Reception Parents Handbook (2026 - 2027)

RHODES AVENUE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Aims Statement

Rhodes Avenue Primary School strives to provide the best in primary education.

Working in partnership with the local community, the pupils, staff, parents and governors continue to pursue excellence in all aspects of school life.

Our aim is for all children to enjoy learning and achieve success in a healthy, happy and inclusive environment.

The Reception Team

Each Reception class is made up of a class teacher and a full-time Nursery Nurse. There may also be additional adult support within the classroom, including students on training placements. We will upload all information about Reception on the school website:

https://rhodesavenue.school/our-learning/reception/

You can find our **school Policies** on the Rhodes Avenue website:

https://rhodesavenue.school/our-school/policies/

Contact details

School telephone number: 0208 888 2859

School absence line: 0208 826 1896

School e mail address: reception@rhodesavenue.org.

School website: www.rhodes.haringey.sch.uk

School Twitter: https://twitter.com/RhodesAvePrim

Please read the **Home - School Communication policy** for the information you will need:

https://rhodesavenue.school/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Home-School-Communication-autumn-2024-pdf-version.docx

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides children with a range of learning experiences and opportunities for all children to succeed and feel valued. It provides invaluable foundations upon which children can build and helps to prepare children for the National Curriculum which begins when your child enters Year One. In Rhodes Avenue Primary School, we use Development Matters as our curriculum guidance throughout the EYFS. We follow the children's interests to build upon each child's prior knowledge to ensure their learning develops and progresses.

There are 7 areas of learning and development - 3 prime areas and 4 specific areas. 17 educational programmes then shape the context under the seven areas of learning and development. Included is a brief summary of the learning areas and an outline of the 3 characteristics of effective learning in the EYFS framework.

Learning characteristics:

Creating and thinking critically:
Thinking, having their own ideas, making links and choosing ways to do things.

Playing and exploring:
Engagement, finding out and exploring, playing with what they know and being willing to 'have a go'.

Active learning:
Motivation, being involved and concentrating, continuing to try. Enjoying, achieving what they set out to do.

Prime Areas

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Your child will be provided with experiences and support which will help them in making new relationships, having self confidence and self awareness and managing their own feelings and behaviour. We will support them to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others; respect for others and a positive disposition to learn.

Physical Development

The physical development of your child will be encouraged through the provision of opportunities for them to be active and interactive and improve their skills of coordination, moving, handling, manipulation and movement. They will be supported in using all of their senses to learn about the world around them and to make connections between new information and what they already know. They will be supported in developing an understanding of the importance of physical activity.

Communication and Language

Children's listening skills will be developed in a range of situations. They will listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. We will support children in their understanding so they can follow instructions involving several ideas or actions and hold conversations with adults and their peers. They will learn to express their ideas and feelings using full sentences and we will encourage them to participate in discussions, using vocabulary recently introduced to them.

Specific Areas

Literacy

Your child's learning and competence in being read to and beginning to read will be both supported and extended. They will learn the letter sounds through Phonics and they will be provided with the opportunity and encouragement to use their reading and writing skills in a range of purposes, and will be supported in developing the confidence and disposition to do so.

Mathematics

Your child will be supported in developing their understanding of number and number patterns in a broad range of contexts in which they can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about their developing understanding. They will be provided with opportunities to practise and extend their skills in these areas and to gain confidence and competence in their use.

Understanding the World

Your child will be supported in developing knowledge and skills and understanding that help them to make sense of: past and present; people, culture and communities; the natural world. Their learning will be supported through offering opportunities for them to explore, encounter creatures, plants and objects in the natural world and real life situations. We will encourage children to talk about the lives of the people around them and we will support them in learning some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities.

Expressive Arts and Design

Your child will have opportunities to sing songs, dance and make music. They will be supported to safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. Your child's creativity will be extended so that they can invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and adults. They will be encouraged to share their creations, explaining the processes they have used.

Prime + Specific Areas together

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other to support a rounded approach to child development. All these areas are delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. We plan the learning environment, activities and experiences that your child needs to fulfil their potential. Play is a very important part of a child's learning experience and it is through play based activities that children learn best. We therefore use play as a foundation to build on and encourage structured play in classroom activities.

We base each half term's learning around a core text and a theme, topic or question. We also use the needs and interests of the children to contribute to the half term's foci. At the beginning of each term there will be a newsletter sent out to you detailing the topic and perhaps suggesting activities that can be carried out at home to extend the theme.

When your child first starts school we will be focussing very much on their personal, social and emotional development – settling in, leaving their parent/carer, making new relationships with adults and peers, adapting to new routines and experiences etc. Our aim is to ensure your child is a happy, confident and independent learner; able to access the full curriculum and extend learning to their full potential.

Key Person System

It is a statutory requirement that your child has a 'key person' in their classroom environment. This means that either the Class Teacher or Nursery Nurse will be your child's 'key person'. They will be there to provide support for both you and your child. The 'key person' system has been adopted so that young children gain as much emotional support as possible during their early stages of development. Despite using a 'key person' system in our school, the Class Teacher takes full responsibility for all the children and then works with the Nursery Nurse to make sure that your child is happy and settled in their class. You will be notified of who your child's key person is during the settling in process.

Settling In

All children new to Rhodes Avenue Primary School will have a Home Visit prior to starting school. This will enable us to see and chat to your child while they are at home in a relaxed environment where they are confident and secure. It allows us to talk to you about our school and to answer any questions you may have. The home visit will last approximately fifteen minutes.

There is a settling in timetable which you will be given but the settling in process will be tailored to meet the individual needs of your child. It is an important time and we want your child to feel happy, secure and positive about the changes. After a day or two at school, from experience we feel it is more beneficial for the children to say their goodbyes to parents/carers at the door to the classroom before entering so that they can start their day independently. Please support us with this task so that we can help your child settle into primary school more easily.

TAPESTRY
ONLINE LEARNING JOURNAL

During the Reception year, the staff will be completing the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile for your child. At the end of the year you will receive a report detailing your child's attainment and progress within the seven areas of learning.

Tapestry is a learning journal, with pictures, videos, quotes and comments and is accessible from home in order for you to follow your child's time in Reception. Within the first few weeks of starting Reception, you will be supplied with a user name and password which will allow you to log on to the Tapestry website in order to see what your child has been up to whilst at school. You can also download an app which will alert you when something new has been posted on your child's profile. We actively encourage you to upload milestones or new learning that happens while at home too. It's a great way to communicate between home and school and encourages conversation among parent and child about the happenings at school.

Outdoor Education

Unless the weather is really awful, the children have free access to our outdoor Reception area in order to provide them with outside play space. We encourage their exploration of this space. Children have the opportunity to improve their coordination, control and ability to move effectively. Children can develop their ability to run, climb, balance, swing, slide, tumble, throw, catch and kick within this space. It is an area for children to play using natural materials such as sand, mud and bark and allows children to develop all learning areas in a holistic manner while exposed to the elements. Therefore, we ask that you ensure your child is wearing the correct clothing for outdoor play so they can have access to this provision. Reception children also have the opportunity to access Forest School educational opportunities by using the school's spinney.

Clothing

It is helpful if your child can wear clothing with simple fastenings so that they can independently dress and undress themselves where necessary whilst at school. Please bear in mind that your child will come across messy, sensory play opportunities on a frequent basis and even though we provide aprons for them to wear, accidents still occur! Please name ***all*** *of your child's garments and in the cold months, gloves on elastic are also very useful as they don't get lost!*

Each child will be provided with a peg outside the classroom with their photograph on it. Please make sure that you provide your child with a change of clothes bag, clearly labelled with their name, which contains spare underwear, a top, trousers and socks for them to change into if they have an accident. This clothes bag will need to be restocked on return to school the next day after an accident happens. Please continue to encourage your child to get themselves dressed and undressed each day as this helps us greatly and gives them a developing sense of independence.

Please make sure your child is dressed for outdoor play in all weathers as the children will have access to the Reception outdoor area at all times. On hot days, shoulders and heads need to be covered and sun cream applied before they arrive at school.

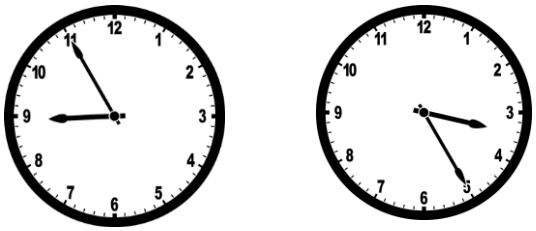
Parents as Partners

When parents and practitioners work together the results will have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. We seek to provide an effective partnership with you as parents/carers. We welcome your views and recognise the important role you have in your child's education.

There will be workshops throughout the school year for Reception parents which will provide information on the teaching of reading, how to support mathematical development, play ideas at home and any others that the cohort of children and their families may need.

We are always very happy to talk to you about any concerns or questions you may have. Please speak to the class teacher and arrange a time to meet with us. We are available most mornings before school or at the end of the school day. There will be an opportunity for you to meet with the staff each term to talk about your child, share their progress and discuss their achievements and targets. If you feel that you need more time, then let us know and we will make a special appointment with you before or after the school day.

The school has a Parent Staff Association (RAPSA) and all parents are automatically members. Please ask parents who have siblings already attending the school for how you can become involved - helping, meetings, fundraising, etc.



Sessions

We ask that you arrive at school promptly at the start of the day to enable your child to come in easily and settle quickly. We offer a soft start to the day with our classroom doors opening at 8:45 – 8:55am. We allow the registers to be left open until 9am for Reception children so that older siblings may be dropped off first. It is also very important that you collect on time at the end of each session as children become distressed and upset if they think they have been left on their own. The school day ends at 3:15pm.

General Information

Outside each classroom there is a class information board to enable us to link school with home. This notice board is used for many things. There is also a general notice board which RAPSA use to let you know about the social and fund raising events they have organised.

We do need to know if there will be any change to your child's usual pick up information. We need to know if they are going home with someone else or going on a 'play date'. We are not obliged to let your child go home with anyone we have not been informed of and it can be upsetting for the child and awkward for the staff.

Absences / Illness / Medication

Please keep your child at home if they are obviously unwell, have a temperature, sickness or diarrhoea. Please inform us if your child is absent from school by telephoning the school office on 0208 826 1896. Your child must have at least 48 hours at home without further illness before returning. If the illness is contagious please contact us immediately.

If your child has a medical condition or an allergy, please make sure that the staff know about it, that it is recorded on the welfare sheet and that necessary medication is provided and a consent form completed.

Unfortunately, head lice are always around in schools but please do inform us if you find any in your child's hair. This is so we can inform other parents in order for them to check their own child's hair too. We will of course be discrete to you and your child, no names being mentioned.

Tissues

We welcome one box of tissues from you at the beginning of the Reception year to help stem the flow of runny noses throughout the year ☺

Personal Hygiene

Toilets are located near the Reception classrooms. During your child's settling in period, all children will be shown where the toilets are and they will be encouraged to use these should they need to go. Children are reminded to flush the toilet and wash their hands as there are poster prompts in the toilet area.

Toys

Please avoid sending your child to Reception with toys. Initially when your child is settling in, they may need a comfort item and we will not discourage this but merely suggest they keep it in their bag on their peg so they can collect it again at the end of the school day. After the settling in period we will ask the children not to bring any toys into class unless they are topic related. We will let you know what our topic is in our termly letter to you. Your child will have their photograph taken on their first day with you which will be displayed in the classroom to help with the settling in period, being able to look at it for comfort where needed.

If your child takes a toy or other items from the classroom, please return them as soon as possible, don't be embarrassed as young children often do this by mistake.

Book Bags

After the settling in period, the children will begin one to one reading sessions with their class teacher. Your child will bring home reading material each week for you to focus on together. Reading school bags are available from Uniform-me, you can find the link at the bottom of the home page on our Rhodes Avenue website, and we ask that you purchase one by the end of the first half term. Your child will also have a reading record book which their class teacher will fill in each week to let you know what your child has been focussing on. This is also a communication tool to use between yourselves and your child's class teacher. We encourage you to use it or even just sign your name to let us know you have seen and acknowledged our note. Please return your child's reading books and reading record book to school in the reading book bag on your child's designated reading day each week.

Fruit / Drinks

We ask that you provide a water bottle for your child. They will have free access to drink whenever they wish to during the school day. Please label this with your child's name and make sure they know which bottle is theirs! Please take this home every day so that it may be washed and talk to your child about how much they have had to drink during the school day.

Each day children will be provided with some fruit or vegetables as a snack. Your child will be encouraged to help themselves. We do not know what will be provided on a daily basis but there are usually 2/3 different options for them to choose from. Milk is also supplied on a daily basis for children at this age.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special days and we like the children to celebrate with their friends. Birthdays are a lovely part of school life, and we enjoy marking these occasions with the children in their class. We do not share cake or treats at school due to encouraging healthy eating habits, for health and safety reasons (we have children with allergies) and differing dietary needs. If you would like to send something in for your child to share with their friends, we recommend a book for the reading corner or a board game for the class wet play games area. Your child can write their name inside to show they have donated it.

Thank you in advance

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. We hope it provides you with the important details you need to prepare your child for their first days at school. Please feel free to ask us if you have any further questions or concerns. We aim to make your child's entry to school life as enjoyable and happy as we can and look forward to meeting you and your child.