Deputy Head*	Mrs McDonald *SENDCO*	Mrs Palser *Assistant Head*	Mrs Hooton *Assistant Head*	Mrs Bending *Early Years Lead*

Nursery 1 Team Blossom			
	Mrs Green *Nursery Lead*	Mrs Henstridge *Teacher Assistant*	Mrs Morgan *Teacher Assistant*

Nursery 2 Team Apple				
	Mrs Green *Nursery Lead*	Miss Champ *Teacher Assistant*	Mrs Hine *Teacher Assistant*	Mrs McDermott *Teacher Assistant*

Reception Team				
	Mrs Bending *EYFS Lead & Cherry Reception Teacher*	Mr Cane *Birch Reception Teacher*	Mrs Smith *Teacher Assistant*	Miss Hinks *Teacher Assistant*

At Southwold we are a caring, supportive community. Working in partnership with parents, we provide a welcoming and stimulating environment which values, motivates and challenges all children, promoting their independence and celebrating their personal achievements.

This booklet contains lots of information about our Early Years Unit. If you have any questions or queries about anything you read about in here, or would like to come and visit, please contact us at school.

INTRODUCTION



Children are at the centre of everything we do. We celebrate children as individuals who have natural curiosity and thirst for new knowledge through exploration. Children learn best through practical experiences and structured play, and this is at the heart of our Early Years curriculum. At Southwold, our Early Years curriculum offer embraces children from two years through to five years. Our highly experienced team plan together to deliver activities based around rich texts, exciting themes alongside engaging in children's interest points and next steps. Our unit is friendly, dynamic, creative, and stimulating and focuses whole heartedly on the high-quality provision within the learning landscape both inside and out and the interactions made with children.



At Southwold we embrace the love of reading. This starts very much in Early Years encouraging children to use their imaginations to create their very own stories using familiar characters, objects, and fabrics. We use oral story telling in our unit, and this has provided our children with the confidence to listen, tell and go on to write their own stories with excitement, action, and wonder. Children have great fun in phonics using our scheme 'Little Wandle letters and Sounds'. Nursery enjoy discovering sounds in the environment and listening to nursery rhymes before moving on to recognising sounds and starting to blend with them in Reception. The process of reading is a delight to be a part of and the most wonderful moment is when a child picks up a book and starts to tell a story, look closely at the pictures, and finally read their first words.

Exploring and investigating number is also an important part of the daily curriculum at Southwold. The children have continuous opportunities to engage with practical equipment to enable them to practise a skill, secure and question the new concept and then teacher led enhancements to enable deeper thinking.



In the Early Years it is important to celebrate your child's achievements both at home and in school and use these to decide upon their next steps, therefore we are excited to introduce you to our home school learning journal called Tapestry. This is an online tool used to record your child's learning and progress.

As a school we are extremely fortunate to have an inclusion team who work alongside children from across the year groups and support parents too. Our 'Sensory Room' and 'Well Being Suite' are used regularly by our Early Years children and enable further sensory adventures and opportunities to play alongside our experienced staff.

At Southwold we can offer you…

- ✓ A caring, experienced Early Years team with consistently high expectations, modelling and building positive relationships.
- ✓ A support system based on choices when things go wrong.
- ✓ A values-based approach which promotes positivity, respect, honesty, determination but most importantly happiness.
- ✓ A rich, engaging curriculum focused on rich texts, exciting themes, interest points and next steps which also promotes curiosity, wonder, questioning and much more.
- ✓ Early years education for two-year-olds through to five-year-olds.
- ✓ Excellent transition through to Key Stage 1.
- ✓ Daily reflection time for all.
- ✓ Story, rhyme, and song times galore.
- ✓ Assemblies which model and celebrate values within our unit and wider school.
- ✓ Family Learning sessions for parents and children.
- ✓ Opportunities to work alongside your child in Maths and Phonics.

This booklet has been written to give you an insight into the wonderful world of Early Years at Southwold and we very much look forward to welcoming you and your child to our school; come and join the fun!

Luke Graham
Headteacher

Val Bending
Early Years Lead

WHERE WILL YOU FIND US?



The 2-year-old Nursery Class is located through the main entrance, turn right at the pencil fence gate. The children will need to wait outside in the garden until the door is opened at 9am. All children will be released at the end of the session at 12pm.



The 3- and 4-year-old Nursery Class is located through the main office entrance, turning left into the garden. The children will need to wait outside in the garden until the gate is opened at 9am. All children will be released at the end of the session from the same door at 12pm, unless they are staying all day until 3pm.

The Reception Classes can be accessed from the Reception gate entrance. Children will come in via the cloakroom door. The reception children will be in school from 8.45am until 3.15pm.

What will happen at lunchtimes?

The Nursery children eat in the school hall then have their playtime in their Nursery Garden. The Reception children eat in the school hall and then play outside in the school playground alongside the older children.

MORE ABOUT THE EARLY YEARS…

In our secure and caring environment, the children work towards a set of Early Years statements, which set high but achievable expectations for the children to reach by the end of the Reception year.

Through a broad and balanced curriculum, your child will be offered a variety of activities and experiences. Activities are organised for small groups as well as opportunities for individual work. The children are encouraged to participate in planning and reviewing their work, managing their own time and equipment.

In Nursery we work in small groups, and this allows us to get to know the children and their families individually. Focusing on a small group of children means that we are better able to plan for their learning needs and build a special relationship with them.

THE PRINCIPLES OF EARLY YEARS

The Early Years Curriculum is based upon four principles:

- A Unique Child- Developing resilient, capable, confident, and self-assured individuals.
- Positive Relationships- Supporting the children and becoming strong and independent.

- ❖ Enabling Environments- Where opportunities and experiences respond to the individual needs of the child by developing a strong partnership between practitioners, parents, and the child.
- ❖ Learning and Developing- An acknowledgement that children learn in different ways and at different rates.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING

Planning for the learning landscape (inside and outside), interest points and next steps will reflect on the different ways that children learn and echo these in their practice. At Southwold School, we support children in using the three characteristics of effective learning. These are:

- ❖ Playing and Exploring- Children investigate and experience things and have a go.
- ❖ Active Learning- Children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements.
- ❖ Creating and thinking critically- Children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PRIME AREA)
(Self- Regulation, Managing Self, Building Relationships)

This **prime** area focuses on children learning how to work, play, co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. It covers important aspects of personal, social, moral, and spiritual development, including the development of personal values, self-regulation and an understanding of self and others.



In the early years, children will begin to show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly. They will start to work and play cooperatively and take turns with others. During their time with us, children will become more confident to try new activites and they will begin to show independence, resilience, and perserverence when faced with different challenges.



When ready, children will start to manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs and will begin to understand the importance of healthy food choices.

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PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
(Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills)

This **prime** area focuses on children developing physical control, mobility, awareness of space and manipulative skills in the indoor and outdoor learning environments. They include negotiating space and obstacles carefully, demonstrate strength, balance and developing coordination when playing and using varied sized tools, leading to the use of scissors, paintbrushes, and cutlery. Children start to make marks using different materials on small and large scales and work towards establishing their tripod grip.







COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE
(Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking)

This **prime** area of the curriculum covers important aspects of language development and provides the foundation for Literacy. The learning intentions focus on children's developing competence in speaking and listening. At Southwold, we use our learning environment to engage and interact with the children, modelling and inspiring the use of vocabulary through play. 'Wellcomm' small group sessions also support children in Nursery and Reception and enable their confidence to grow, their sentence structure to develop and their use of language to flourish. Other areas of learning also make a vital contribution to the successful development of Literacy, such as creativity, exploration, investigation, small world, and role-play.

In small groups, children listen attentively and talk about their experiences. They use a growing vocabulary with increasing fluency to express thought and convey meaning to the listener. They listen and respond to stories, songs, nursery rhymes and poems. They make up their own stories, songs, and rhymes through oral storytelling sessions, role play and small world.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD
(Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World)







This **specific** area focuses on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their own environment and the environment of others. It provides a foundation for historical, scientific, and technological learning and exploration. Children are encouraged to talk about the lives of people around them and their roles in society. They will start to explore the past and compare them to now and will have rich opportunities to explore the natural world around them, asking questions and making observations.

One of our favourite days in the week are Welly Wednesday and Foraging Friday! The children enjoy exploring and recognising features of living things, objects, and events in the natural and made world and they look closely at similarities, differences, patters, and change. They talk about their observations sometimes recording them and asking questions to gain information about why things happen and how things work.

MATHEMATICS
(Number and Numerical Patterns)

This **specific** area covers important aspects of mathematical understanding and provides the foundation for number. It focuses on having a deeper understanding of number through subitising (recognising quantities without counting), representing with maths equipment, loose parts and mark making and being able to investigate through problem solving. Children recognise, build, and recreate patterns and models. They are familiar with numbers, songs, rhymes, stories and counting games. They compare, sort, recognise and use numbers to ten and are familiar with larger numbers from everyday lives. Through practical activities children start to understand and record numbers, beginning to show awareness of number operations, such as addition and subtraction and beginning to use the language involved.

LITERACY
(Comprehension, Word Reading, and Writing)



We use Little Wandle as our phonics scheme across nursery and reception. This **specific** area enables children to start to use their sounds to support word building within reading and writing. The children begin to associate sounds with patterns in rhymes with syllables and with words and letters and they recognise their own names and some familiar words. In their writing they use pictures, symbols, familiar words, and letters to communicate meaning, showing an awareness of the different purposes of writing. At Southwold, we love to mark make inside and outside on a small and large scale with lots of different materials- big sheets of card, notelets, writing paper, rolls of wallpaper, chalks… the list is endless! Children begin to write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower-case letters, with guidance from a 'name model' if necessary. The reception children at Southwold take part in a daily session of Little Wandle. The Nursery children enjoy daily story times, creating story sessions, rhyme times, music sessions and fun Sound Games to support them in hearing sounds in their environment.



Reading in the Early Years:

The **Nursery and Reception** children will take a high-quality text home on a weekly basis which will also be shared in school. Please use the diary to record story times with your child and any questions they have asked or wonderful language they have used. Please ensure books are returned to school and placed in the 'return box'.

Reception- You will a receive a diary for your child. Please comment in the diary each time you hear your child read. We will also comment in these books. Reception children will also have 'key word' and sound cards to bring home, and we ask for your support in helping the children to learn these. Once your child knows all their sounds and can blend 3 and 4 sound words, your child will start to bring home a reading book, which will be worked on at home and in school. More information will follow.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS AND DESIGN
(Creating with Materials, Being Imaginative and Expressive)

This **specific** area focuses on the development of children's imagination, storytelling, and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways through their play. Children explore sound, colour, texture, shape, form, and space in two and three dimensions. They respond in a variety of ways to what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel. Through art, music, dance, imaginative play, and stories, they show an increasing ability to use their imagination, to listen and observe. They use a widening range of materials, suitable tools, instruments, and resources to invent, express ideas and to communicate their thoughts.





Learning at Southwold is great fun. We offer…

- ✓ A rich, engaging curriculum where learning extends to the outdoor classroom, and we embrace the 'whole child.'
- ✓ A cross curricular approach which inspires curiosity, questioning, exploration, investigation, and imagination.
- ✓ Story telling sessions where children learn stories off by heart through retelling, puppet work, hot seating, and story mapping.
- ✓ Phonics sessions which are upbeat, active, and engaging
- ✓ Lots of opportunities for messy play, designing, creating, and reviewing.
- ✓ Enabling mastery in Maths using equipment- encouraging children to learn how to do or recognise and go on to apply it to their play, securing and deepening along the way.

WORKING WITH PARENTS

Parents are their children's first and most enduring educators. This is why we believe that building a strong school-parent relationship is essential in securing the best education for each child. A happy start to school life is encouraged by meeting with us before your child starts school. This includes play dates at school, a picnic in the local park and a special morning with your new class.

Your child's experiences and achievements are continually recorded through observations and assessment, so that we can ensure each child's needs are met and that each child is supported and valued as an individual. The evidence collected is in their Tapestry journal over the period your child spends in the early years then forms the basis of an Early Years Learning journey.

We aim to keep you fully informed of your child's progress. Parents' Evenings take place twice a year and Foundation Stage Newsletters and curriculum overviews will be sent out termly. We have learning showcase sessions where you visit your child's classroom and hear all about our learning.

PE:

The reception children will have a PE lesson once a week. Please provide black shorts and a white or burgundy t-shirt for PE.

A little reminder for Nursery and Reception children…

You will need…

- ✓ Named PE kit (Reception)
- ✓ Book bag
- ✓ £1.00 weekly voluntary contribution (cooking, treats, craft activities)
- ✓ Water Bottle clearly named (Fresh water is always available in the unit)
- ✓ Spare clothes for your peg
- ✓ Waterproof coat/Mac and trousers
- ✓ Wellies boots to keep in school.
- ✓ A fruit snack in case you feel hungry. Children will also be entitled to government fruit and vegetables and milk scheme too.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Hygiene

Children will frequently be reminded to wash their hands throughout the school day to support hygiene.

Illness

Children suffering from sickness and / or diarrhoea should be kept at home for at least 48 hours after the symptoms have cleared. Absence from school should be reported to the school office.

Accidents

If your child has a minor injury at school, the staff will attend to the injury and record it in the Accident Book. Parents are informed via a text from the school office if it is a head bump.

Taking photos of your child in school

In Early Years we like to value your child's achievements, therefore we regularly take photos which feed into your child's Tapestry Journal and are often displayed around the unit. There are also times when we may use your child's photo for the school website, Twitter, and Facebook pages.

** Photo permission and Tapestry letters are sent before your child starts school with a signed permission slip that will need to be returned to the school office in order to set up a Tapestry account*

Clothing

Please make sure that your child always has wellies and a waterproof coat available in school. We will be using the gardens all year round and, in all weathers, so please ensure that your child has suitable clothing. We have often found that all-in-one waterproofs are particularly useful for the nursery children. Please make sure all clothing is named. School uniform is available to purchase from the school office during each morning. You may also wish to purchase a book bag. Please also provide your child with a change of clothing in case of accidents. If your child is not toilet-trained, then please talk to your child's class teacher to make arrangements. There is a self-care policy available through the office which offers more information on intimate care.

Toys

We know how much the children adore their own toys and like to share them with us, but we ask for **all** toys to remain at home.

Welfare

It is important to Southwold School that all children in the school are safe. We aim to educate children on boundaries, rules, and limits and to help them understand why they exist. We provide children with choices to help them develop important life skills. Children should be allowed to take risks but need to be taught how to recognise and avoid hazards. We aim to protect the physical and psychological well-being of all children (Please see Safeguarding Policy on the school website).

Starting in Early Years – Advice for Parents and Carers

To help your child develop independence, get them used to doing the following at home:

- Getting dressed independently every day – practise closing buttons, putting on socks and shoes on the right feet, putting coat on and zipping up.
- Going to the toilet and wiping their bottom on their own – simple clothing like elasticated waistbands is easier to get on and off.
- Using a song to help your child learn to wash their hands for 20 seconds- Baby Shark is a great one!
- Cutting food using a 'real' knife and fork and pouring a drink from a plastic jug.
- Tidying up their toys– giving them little responsibilities will help them to become more independent.

› Helping them to recognise their name in writing and to consistently respond to it verbally. Create a coat and shoe peg at home with their name on it to help get them used to having something similar at school – it seems like a simple thing, but it'll help when we ask your child to go and fetch their coat!

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You can practice some of the skills your child will develop in early years in your home. This will help your child feel more ready when reception starts:

› Talk to your child taking turns to talk and listen as much as you can. Many children do not spend enough time talking to their parents, often because we all use screens much more. Having good communication skills is one of the key things that will children feel happy and learn more easily at school.

- Talk to your child in your home language. Don't worry about talking in English if this is not what you do normally- If your child can talk well in your home language, they will pick up English more quickly at school.
- If we are using screens more often to stay in touch with family and friends, include children in video calls and activities. Getting them to have conversations with relatives and friends is a good way to combine screen time while helping children to improve their speech.

› Do turn-taking activities such as playing with a toy – this helps them to get used to taking turns and to understand the concept of sharing.

- Get your child used to eating with others even if it's just a snack.
- Get your child to listen by sitting still and looking at you while you give some simple instructions or tell a story.
- Lots of the learning in nursery happens through play. Get down onto the carpet so you're at their level and enjoy some play with your child. Follow their lead with what they're doing or how they're playing. Then, try to get them to follow your lead and create games together. This will help them to get used to playing and engaging with other children.
- Do some drawing, painting or mark making together- have fun making marks with everything from mud to gravy!

Get children interested in stories, sounds and numbers:

- Read to your child everyday- we get most of our new words from what we read. Research shows that reading stories is one of the best things' parents can do to help children do well at school. A bedtime story helps bedtime routines and gives a great opportunity to snuggle together and feel connected. It's great to get to know some stories well so don't worry if your child asks for one book over and over again- this will help them later in school when they start to learn to write.
- Encourage your child to become a storyteller using puppets, toys, different materials and objects. Do they have a character, setting, problem and solution in their story? Can they use different voices and create songs and actions?
- Explore rhyming words and sing songs together- action songs are fun.
- Count items out together and talk about numbers they can see in their environment.
- Play dice games- can you child recognise the dice pattern without counting it?

Routine and consistency help children to adapt, and this will help ease the transition into Early Years. About 4 weeks before the start, try to set a morning routine with your child. You can start with small steps and gradually add to the routine:

- Get up at the same time every day and have breakfast, if possible, try to have a bedtime.
- Get dressed up in the school uniform and put on 'school' shoes.
- Prepare a 'school lunch box' – you can choose one together if you don't have one yet.
- Try to get a bedtime routine- the first few months of school are really exhausting for children and good sleep habits will keep them healthy and benefit their learning in the long term. The NHS website offers good ideas helping your child with sleep https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/healthy-sleep-tips-for-children/

Help your child get to know the school and staff faces:

Many children like to be able to know what their school and teacher look like before they start.

We will offer you the opportunity to join Tapestry and start to upload your child's learning through play at home. Our staff love to comment and share in the children's achievements and it's another great way to get to know each other.

- Look up the route to Southwold and if its walking distance try it out as your daily walk– point to the school and tell your child they'll be going there soon.

Show your child that you are excited about school and talk to them positively about starting at Southwold. Children look to parents for reassurance, try not to worry out loud to your child about starting school and please give us a ring to talk about any concerns you have- you will not be the first parent to have concerns and questions, and our team really like to help!

Thank you for taking time to read our booklet. If you have any questions or queries, please feel free to contact the school office and they will direct you to Mrs Bending, the Early Years Lead, or a member of the team. Don't keep worries to yourself- we are here to help!

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