

A photograph of a modern playground. The ground is covered in a thick layer of black rubber safety matting. In the foreground, there is a long wooden beam balanced on two metal stands. To the right, there is a blue-roofed playhouse and a tall metal frame with slides. The playground is surrounded by trees and a wooden fence. A sign on the fence reads "CHILDREN ONLY".



Hoo St Werburgh Primary School.



Contents

Page

Welcome.....	3
Visions and Aims.....	4
General Information.....	5
Parents as Partners.....	10
The Reception Curriculum.....	12
The Benefits of Play.....	16
Characteristics of Effective Learning.....	18
Outdoor Learning & Forest School.....	21
Helping Your Child at Home.....	23
Checklist for Starting School.....	24
How to Contact Us.....	25

Dear Parents/Carers,

We would like to take this opportunity to **welcome** you and your child to Hoo St Werburgh Reception Classes. This is the beginning of an exciting, enjoyable and positive journey for you and your child and we cannot wait to get to know you all and welcome you into the Hoo family.

This booklet is designed to help prepare you and your child for the start of school and ease their transition into school life. We hope that you find it informative and useful.

As a team, we do our very best to make sure that your child is happy in their learning through providing challenge and support in equal measure. We recognise and respect that each and every child is unique and amazing in their own way and our curriculum enables us to follow their own interests and help develop their personalities and characters.

Parents are children's first and most important educators. At Hoo, we recognise that parents play an important role in their child's education and we therefore hope and strive to establish a strong working partnership between home and school. This booklet is the first step towards that. We would always encourage you to talk to us about any concerns you have and also celebrate achievements of your child too. We are always here.

Kind Regards,

The Reception Team

Visions and Aims...

At Hoo St Werburgh Primary School we...

Ensure successful transition through forward planning and good communication with our pre-schools;

Work in partnership with our parents, value their ideas and suggestions and take any concerns seriously;

Encourage independence and confidence in our children by providing a well-resourced environment and a child-led curriculum;

Enabling our children to learn by first-hand experience;

Encourage active learning;

Value play;

Respect our children as individuals by making time to listen to and learn from them;

Model a range of positive behaviours giving them the courage to try new things;

Ensure our environment is safe, secure, stimulating and happy to develop a deep sense of belonging to the Hoo St Werburgh family.

Ensure successful onward transition through forward planning and good communication with our Year One Team.

Strive for the very best outcomes from every child, ensuring that they reach their full potential, whilst not compromising on our child centred values.



General Information

Arrival and Collection...

Transition into Reception...

Week 1 – Monday 4th September to Friday 8th September- Children stay until lunchtime. Drop off 8:40am. Pick up 11:30am.

Week 2 – Monday 11th September to Friday 15th September -Children stay for lunch. Drop off 8:40am. Pick up 01:15pm.

Week 3- Monday 18th September onwards– **Children stay full time.** Drop off 8:40am. Pick up 3:05pm.

BASELINE- All children will be invited to stay 1 afternoon to complete the Baseline test during either week 1 or week 2.

We welcome both parents and children into Reception at the start of the day from 8:40am. Pick up is at 3:05pm.

This start time, which is slightly earlier than the rest of the school, is to support the children with the morning routines of; self-registration, selecting a new library book, putting away water bottles, book bags and coats before they begin to play.

We recognise that all children and indeed parents will feel anxious about the first few days of school and the initial drop off may feel emotional. When you drop off your child, please walk through the reception garden to your child's classroom door and drop off there. We would encourage you to say your goodbyes to them and reassure them that you will return at the end of the day to pick them up. Staff are highly skilled at reassuring, distracting and settling children so please do not worry – we will always call you if we need to. If you think there is something we could do for your child specifically to help them settle, then please let us know.



Meet the Staff...

Badgers Class



Mrs Hunt -Teacher
EYFS Phase Lead



Mrs Brady – Teaching Assistant

Foxes Class



Miss Fishlock– Teacher



Mrs Perry – Teaching Assistant



Mrs Wilson
Speech and Language TA



Miss Brenchley
HLTA

Fruit and Milk...

Each child has a piece of fresh fruit provided by the Government's 'Free Fruit for Schools Scheme'. Cool Milk (www.coolmilk.com) deliver milk to school on a daily basis. Milk is free for all children up until their 5th birthday and after that you can choose to pay for it, if you wish for them to continue drinking milk at school. We encourage independence as much as possible, therefore children choose to have their fruit and milk when they want during the morning or afternoon and access the snack bar themselves, cleaning up after themselves as well.



Water bottles are issued to the children on their first day of school. Please fill your child's bottle before school as the children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day. Water bottles can be filled during the school day if necessary. Please ensure they are clearly named.



Lunchtimes...

Children can choose whether to have school dinners or packed lunch at school. School dinners are chosen in advance online (details available from the school office).

Our reception pupils and staff go to lunch first so they can have the dining hall to themselves. This makes their lunchtimes much more relaxed for the first 20 minutes. If your child is having a packed lunch, please ensure that it is healthy and contains *no sweets, chocolate or fizzy drinks*. Please teach your child to use a knife and fork properly and ensure that all lunch boxes etc can be opened independently and are clearly named. Staff will be on hand to help children with tricky packets and give guidance and help with knives and forks but we will be encouraging independence and a creating a 'can do' attitude when doing this.



All KS1 (including Reception) are entitled to a free school meal. The children can choose from several healthy options each day, which always include a selection of fruit and salad on trolleys from which children can serve themselves and are unlimited.

If you are in receipt of a qualifying benefit and are entitled to free school meals anyway, please look at the important notice enclosed inside the welcome pack. Filling in the form provides the school with an extra £1300 per year to spend on supporting your child's learning.

Bumps, Bruises and illnesses...

If your child should get injured, they are taken into the medical room and treated by a qualified first aider. They are given a note to take home, detailing any injuries. If they have had a head or facial injury you will always be telephoned.

If your child becomes unwell at school, staff will assess the symptoms that your child is showing. We will take their temperature if necessary and encourage them to drink water and of course comfort them. We will then telephone home for you to come and collect your child if needed.

If your child is ill or going to be late, please ring the school office by 9am. Our school day officially starts at 8:50am. If you arrive after this time, please take your child to the main school office where they will be signed in as late.



School Uniform...

EYFS Uniform

As a welcome gift we will provide all our children with their own Hoo St Werburgh Primary School book bag and water bottle on their first day at school- **please do not buy alternatives. (No rucksacks please – these do not fit in the children’s trays and storing them during the day is very difficult).**

A navy sweatshirt or cardigan- with or without the school logo



A blue polo shirt – with or without the school logo



Black or grey jogging bottoms or leggings



Sensible shoes/trainers with a good grip



black, no logos and preferably fitted



Black or grey culottes or shorts for the warmer weather

A pair of wellington boots



A pair of plimsolls for indoor wear



School Trends can provide items with the school logo if desired (see separate order details)

In our classrooms we operate a no shoes rule. When your child comes into class they will need to change from their outdoor shoes into plimsolls or slippers. Your child will need a pair that they can keep in their special place at school, all the time. This will become part of their routine. Please make sure all shoes/plimsolls/slippers are named 😊

Parents as Partners.

Working together has a big impact on your child's development.

We will give you guidance and suggestions throughout the year about ways in which you can support your child's learning and development at home. Each week, we send out something you can do with your child to support their learning in the form of a 'Home Learning Challenge.'

However, nobody knows your child better than you and we need to share in your knowledge and expertise. Throughout the year, we will make sure you have plenty of opportunities to share your child's individual success stories with us, no matter how big or small. Comments on achievements at home can be added to our "Wow Tree" and we love to celebrate these at school with the children. Parents can also send parent postcards via Evidence Me – our online learning journey.



During the year, your child will become what we call a 'focus child' and this will happen three times a year (once every term). When your child is a focus child they will get a little 'extra' attention and as staff we will observe them while they play, find out more about their interests and see how they are progressing. We will set targets and concentrate on their next steps. *All of this is shared with you and we value your input during their focus week as well.*

We would ask that during your child's focus week, you fill in the focus child sheet, meet with us for a 10 minute appointment and send any photos you and your child want to share through Evidence Me. Children love to share their photos from home and we enjoy sharing these with the children in school. We often get to see entirely different sides of a child's character.

Evidence Me.

Evidence Me is our online learning journey system for all children. At Hoo, we use this as a way to record all the children's achievements in the form of photos and observations from Nursery to Year One.

This is two-way communication, and both school and home can contribute. We love to send your child's wow moments from school and we also love to see them from home as well.

If your child is in Squirrels, they will already be set up on Evidence Me. However, in the first few weeks, we will add on our new starters and send you request details. When you receive this email, please follow the instructions to download the App.

Please visit <http://help.evidence.me/parent-share/help-for-parents/> for further information and guidance.

Evidence Me Parent App



At Hoo, we also have our own social media page on Facebook; 'Early Years at Hoo St Werburgh'

We regularly post our WOW moments and share with you achievements of your children, real learning points and any other information we think will be interesting and relevant to you.

Please find us and follow us! You can also comment on posts – we will always endeavour to reply. We love to hear what you think.



Early Years at Hoo St Werburgh

213 likes • 241 followers



The Reception Curriculum.

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile describes and summarises children's attainment at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children are supported through the four themes of:



It encourages positive attitudes and dispositions towards learning in the children and promotes learning through play. It also emphasises the importance of teachers and parents working in partnership.

The profile is based on ongoing observation and assessment in the three prime and four specific areas of learning. It also includes three learning characteristics:-

The prime areas of learning are fundamental, work together and move through to support development in all other areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

The specific areas of learning include essential skills and knowledge for the children to participate successfully in society:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The characteristics of learning are the ways in which children learn:

- Playing and exploring
- Active learning
- Creating and thinking critically

Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

Personal, Social and Emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.



Communication and Language.

Communication and Language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Children are given regular opportunities to build skills in this area, for example during sharing time on the carpet where they can talk about something special outside of school or share photos when it is their focus week.

We believe that children gain in confidence to talk by having a wide range of interesting people to talk to and listen to. Therefore, we arrange lots of visitors to come in to our setting and always tailor these to the children's interests.

Talking about their play is one of the most important parts of our Foundation Stage learning journey and we encourage children to share their achievements and questions with each other and most importantly with you, their families, on a daily basis.



Physical Development.

Physical Development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity and make healthy choices in relation to food.

The children participate in a games, dance or gym session with our PE specialist sports team once a week. However, the majority of physical development is undertaken in our garden area.



Literacy.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems and other written materials) to ignite their interest. We follow Read, Write, Inc phonics programme to teach reading and spelling.

At school we support your children to develop their mark making into decodable words and sentences by encouraging them to “write” in different situations with a wide selection of tools and equipment. We believe that every child is capable of becoming a writer from an early age and we endeavour to make writing opportunities purposeful, meaningful and fun for them.

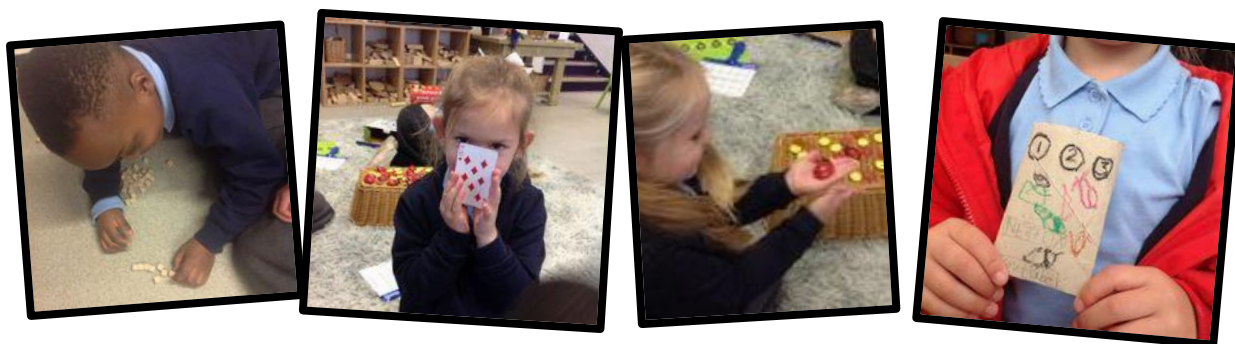


Mathematics.

Mathematics provides opportunities to develop children's understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space.

During Child initiated time they always have access to a wide variety of equipment which help them use and apply the skills they are learning in a practical context.

Giving children opportunities to use maths ideas at home is really valuable. Encourage them to look for numbers in their everyday environments and make counting a part of everyday activities like setting the table and putting toys away.



Understanding the World.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places and the environment.

Expressive Arts and Design.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of interactions in art, music, movement, dance, role play and design and technology.



The Benefits of PLAY.

At Hoo, we really understand and recognise the benefits of young children and their needs, wants and desires to PLAY. It is not a 'treat' to play, in fact it is the complete opposite – it's a fundamental need and it is central to their progress and development.

Most of your child's school day will be spent engaged in active play. Alongside this they have a focused small group phonics session; a short whole class maths session and story/sharing time.

PLAY puts children in charge of their learning experience.

PLAY encourages the development of investigative skills.

PLAY enables children to practise recently learned and emerging skills.

In PLAY, children can talk or communicate by other means.

Through PLAY, children are motivated to learn.

Undirected PLAY allows children to learn how to work in small groups, to share, to negotiate, to resolve conflicts and to learn self-advocacy.

For example, your child might have been 'playing' in the mud kitchen in the morning but, in fact they have been given a specific saucepan and spoon in order to develop the gross motor skills and circular shoulder movements needed to accurately form the letter C in their handwriting.

Our Foundation Stage results are above the national averages for a reason, and it isn't because we 'hot house' our pupils into formal learning as soon as they arrive.

PLAY IS AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO.



We are 'In the Moment...'

Given the importance of play, we dedicate most of the school day to child-initiated play. It is during this time that children are on their own learning journey's, pursuing their own interests, exploring, investigating, communicating and practising skills. As staff, we are led by the children in the moment and we respond to children accordingly.

Having a truly child – centred curriculum allows us, as staff, to develop and form strong relationships with each and every child in our setting. It means the children can become fully absorbed, happy and engaged in their own learning and we know that when a child is deeply engaged, their brain is developing and *they are making progress.*



Play is the
highest form
of research
Albert Einstein



Characteristics of Effective Learning

When we think of 'school' it is easy to think about being taught to read, write and understand mathematical strategies. But it's easy to overlook that there are skills and knowledge that it's vital we develop and practice alongside more academic skills in order for it all to become embedded, practiced, and investigated. These are the '**Characteristics**' and another way of looking at them is to call them the skills we need for life.

The Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning are divided into three sections. They're all interconnected and overlap with one another, and hopefully you'll already recognise a lot of these characteristics in your children. All children demonstrate each of them at some time – provided they're given the opportunities to do so.

PLAYING + EXPLORING

This aspect covers how engaged a child is in the world around them and how involved they are in their activities. It looks at whether a child feels confident to 'have a go' at new activities and try new ways of doing things. It also covers how children experience the world around them.



ACTIVE LEARNING

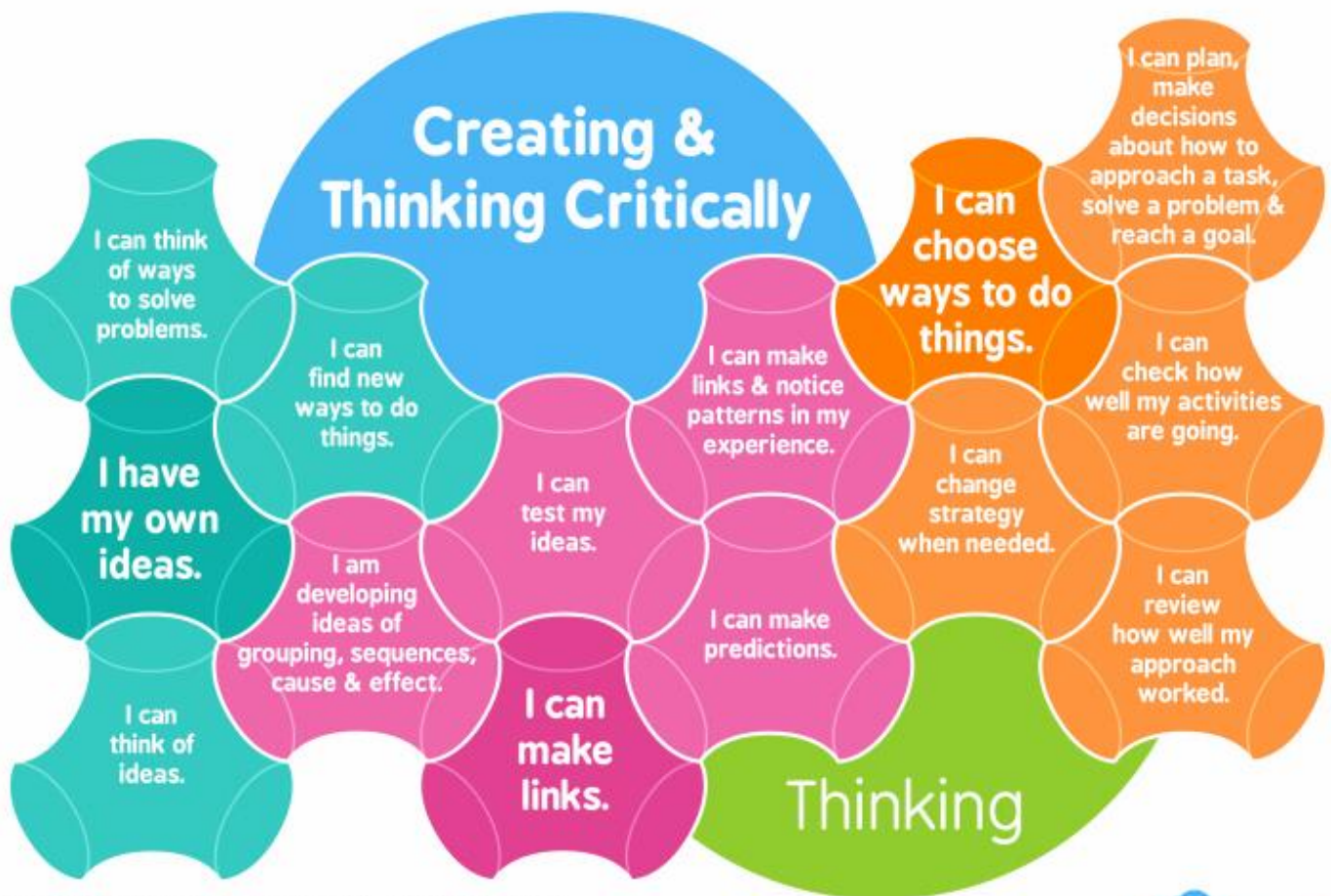
This covers how motivated a child is in their play and learning. By looking at how involved a child is in their activity and how long they concentrate for, we can assess how involved in the activity a child is. Within Active Learning, we can also observe children's resilience in learning. If they try something and it doesn't work, do they try again? It also includes observing how a child feels once they have met a goal they set for themselves. Are they proud of their achievements?



Characteristics of Effective Learning: A Unique Child

CREATING + THINKING CRITICALLY

This aspect looks at how a child is developing thinking skills. This includes behaviours such as, solving problems they come across, having their own ideas about how to achieve the challenges they set themselves, and testing these ideas. As children become more verbal, it includes making predictions about what will happen next and also considering how well their approach to solving their problem has worked. If they could do it again, would they do anything differently?



Characteristics of Effective Learning: A Unique Child

Outdoor Learning and Forest School.

In reception, our indoor and outdoor environment are equal and we allow the children free-flow access to both indoor and outdoor spaces throughout the day.

Children learn best through being active and interacting with the world around them, through sensory and social experiences.

We believe there is no such thing as inappropriate weather, just inappropriate clothing! Therefore, we expect all children to come into school fully prepared for being outdoors. This means in colder weather; big coats, hats and gloves (all named). In the warmer weather; sun hats and sun cream (once again, all named). We find it is best if you apply sun cream in the morning before school and send your child in with a small bottle as well. That way, they can re-apply it themselves later on in the day. Don't worry – we are on hand to guide and teach your child how to apply it if they need it.





Forest School

Children are also extremely lucky at Hoo, as they get to take part in regular Forest School lessons in our outdoor Forest School. Even in the depths of winter, children are enthusiastic and excited about forest school lessons and they are so beneficial to the children's learning and development.

In order for the children to be as comfortable as possible during all weathers the uniform for forest school includes; welly boots, a waterproof coat, a pair of waterproof trousers and a hat suitable to the weather (e.g. sun or woolly hat). *All named in a named bag please.* The children can keep their forest school kit at school and it can be taken home at the end of term to wash. Don't worry – if they get wet after Forest school we dry them out first before asking the children to put them away.



Helping your child at home.

To help prepare your child for reception and to support them throughout the year, please help by;

Developing their independence- Encourage your child to do things by themselves. This includes jobs like tidying away their toys when they are finished playing, opening their own packets of food, asking them to carry out small jobs for you such as dusting or hoovering and doing up their zips or buttons.

Self-care- Show and help your child to dress and undress themselves, to take off their shoes and put them on again.

Hygiene- Teach your child how to use the toilet and wipe their bottom. Show them how to wash their hands and talk about why it is important. Teach them how to use a tissue and blow their own nose.

Eating routines- Encourage good manners when eating and drinking e.g. not talking with their mouth full. Show them how to use a knife and fork properly.

Sleeping routines- Have a good routine for bedtime that is consistent and peaceful. Brushing teeth and having a story each night is a lovely way to end the day.

Sing and read together- Share stories every day, making them fun, talking about pictures and maybe even acting them out together. Sing at every opportunity – when brushing teeth, climbing the stairs or in the car.

TALK to your child- This one seems very obvious but with technology and mobile phones an important part of our present life sometimes it is easy to forget the simple pleasure of talking in person. Ask a question such as; What was your favourite part of the day? Or ask them to show you the game they played. You could even ask them to draw what they played and talk about the picture after.

For more information about preparing your child for school, you can visit-

www.pacey.org.uk (Go to -> parents-> school ready)



Are you ready?

Checklist for starting school.

In reception I will need;

- A school uniform which is clearly named..... ☐
- A coat suitable for being outdoors in all weather..... ☐
- Book bag..... ☐
- Named water bottle..... ☐
- Lunch box (if you're not having hot dinners) ☐
- Forest school kit, including wellies..... ☐
- Indoor plimsolls or slippers (clearly named)
..... ☐



Thank you. We look forward to starting a fun filled year together!

How to contact us.

Hoo St Werburgh
Primary School



Hoo St Werburgh Primary School and Marlborough Centre
Pottery Road
Hoo
Rochester
Kent
ME3 9BS

Tel: 01634 338040

E-mail: office@hoo-st-werburgh.medway.school.uk

Website: www.hoo-st-werburgh.medway.sch.uk

Severe Weather

In severe weather it may be necessary to close the school. At such times, an alert is put on our school website, Facebook and Parentmail.



www.hoo-st-werburgh.medway.sch.uk



We will also send out a text message to all parents, so please ensure we have your current mobile number.

In the event of an emergency please check the school website/Facebook rather than call the school as this could block telephone lines needed for emergency services.

Please advise the office if you change your address, e-mail or telephone number.