



# Foundation Stage Starting School Booklet 2024

A guide for parents and carers



# **Welcome to Pilton Infants' School**

## **Our Vision:-**

A school community of calmness, fun and positive relationships where all children reach their potential and create the building blocks for future success.

## **Foundation Stage**

Pilton Infants' is a two form entry Infant school with high aspirations for our learning community. We pride ourselves on our family ethos and successful, happy and motivated pupils.

We recognise the importance for our Foundation Stage Pupils of a curriculum that equips them with the skills, knowledge, confidence and success that will engender a lifelong love of learning.

We want your child to settle quickly into a happy, productive and exciting school life. We hope this booklet offers you an insight into what we do and how you can support your child's learning through that vital Home School Partnership. Further information about Pilton Infants' can be found on our school website:

[www.pilton-inf.devon.sch.uk](http://www.pilton-inf.devon.sch.uk).

Information specific to starting school in September can be found here:  
<https://www.pilton-inf.devon.sch.uk/parents/new-children-september>

## **What is the Foundation Stage?**

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the period of education from birth to five. It often starts with child-minders, playgroups or pre-schools and finishes in the reception year of the primary school. Children are able to start school during the term after their fourth birthday.

## **Why is it important?**

The Foundation Stage claims its name and importance from the fact it gives children secure foundations for later learning. Early experiences affect children's attitude to learning so it is vitally important we get it right. All children learn best from experiences that are suitable for their stage of development.



## **Pilton Infants' Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Vision Statement**

At Pilton Infants' School we will provide experiences that are varied, exciting and challenging. These experiences encourage children to be creative, resilient, independent and critical thinkers

Our environment is inclusive, fun, accessible and stimulating.  
We foster relationships that are positive, happy and nurturing.

We work in close partnership with parents/carers to ensure good communication and positive relationships between school and home so we learn together and provide the very best experience and provision for children in our care.

### **There are some key principles which guide our practice in the Foundation Stage at Pilton Infants' School:**

Every child is unique and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured whilst constantly learning

Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships.

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.

Play is essential to the way young children learn. Through play children can develop, for example: the confidence needed for learning; the social skills needed for personal development and the skills needed for reading and writing.

We encourage independence from an early stage to aid problem solving skills.

**Taking all this into account, the children will be given the opportunity to learn through a carefully planned, well-balanced, topic based curriculum.**



## What does the Foundation Stage involve?

There are seven areas of learning and development, all the areas of learning and development are inter-connected and Important for children to lead healthy and happy lives.



<u><b>Three Prime areas</b></u>	<u><b>Four Specific Areas</b></u>
<p>Building the foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.</p>	<p>There are four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.</p>
<p><b><i>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</i></b></p> <p><b>Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably.</b></p>	<p><b><i>Literacy</i></b></p> <p>It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two parts:</p> <p><b>Language comprehension</b> starts from birth. It develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.</p> <p><b>Word reading</b> involves both using phonics to sound out and blend words and the whole word reading of familiar printed words.</p> <p>Writing in the Early Years involves spelling, handwriting and composition. We practice pre-writing shapes, strengthen the children's grip through a variety of practical tasks before moving on to forming the letter shapes with the correct formation.</p>
<p><b><i>Communication and Language</i></b></p> <p>The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development.</p> <p><b>The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and children throughout the day is crucial.</b></p> <p>Through conversation, story-telling and role play, the children learn to share their ideas.</p>	<p><b><i>Mathematics</i></b></p> <p>Developing a strong understanding in number is essential so to working mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently and develop a good understanding of the numbers to 10. The children will have rich opportunities to also develop their understanding of shape, space and measures.</p> <p>It is important that children develop positive 'have a go' attitudes and interests in maths, look for patterns and relationships, spot Connections and talk to adults and peers about what they notice.</p>
<p><b><i>Physical Development</i></b></p> <p>Physical activity is vital for children's development. <b>Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being.</b></p> <p><b>Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy.</b></p> <p>Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools will develop the children's control and confidence.</p>	<p><b><i>Understanding the World</i></b></p> <p>This involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. A range of personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society and the local community. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our diverse world.</p> <p><b><i>Expressive Arts and Design</i></b></p> <p>The development of children's artistic skills supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials.</p>



## **How will the children be assessed?**



Within the seven areas of learning are sets of Early Learning Goals (ELG's). Most children are expected to be working within these ELG's by the end of the Foundation Stage. These children will be assessed as at the 'Expected' stage of development. Those working below will be assessed as at the 'Emerging' stage.

The children are assessed through a mixture of informal observations as they play and adult initiated group tasks. You will also receive a copy of your child's Early Years Foundation Stage Profile report.



## **Life before school**

As parents, carers and family you are the most influential teachers in a child's life. With you, your child will have been watching, listening, touching, copying and generally experimenting with day-to-day experiences. They will have acquired amazing skills from you already. They will be learning about relationships and beginning to have and express thoughts and feelings of their own.

Your child will probably have begun to experience life away from you for short periods of time with your chosen form of pre-school provision. They will be beginning to learn to play and share with other children and adults and realise that people can have different ideas and feelings. Most children will have experienced a range of early learning at their pre-school which we will build upon, as this is the first phase of the Foundation Stage and subject to national expectations.

## **Getting ready for school**

It is very important to us that the children feel comfortable about starting school.

We invite you to visit the school with your child before they start in September. This is a great opportunity for you to meet and talk to the staff. This is also an opportunity for you to talk informally to the staff and to talk about any questions or queries you may have. You can also talk to the staff about any specific medical needs or any other needs your child has.

## **Parent and Carer partnership**

We have already acknowledged the importance of you in your child's development. If we now add our expertise as teachers and your child's natural curiosity about life, we can really start to maximise your child's progress and life chances.

In your Admissions Pack you will have received a copy of our Home School agreement which underpins our partnership. Homework is less formal in the Reception Class as the school day can be quite tiring. There are things you can do at home that are very helpful especially in the early stages.

**You can support and encourage your child by talking about school and reinforcing positives attitudes towards learning and behaviour.**

**If children see their parents valuing learning they will usually be positive about it too because they want you to be proud of them.**

**You can increase your child's confidence and self-esteem by developing their independence. (We include a list of suggestions for these on the next page.)**

Look for opportunities to apply and consolidate simple skills such as observing, counting, pointing out labels and words as communicators of meaning, sharing books and pictures and talking and listening with your child.

## How to help at home.

### Can your child..?

When children start school, we expect the vast majority to be able to do these things.....

Dress and undress themselves.



Put on and fasten their coat.



Take shoes and wellies on and off.



Use the toilet properly and flush it.



Wash and dry their hands and face.



Use a knife and fork.



Tidy/clear away their toys.



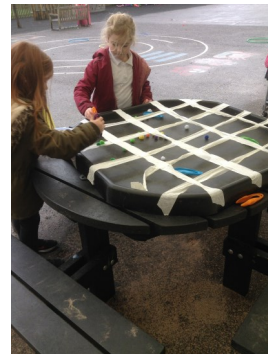
Use a handkerchief.



## **Make Time for Play**

Enjoy this precious time at home with your child and don't under-estimate the value of play. Play underlines everything that we do in the reception year and beyond. It is vital for personal and social development and can promote development of speech, numerical ability and physical and creative development. For example:

- Playing with play dough and paint develops strength in children's fingers.
- Sorting buttons or other small objects helps develop skills.



## **Routines**

Adopt a sensible daily routine now that will carry on when your child starts school, e.g. time to get ready in the morning and set a reasonable bedtime.

Please arrange your holidays to coincide with the school holidays. The Head of School will not authorise any holidays during term time unless the circumstances are deemed to be exceptional. You may also be fined or prosecuted by Devon County Council.

## **Number Awareness**

Being able to recite from 1 to 20 (or higher) is not the same as understanding the value and place of number. Focus on:

- 1:1 counting e.g. Can you find four spoons? How many sausages are there on your plate?
- Quantities, e.g. I've got 5, you've got 2. Who has more/less?
- Playing dominoes or simple board games, e.g. snakes and ladders.

When you are out and about look at house numbers, or count the number of red cars you see. Maths is everywhere and at this age, with almost no effort, any journey, shopping trip, waiting time or mealtime can be turned into a maths game.



## Get Ready to Read

To assist your child in developing a life-long love of reading:

- Share texts as often as you can this can be stories, comics, pictures in newspapers and recipes.
- Draw attention to words in the street, on TV, on cereal packets etc.
- Speak to your child and listen to what they say. If your child doesn't have the oral vocabulary, he/she cannot be expected to understand the written words.
- Play games like dot to dot, matching games, jigsaw puzzles and spot the differences these are great for early reading.
- Teach your child simple songs and rhymes to develop your child's memory.
- Keep it FUN! Short enjoyable experiences are best.
- Pay attention to the mechanics of reading, e.g. holding the book, and turning the page. Let your finger go under the words as you read from left to right.
- Your child's main interest will be in the pictures – allow time to examine them and comment on them. Ask 'What happens next?'

## Get Ready to Write

- Use opportunities to encourage your child to use writing tools e.g. when you write a shopping list encourage them to write one. Squiggles and pictures are fine.
- Encourage your child to trace over their name ensuring it starts with a capital and the rest is lower case.
- Help your child to develop their fine motor skills by modelling with plasticine, drawing on a blackboard or with crayons, joining the dots etc.
- Develop his/her observation skills and recall by sorting shapes, doing jigsaws or matching snap cards.

## Other Useful Information

If you have any concerns about your child's health or if they have a medical condition or allergies that we should be aware of, please let us know before they start school. We can then discuss the matter with you and be fully aware of and prepared for any possible difficulties.

If your child has a bout of sickness or diarrhoea please keep them off school for 48 hours after the symptoms have stopped. This type of illness spreads so quickly and easily among children and staff!!

## Fruit , milk and lunches

ALL children in our school are entitled to a Universal Infants' FREE school meal. There is also a milk entitlement for children under five.

Every infant child is given the option of having one piece of fruit each day free of charge. If your child only certain pieces of fruit you may wish to send some fruit in daily as we do not know in advance what fruit, we will be having.

Crisps, biscuits and sweets are **NOT ALLOWED**.

We hope that your child will enjoy their free meal which is a hot dinner. You will be given a copy of the dinner menu before your children start staying for lunch. There is a choice of 4 hot meals each day including a vegetarian option, jacket potato (with cheese, beans or tuna) and tomato pasta.





## **Pupil Premium**

If you are in receipt of Universal Credit we strongly urge you to fill in the online registration form which will entitle you to discounted school trips, after school and holiday club and other educational benefits such as additional support if your child needs it. The school receives additional funding for every family who is eligible. This is called 'Pupil Premium' and the extra money helps us to provide extra resources for your children's education.



## **Water**

Children will need to bring drinking water from home in a **named, refillable** bottle. We encourage children to drink regularly and refill their bottle whenever needed. We request that you do not send in fizzy drinks, squash or cordials or juice as these nearly all contain large amounts of sugar which are bad for teeth.

## **Breakfast and After School Care Club**

Daily Wraparound care is provided by North Devon Primary Sports and Education.

Breakfast Club – 7:45am – 9.00am

After School Club – 3:30pm – 5:30pm

For more details on place availability and fees please contact:

## **Uniform – ALL NAMED PLEASE!**

Our uniform is designed to suit an active curriculum and school life. We believe practical learning and physical activity are really important in helping us to learn.

All children are to wear:

- A school jumper or cardigan available from <https://schoolthreads.org> or Express embroidery & printing T: 01271342225 M: 07795683631 or email: [wathen528@aol.com](mailto:wathen528@aol.com)

- White polo shirt

- Black or dark grey shorts (appropriate length), leggings, jogging bottoms, skirt or dress

- Trainers (no plimsolls)

**If wearing skirts/dresses or summer dresses, please ensure shorts or leggings are worn underneath so that children are dressed appropriately for PE.**

Please ensure long hair is tied back and **only stud earrings** are worn. No other jewellery.

**All uniform must be named.**

Children should bring **a named bag of spare clothes** to leave on their peg in case they have an accident.

## **No PE kit is required.**

It would be very helpful if you could leave a named pair of wellies in school.



## **A phased start to school**

On Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> and Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September your child will be invited to start school on our Welcome Mornings from 9am -11.45am.

On Monday 9<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September, we invite children to between 8.45 - 8.55am, stay in school for lunch and be collected at 1.30pm.

From Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> September, children will stay in school full time with a 3.30pm finish.

If you wish for your child to attend full time from Thursday 5<sup>th</sup>, please let the school know before Tuesday 23rd July.

## **Collection**

Children must be collected promptly. If anyone but yourself is collecting them from school you must inform the teacher at the beginning of the day. If your plans change during the day. To phone the school office and they will pass the message that someone else will be collecting the child to the teacher. If they are collected by someone we do not know we will not allow them to leave the premises until we have contacted you.

## **Keeping Children Safe (Safeguarding)**

Ensuring your children's safety is paramount. All of our staff and volunteers are DBS checked and we rigorously adhere to stringent safeguarding policies and procedures.

EVERYONE has responsibility for keeping children safe so if you see or hear anything that gives you a cause for concern, either in or out of school PLEASE let us know by speaking to either Mr Mortimer or one of the Safeguarding team.

### **PILTON INFANTS' SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS:**

<b>LEADS:</b>	<b>IAN THOMAS</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER</b>
	<b>JOHN MORTIMER</b>	<b>HEAD OF SCHOOL</b>
<b>DEPUTIES DSL:</b>	<b>EBON DAUNTON, NICKY RUDDICK.</b>	

Please visit our website [www.pilton-inf.devon.sch.uk](http://www.pilton-inf.devon.sch.uk) to read our Safeguarding Policy and other related documents related to keeping children safe.

## **Mobile Phones on site**

**Mobile phones are not allowed to be used by visitors on the school site.**  
**Thank you.**

We look forward to working in partnership with you to provide the best possible start for your children's education.

If you have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to ask. You are welcome to ask at the school office at any time or phone school on 01271 342579.