



Solefield School

Reception Class Information Booklet



We would like to welcome you to the Reception Class of Solefield School 2017-18

Staffing

Headmaster: Mr Dougal Philps

Deputy Head (in charge of Pre-Prep): Miss Diana Mahon

Reception Teacher & EYFS Key Worker: Mrs Rachael Robinson

Teaching Assistant: Mrs Jana Mack

Art: Mrs Dana Koheji

French: Mrs Emma Hicks

ICT: Mr Robert Coston

Music: Mr Rob Fenning

PE and Games: Mr Mike Parker

Violins: Mr Martin Bloor

Registrar & PA to Mr Philps: Mrs Barbara Volpato

School Secretary & PA to the Governors: Mrs Lindsay Savage

Catering Company: Holroyd Howe

Uniform

The boys wear a **grey shirt, grey jumper, grey shorts, clip on tie** (initially), **grey socks and black shoes**. (A short sleeved aertex shirt can be worn when it is warm). They will also need a **blazer** and **cap**. This uniform is worn all year round. Please see the school website for full uniform lists for each age group. There is a school sun hat and winter knitted hat, rain coat and duffle coat which are compulsory parts of the uniform too – no other coats or hats are acceptable. We do not wear our blazer and cap when we wear our duffle coat and woolly hat.

Most items are available from **Horncastles** in Sevenoaks. Up to date prices are available on their website at

http://www.horncastles.co.uk/acatalog/Solefield_School.html

Second hand uniform sales are run voluntarily by Solefield Parents' Association (SPA) each term.

The boys also need PE clothing: **a blue and white P.E shirt, white shorts, school sweatshirt, school jogging bottoms, white socks and trainers** also available new from Horncastles

The boys will receive their first book bag **free of charge** at New Boys' Tea in September. The school P.E rucksack will need to be purchased.

It is really helpful if the boys are used to **getting themselves dressed and undressed** before they begin school – especially practise buttons and doing up the school shorts please! Also turning things the right way – like jumpers and socks is a useful skill to practise over the summer please.

We take the boys swimming from the beginning of the Spring Term in January. They do not need to have learnt to swim before they come to school. Our sessions are to make them feel safe in and around the water and further their skill from wherever they are. For swimming we wear simple **swimming trunks and goggles**, if required. On swimming days, the boys come to school dressed in their trunks under their school shorts, with a **towel and pants** in a swimming bag.

Please could you also provide a **spare set of clothing** in a named bag on your son's peg in case of any accidents.

PLEASE ...

**NAME EVERYTHING YOUR CHILD WEARS
AND BRINGS TO SCHOOL...**

This includes bags, socks and pants!

The School Day

The day starts with **registration promptly at 8.25 am and finishes at 3.00 pm**. The Reception class door is open from 8.15 am. There is an 'Early Class' for boys arriving between 8.00am and 8.15am that is supervised by a member of staff and is either on the playground or in the dining hall. There is a Breakfast Club that is chargeable, from 7.30am. There is also a 'Late Class' which can hold your child, if he is waiting for an older brother or for After School Care, in school, until 4.00 pm. After School Care provision begins at 4pm - this is also chargeable and runs until 6pm.

We ask that you observe our staggered end to the day with respect and if you do not need to wait for older boys that you leave promptly before the next classes are due to go home. We also ask you kindly **not** to let your son play on the playground or equipment at the end of the day as it is out of bounds for them and senior boys are still working in school until 3.55pm.

Settling Period

The children will be coming to school **just in the mornings** for the first week and a half. This is from 8.15 am to 12.10 pm (the boys will not have lunch on these days) and is to ensure they settle into school easily and that they do not get too tired.

Tears

Starting school can be very stressful for parents! Tears may happen but it is NOT a good idea to get into negotiations with your son at this point. The best thing to do is to say a cheery goodbye and then **GO** - the boys are usually fine before you've even got to the car!

If we have any concerns we will ring you but you are always welcome to ring the office and Mrs Volpato or Mrs Savage will come and check on things and report back to you as soon as they can.

Home Toys

We do not generally encourage 'home toys' to come to school (except for Show and Tell) as they can be easily lost or broken which can cause great upset. We have plenty to do and play with at school -believe me- they are **best staying at home!**

Snack Time

This begins as a social time for the boys to talk about what they have done that morning and reflect and review their learning. Then it progresses to being part of their break time outside. During **Reception**, the school will provide your son with a **small, healthy, nut free snack each day**. Fresh drinking water is available in the classroom and on the playground at all times during the day. Milk is offered at snack time too.

School Lunches

The menu is on show in the classroom and on the website. It is a **two course meal**. Reception eat in the Dining Room with the other Pre-Prep boys and the teachers. Please help them at home to use their cutlery correctly – this really helps give the boys a greater sense of independence from the outset. Meals include roast pork, chicken curry, lasagne and many more! There is always a vegetarian option too. Everyone has school lunches at Solefield.

Teaching and Learning

We do not expect the boys to be coming in reading or writing but we are aware that some boys do. The flexibility of our small class sizes and experienced staff means that we are quick to assess where our starting point is for each individual boy and take them on from where they are.

Curriculum

Although we no longer follow the formal EYFS Curriculum, the Reception curriculum is still based on it and therefore is split into **6 areas of learning**, though these are often merged during teaching and learning sessions:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Physical Development

- Literacy (including Communication and Language)

- Mathematics

- Understanding the World

- Expressive Arts and Design

Topics

The year is split into **6 flexible topics**:

Autumn: All About Me, Buildings and Gardens

Spring: Animals and the Farm

Summer: Things That Grow, Vehicles and Journeys

Trips

Trips and visitors are arranged to support the curriculum as opportunities arise. It is always exciting to go out of school or have people in so we try to have at least one trip and/or visitor a term. We also have a trip that involves all the classes from Reception to Year 2 and is a fun day out!

A school packed lunch is provided for us when we go out of school.

We wear our **school tracksuit**; school sweatshirt and school jogging bottoms and take our **school raincoat** when we go on trips. In the summer we also take our school sun hat. Please ensure that sun cream is applied to your son before he comes to school. This includes normal school days when the weather is sunny.

Class Activities

The day is split into a variety of sessions and the **timetable will be on display** in the classroom and on the school website for you and the boys to see. Sessions are split into teacher-led and child-initiated times (P.A.T – Planned Activity Time). There are specialist teachers for Music, French, Violins, Art, ICT and PE (including swimming when the time comes). There will also be a library lesson. Play times, lunchtime, 'Show and Tell' times and story times are all included too.

Music Lessons

Every child will receive **free violin tuition** for the year from Mr Bloor (our violin specialist) as an additional music session per week.

Parents will be invited to attend concerts to see how well we are doing - we play to many different audiences; informal concerts, parents and assemblies.

It is a great way to introduce the world of instruments and musicality to the boys and they seem to enjoy it very much – Mr Bloor is brilliant!

Letters and Sounds

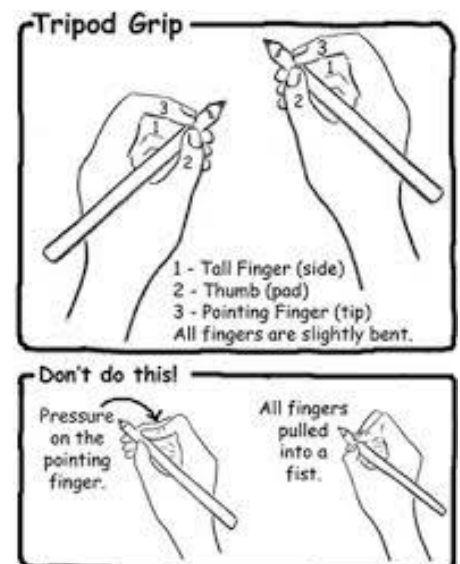
It is **very important** that you use *lowercase* letters when writing with your son and the *sounds* rather than the letter names when 'spelling' and 'sounding out' in reading.

Sounds also need to be 'pure' with no added bits like 'u'. This YouTube clip will help you if you are unsure of the pure sounds for the alphabet and will help support you, as you support your son, from September when letters and sounds start to come home:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYx1CyDMZSc>

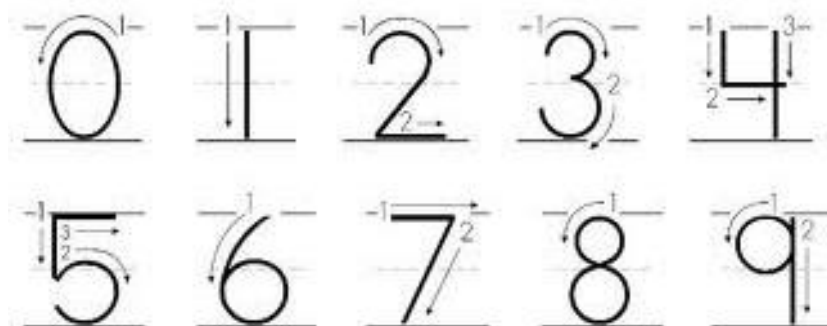
Pencil Grip

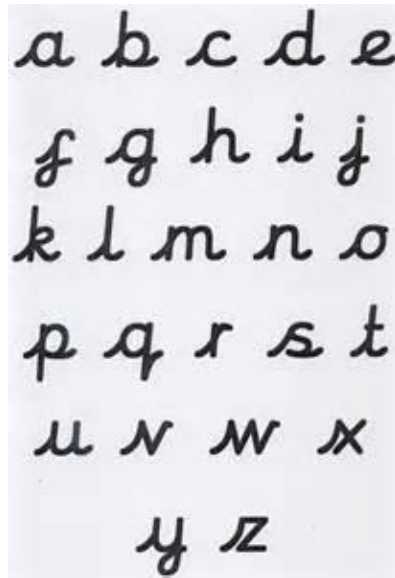
Please could you also ensure that the boys are holding their pencil or colouring crayon, or whatever implement they are using for making marks, correctly at all times – gently correcting them if you see it held incorrectly. It is **very difficult** to alter bad habits later. A simple tripod grip is the correct way please.



Letter and Numeral Formation

The formation of letters and numbers is also important and very hard to alter once learnt... remember that *most* letters and numbers are completed in one go – without taking your pencil off the paper:





We will be teaching the boys cursive handwriting from the outset. Please do come and ask me if you would like further guidance at this stage. There will be many opportunities to ask in September though.

Reading

The children will get a reading book when *we* feel they are ready, please bear with us. After our initial assessments we will begin with the learning, reinforcement and consolidation of sounds and sound pictures before beginning with formal texts – sharing books together at home is a fabulous support to this process and reading each night to your son sets up a pattern of practice regardless of who is doing the reading.

We would like you to commit to practising the sounds and letters, and then books, every night – as much as possible. Your child will be reading every day with us at school during lessons but we will also endeavour to hear him read individually at least twice a week.

The books do seem quite easy to start with, but we move slowly to build confidence, success and fluency that is essential for progress and prolonged enthusiasm in the process. I am always looking to supplement our main scheme with books from other schemes and we have some phonics based books that we use at certain points to further consolidate blending and segmenting skills – these can be tricky so please be patient and trust us – it will all come together, I promise!

Communication

- A **contact book** will go home every day with your child in their reading folder. You can write questions or comments in here about anything but also a note or two about the reading/sounds work please: it is helpful for us to know if you have read with your son and briefly how they got on with the sounds/words/books that were sent home that evening. **It is to be used as a dialogue between home and school.**
- **Parents' evenings** are held in the Autumn and Spring terms – a written report comes home at the end of the summer term.
- A **USB stick** will come home at the end of the year for you to keep containing all the photos that we have taken of your son at work and play throughout the year. This is a real celebration of his time in Reception.
- We also arrange a variety of opportunities for you to come into the classroom, on an informal basis, to see your son and his work throughout the year. Please check the school calendar for these events.

Most communication regarding trips, events etc. is **emailed home** so it is important that we have your **current email address** at all times.

Friday Email

Each week Mrs Savage produces a weekly email containing lots of important information and letters about specific events which include Reception. Please you read this to ensure you don't miss anything!

Please also use the school calendar on the website as it will always be more up to date than the printed version.

The Little Acorn

Each Friday I produce a **Reception newsletter** for you called the 'Little Acorn' and this will be **emailed** to you. This includes items such as notices for the week, ideas for reinforcing learning at home, photos and brief explanations about what we have been doing. There will be a paper copy in the classroom and a copy is also published on the school website.

The Acorn

This is a **whole school newsletter** which includes photos and information from school trips, school events, examples of the boys' work, news about Sport, dates, and any other items you and your son will enjoy reading about. This is sent home as a paper copy and also by email.

Social Events

There are many social events for parents to attend if they wish, including termly coffee mornings for each year group. The Solefield Parents' Association (SPA) regularly arrange social events too and these are always popular and a lot of fun.

We greatly value the support of our parents.

Form Representative

The school runs a **Parent Representative Committee**. A representative or two, from each year attends the termly meetings with Mr Philps to discuss any issues that may arise and co-ordinates group email reminders and notices when necessary.

Any Questions?

Please feel free to come in to the classroom at the beginning or end of the day for a quick chat or if you need longer, to make an appointment to see me. You are very welcome and our door is always open.

School Website

The school has its own website which many of you may have already seen: www.solefieldschool.org

Please add this to your favourites as news and information is put here, and as I have already stated, the **most up to date calendar** information is posted here too. There is a secure parent only area to access with lots of additional school information that you will find useful including recent letters and emails.

You will receive details of how to set up your account on the website.

Please also follow Solefield School on Twitter (@solefieldschool) and Facebook as we regularly update it with the boys' learning experiences.

Email

Please feel free to email me at r.robinson@solefieldschool.org if you have any queries. Please note that the school office will be staffed on a part-time basis during the summer holidays – please see our website for details.

If you prefer, you can leave a message for me with the office staff on **01732 452142** and I will endeavour to get back to you when I can.

Notes