



# Nursery and Reception Handbook

*Sparking Curiosity, Nurturing Potential*

Co-educational • Day • Ages 3-5

# The EYFS Framework

There are seven areas of learning and development that shape our educational programme. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

Three areas are particularly important for building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving.

## These are the prime specific areas:



Communication and language



Physical development



Personal, social and emotional development

We also support children in the four specific areas of learning, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied.

## The specific areas are:



Literacy



Mathematics



Understanding the world



Expressive arts and design

At Orchard House School the children in the Early Years benefit from a continuous provision in the outdoor environment. Children's learning is extended daily in our outdoor area and children enjoy daily outdoor activities throughout the academic year. Exploratory play is encouraged in the outdoor area throughout the day.

Children in the Early Years also benefit from many aspects of the Montessori curriculum and philosophy at Orchard House School.

For more information about the Early Years curriculum please follow this link [www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation)



## The ethos of Orchard House underpins the aims of our school and runs through every aspect of school life.

In the course of their daily work, all members of the school community contribute to the development of this ethos by:

- Providing a child-centred, forward-looking educational philosophy
- Treating each child as an individual and nurturing their own individuality
- Valuing all members of the school and wider community equally, showing mutual respect and concern for others
- The provision of a friendly and welcoming environment, in which courtesy, kindness, respect and teamwork are fostered
- Valuing and celebrating success and achievement, in all spheres
- Cultivating a culture to help instil resilience and perseverance



# Introduction

Our Early Years curriculum ensures that your child's academic potential is fulfilled but we go well beyond this; we inspire, motivate, nurture and care so that you know your child will have the opportunity to grow and prosper in an engaging, vibrant and supportive learning environment.

We ensure that each child receives the quality time and attention required each day to build confidence and self esteem; which in turn will allow your child to develop his or her own curiosity and interest in learning and discovery.

Our spacious and innovative centre for early years, provides a safe and dynamic home to our Nursery and Reception classes. The bright and colourful centres are perfectly equipped to offer stimulation for both physical and academic development with spacious classrooms, library and outdoor play areas on site, planned for 2024-25.

The play areas are enjoyed by the children on a daily basis providing space to learn and play together. They are introduced to the world of music and Eurhythmics by our specialist teachers in the Performing Arts Centre at the Church and will have the opportunity to be involved in a music and drama performance every year to their parents. Our new Science & Technology centre (to be completed September 2024) will enable the children to be introduced to scientific concepts in our purpose-built science laboratory. The children are introduced to the world of coding and tech using the most up-to-date resources.

# Values and Ethos in EYFS

At Orchard House we strive to ensure all children within our settings feel safe, happy and valued.

We know that young children develop rapidly during these early years physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

The school operates an open door policy, valuing close relationships between school and home.

In our EYFS setting we aim for all pupils to be happy and fulfilled. For each child to reach his or her potential across all areas of the curriculum, thereby becoming confident, creative and independent learners. We ensure teaching is supportive yet challenging, always taking into account the individual needs of each child.

We aim for the children to develop self respect along with a strong sense of moral values, so they can grow into responsible and involved members of society.

Orchard House school harnesses an ethos that shows mutual respect and concern for all members of the school community and one which fosters close relationships between its pupils and staff alike.

## Orchard House Values:



### Excellence

With unrivalled staff, excellent facilities and top-quality extra curricular provision, we offer endless opportunities for children to discover where they excel. Our pupils have ambitious goals and high hopes for their futures. Our culture of excellence offers the best possible preparation for an extraordinary life.



### Honesty

Honesty is our guiding principle. With it, we build respectful and genuine relationships. We learn to trust and be trusted by others. Honesty creates a culture where children are encouraged to be themselves. It also means taking responsibility for mistakes and learning from them. It builds resilience and character, making sure our pupils are ready for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.



### Kindness

We believe kindness bears fruit; that a less self-centred mindset leads to greater and wider success. At Orchard House School, kindness is our pupils' strength. It is active, purposeful and robust. Kindness means courage; standing up when others shy away. And by showing kindness we prepare children to become the considerate and courageous leaders of tomorrow.



# The EYFS Framework

At Orchard House School we follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage framework, which, aims to provide:

- quality and consistency in all early years settings, so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind
- a secure foundation through planning for the learning and development of each individual child, and assessing and reviewing what they have learned regularly
- partnership working between practitioners and with parents and/or carers
- equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported

The EYFS specifies requirements for learning and development and for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. The learning and development requirements cover:

- the areas of learning and development which must shape activities and experiences (educational programmes) for children in all early years settings
- the early learning goals that providers must help children work towards (the knowledge, skills and understanding children should have at the end of the academic year in which they turn five)
- assessment arrangements for measuring progress (and requirements for reporting to parents and/or carers)



## Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.



## Communication and Language

The development of children's spoken language underpins all seven areas of learning and development. Children's back-and-forth interactions from an early age form the foundations for language and cognitive development. The number and quality of the conversations they have with adults and peers throughout the day in a language-rich environment is crucial. By commenting on what children are interested in or doing, and echoing back what they say with new vocabulary added, practitioners will build children's language effectively. Reading frequently to children, and engaging them actively in stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems, and then providing them with extensive opportunities to use and embed new words in a range of contexts, will give children the opportunity to thrive. Through conversation, story-telling and role play, where children share their ideas with support and modelling from their teacher, and sensitive questioning that invites them to elaborate, children become comfortable using a rich range of vocabulary and language structures.





### Physical Development

Physical activity is vital in children's all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives. Gross and fine motor experiences develop incrementally throughout early childhood, starting with sensory explorations and the development of a child's strength, co-ordination and positional awareness through tummy time, crawling and play movement with both objects and adults. By creating games and providing opportunities for play both indoors and outdoors, adults can support children to develop their core strength, stability, balance, spatial awareness, co-ordination and agility. Gross motor skills provide the foundation for developing healthy bodies and social and emotional well-being. Fine motor control and precision helps with hand-eye co-ordination, which is later linked to early literacy. Repeated and varied opportunities to explore and play with small world activities, puzzles, arts and crafts and the practice of using small tools, with feedback and support from adults, allow children to develop proficiency, control and confidence.



### Literacy

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (articulating ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing).



### Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. Children should be able to count confidently, develop a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers. By providing frequent and varied opportunities to build and apply this understanding - such as using manipulatives, including small pebbles and tens frames for organising counting - children will develop a secure base of knowledge and vocabulary from which mastery of mathematics is built. In addition, it is important that the curriculum includes rich opportunities for children to develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures. It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.



### Expressive Arts and Design

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness 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. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.





## Understanding the World

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community. The frequency and range of children's personal experiences increases their knowledge and sense of the world around them – from visiting parks, libraries and museums to meeting important members of society such as police officers, nurses and firefighters. In addition, listening to a broad selection of stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems will foster their understanding of our culturally, socially, technologically and ecologically diverse world. As well as building important knowledge, this extends their familiarity with words that support understanding across domains. Enriching and widening children's vocabulary will support later reading comprehension.



# School day

## Nursery and Reception (EYFS)

At the start of each day, children in the Nursery and Reception work with a combination of Montessori apparatus and other specialist Early Years resources to develop their basic skills. Whether classroom based or in the tailored outdoor environment, pupils consistently spend time in the morning and afternoon acquiring and developing new skills such as language, communication, physical, literacy and mathematics. During the week they will also have topic-based lessons and activities including PE, music, computing, Eurhythmics, Spanish and French. On several occasions each week, the children in Reception are arranged in ability sets for Phonics lessons.

Each day of the week differs as we have many specialist teachers who come in to take lessons throughout the day. During morning break time, each Reception class is taken into the playground under the supervision of our teaching staff. In the afternoons, the timetable for Reception is less structured, and the children enjoy outdoor learning and physical and creative activities. Nursery children benefit from free flow between the indoor environment and outdoor provision, with the Nursery timetable becoming gradually more structured every term in preparation for Reception class.

## Outdoor Learning

We place a lot of value on outdoor learning and feel strongly that it is a crucial element to our young children's learning and development. This belief is why we ensure, whenever possible, that our pupils have access to outdoor areas every day both in the morning and afternoon.

## Assessment/Early Years Foundation Stage Profiles

At Orchard House, we observe the progress your child is making, assessing each pupil's development in relation to the EYFS developmental learning intentions and goals that form part of the statutory guidance for the foundation stage. These assessments, (called profiles), are made based on our accumulated observations, on-going informal assessment and in-depth knowledge of your child. To gather a full picture of your child we invite parents to contribute to our assessment via the online learning profiles. Contributions could include writing their name, being kind or helping at home; however small we want to know about it. This gives us an opportunity to have discussions with your child, celebrating various achievements or moments which are special to them both at school and home.





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# Welfare Requirements

## The staff

**Head of EYFS:** Miss Rosamund Brown

**Head of Nursery:** Mrs Mercedes Remuinan

**Deputy Head of Nursery:** Miss Lara Heaver

**Reception:** Miss Argyro Fornaridou

**Reception:** Miss Susie Plummer

**Reception:** Mrs Maryanne Singh

**School email:** [info@orchardhs.org.uk](mailto:info@orchardhs.org.uk)

**School phone number:** 020 8742 8544

## Staffing

All staff attend regular training days and INSET sessions to keep updated. The Head of EYFS attends regular cluster meetings, conferences and training sessions with Little Dukes colleagues. All staff are trained in Paediatric First Aid.





# Promoting Positive Behaviour in EYFS

At Orchard House we have high expectations of children's behaviour and we follow our Orchard House values throughout the day.

Kindness and respect towards each other is expected at all times.

In the Early Years we understand children are going through many developmental and neurological changes including sensitive periods and developing their individual interpersonal skills. We pride ourselves on helping children to become confident and kind members of the class with strong communication skills. We believe that positive reinforcement works best at this young age and clear communication and expectations help children to work through any low level issues that may arise.

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# Housekeeping

We use the Montessori 'Peace Rose Table' to help children overcome low level conflict in a peaceful and purposeful manner. Children can also talk about their feelings at the 'Peace Rose Table'. Form teachers may wish to use specific charts or resources to support the whole class or individuals with behaviour choices and celebrate their successes. We have a wide range of resources in the classroom environment to help children develop strong social communication skills. EYFS children take part in regular PSED sessions to explore a range of topics such as sharing, taking turns, kindness and emotions.

## Reporting to Parents

Parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the key teacher in the Nursery and class teacher in Reception classes in the autumn and spring terms. A full school report will be sent home at the end of the summer term.

## Keeping In Touch

It is the school's intention that parents should enjoy at all times completely satisfactory communication with the school. If you wish to contact the school or send a message to any of the staff by email please use the school email address: [info@orchardhs.org.uk](mailto:info@orchardhs.org.uk)

This will ensure your message is seen and dealt with quickly. Please do not use the individual address of any staff, as if they are away from school for any reason your message will not be seen.

## Staying Healthy

A snack consisting of a piece of fruit or vegetable, should be brought into school each day; no snack bars or nuts, please. Please ensure it is clearly labelled in a plastic bag or small container. The children will also require a water bottle which will be kept in school and sent home every day to be cleaned. A nutritious and healthy lunch will be served daily (please note that only Nursery pupils who are in for the full day will have lunch at the school). Please do inform us if your child has any special dietary needs. Children will learn about healthy eating, oral hygiene and staying fit in school.

## Snack and lunchtime

Snack time in the morning should consist of one piece of fruit or vegetable; no snack bars or nuts, please. If your child prefers to eat her or his fruit without the skin please make sure it is sent in this way. Snack boxes should be labelled with your child's name. Please ensure your child brings their water bottle to school each day.

For those staying for the afternoon a nutritious lunch is provided every day.

## Medicines, Infectious Diseases, Injuries

The school must be informed if your child is suffering from an infectious disease such as COVID-19, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, measles, mumps, scarlet fever. Children should not be sent to school if they are infectious and advice should be sought from your GP about when it is safe for your child to return. If the headteacher has any concerns about a child being fit to return they may ask for a letter from the child's doctor.





When a child becomes ill at school, the school secretary will contact his or her parents and ask one or other to collect the child from school as soon as possible. Children who have been absent due to illness, particularly sickness or an upset stomach, should not return to school until the child has been clear of any symptoms for 48 hours. If this is not the case, the office should be informed. If your child has an injury such as a broken bone please contact the school office who will prepare a risk assessment to be agreed before your child returns to school.

**If any changes occur to your personal or emergency contact details please let us know immediately.**

It may be necessary for the school to contact you urgently if your child is ill or has had an accident. For this purpose, it is essential that parents advise the school at the beginning of the academic year with the emergency contact details. However, we rely on parents to notify us if their details change e.g moving house or changing employer. Please remember to let us know if your details change during the course of the year. Parents will also be asked to nominate at least one e-mail address, which should be checked on a daily basis, to which e-circulars may be sent. Communications are also sent in this way from the Parents' Association's class representatives to their classes.

### **Settling In New Children**

All new EYFS children (Nursery and Reception) will be invited into school for a Tea Party to meet their new teacher and peers in the summer term. EYFS teachers will contact children's previous Nurseries to discuss the transition into Orchard House School.

Children joining Reception are also invited into school for a moving up day at the end of the summer term in preparation for September.

### **Morning and Afternoon/Pick up and drop off**

Children are expected to arrive at and depart from school on time. The school operates staggered arrival and departure times as follows:

<b>Form</b>	<b>Arrival</b>	<b>Registration</b>	<b>Departure</b>
Nursery	8:40am <i>via side gate on Rupert Road</i>	9am	12noon or 3.30pm <i>via Rupert Road playground</i>
Reception	8:30am <i>via side gate on Rupert Road</i>	9am	3.30pm <i>via Rupert Road playground</i>

All children based in the Nursery or Reception should arrive at the side gate on Rupert Road between the times shown above.

Parents who come to the Rupert Road building by car should park in Rupert Road or in a nearby residential road – not on Bath Road. A member of staff will be in attendance at the gate at arrival and departure times. There are CCTV cameras at both entrances at Rupert Road to aid security.





## **Inclusion and Equality**

All children, parents and carers are valued whatever their race, gender, creed or area of residence. We enjoy taking part in multi-cultural festivals and have toys and books readily available to promote positive values and behaviour, and to discourage sexist and racist attitudes. A full copy of the Equal Opportunities Policy is available on request.

## **Message book**

Please use the message book provided for any changes in home time arrangements and other informal communications. We are unable to allow your child to go home with anyone else unless we have written confirmation or, in emergencies, a telephone call or email to the school office. If you would like your child to stay for an afternoon, please let us know via the message book.

Teachers are available only for a very quick word in the mornings. Parents wishing to speak with staff should telephone or email the office to arrange a time that is mutually convenient. Circulars are posted on our website and an email with the circular attached will be sent to parents at whatever addresses they may have nominated for the purpose.

## **Uniform/ labelling**

Children are expected to wear the correct school uniform at all times.

All items of uniform must be clearly named.

Children in the Nursery should wear their navy blue nursery jumper or nursery polo shirt (available from School Blazer) and navy bottoms or skirt. No belts or accessories at school please and we recommend children wear sensible footwear everyday ideally without shoelaces.

Parents should ensure that there are strong loops inside the collar on rain jackets and blazers so that they can be hung securely from the child's peg. Depending on the weather, children in Reception class should wear either the 3-in-1 jacket (with or without the inner lining) or blazer for going to or coming home from school. They should return home in the same outerwear that they went to school in. A lightweight navy rain jacket (available from Sogans) should be kept in school. Navy blue gloves, scarves and the optional woollen 'beanie' may be worn in very cold weather.

Caps and berets are not compulsory and are only worn by children in the Lower School (Form 2 and below) and are not worn with summer uniform. They should be clearly named and are kept in book bags or in the classroom. Summer uniform should be worn from the early May Bank Holiday and may continue to be worn at the start of the autumn term until the half term break.

Blazers should be worn for all smart occasions, such as trips, end of term assemblies, examinations and interviews. For every PE and Games lesson, or after school sports club, every child must wear the correct PE kit and should bring shin pads, mouthguard and water bottle. Warm clothing should be worn in cold weather.

A new uniform for children in reception and above will be introduced in **September 2024** which will be supplied by **Schoolblazer**.

Second-hand uniform sales are held, usually in the autumn, spring and summer terms. Parents are notified well in advance of these sales, which are organised by the Parents' Association. Please ensure that all items of clothing, including shoes, are labelled clearly.

## Uniform

The school uniform supplier is:

### Schoolblazer

[www.schoolblazer.com](http://www.schoolblazer.com)

All orders should be placed online via the schoolblazer website.



**Stormproof Coat**  
Nursery to Form 6



**Crew-neck Jumper**  
Nursery only



**Blue Polo Shirt**  
Nursery - Form 6



**Summer Dress**  
Reception - Form 6



**Navy Joggers**  
Nursery only



**P.E. Shorts**  
Nursery - Form 6

A full uniform list can be found on the school website. Please refer to the OHS Parent Handbook and Essential Information document emailed to all parents for further information.





# Sparkling Curiosity, Nurturing Potential

**Orchard House School**  
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Part of the Dukes Education family.  
Together we're extraordinary.

