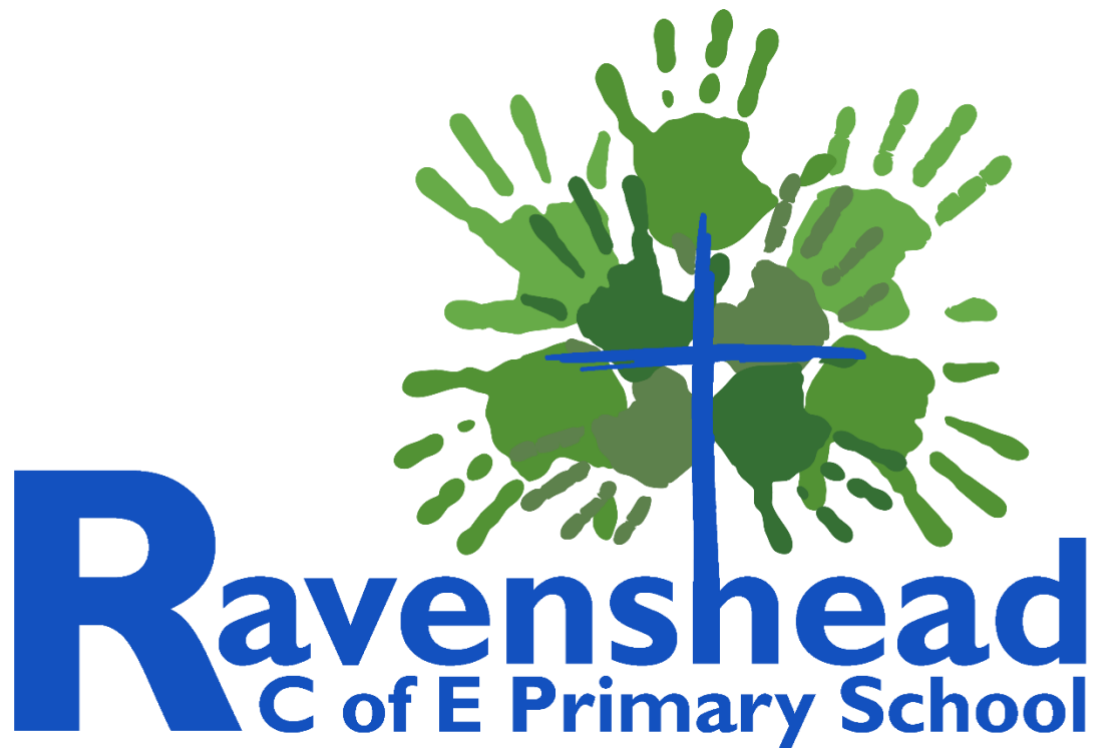




Early Years Information Book



Dear Parent / Carer,

We hope you will find this booklet helpful as your child starts school in our Foundation Unit.

Hopefully you will have chance to come along to our introductory information meeting or be attending a visit soon. If you are a new parent to the school, this booklet will give you some information about the school and what is going to happen. If you already have children in school, check that information and routines are still the same as when your other child/children started school.

Talk to your child about starting school and help them to look forward to it. Make them feel that it is a real, grown-up adventure, something to be excited about.

We will do our utmost to ensure that your child has an enjoyable time learning with us. We have an open-door policy, so please feel free to contact us via Dojo, email- office@ravenshead.notts.sch.uk, or telephone 01623 456516, and we will endeavour to answer any queries you have.

Thank you and a big warm welcome.

Starting School

When your child starts a new school for the first time it is a big change. Starting school is exciting, but it can be a worrying time.

Children like what's familiar. The idea of school may be a little daunting - but many of the activities are ones they already love doing every day. Tell them what to expect and talk to them about the similarities, as well as the differences, between school, playgroup or nursery and home. Talk about what they might enjoy doing in their new school.

We ask that before starting school you create an 'All About Me' booklet with your child, containing lots of photos and captions of things that they enjoy, people who are close to them, their favourite things etc. We will keep this in school and use it as a tool for practitioners in the setting to;

1. Learn all about your child
2. Have a talking reference to help children settle
3. Give your child something familiar to look at if they are having trouble settling.



Lunch Times

Lunchtimes and playtimes can feel strange. It takes time to feel at home in the unit and playground, but all the staff are friendly and will help them to settle in. All children in Foundation have a choice of hot dinners or to bring a packed lunch from home. We all eat dinner in the hall, but Foundation go in slightly earlier than the other children, to help them to settle.

If your child is having a school dinner, please fill in the meal form before they start school and ensure any allergies have been discussed with office staff/ Early Years staff. Hot dinners are charged at **£3.16 for Foundation One** children. Meals are **free for Foundation Two** children, as they are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals, which continue until the end of Year 2.

If your child is bringing a packed lunch to school, make the contents attractive and accessible and at a portion size that your child is familiar with. We encourage healthy eating, so please don't send fizzy drinks, sweets, or chocolate. For safety reasons, hot liquids are also not allowed. We are also a nut-free school. Please also read the governments advice on 'choking hazards' for young children. (https://www.foundationyears.org.uk/files/2021/09/Early-Years-Choking-Hazards-Table_FINAL_21-Sept-2021.pdf)

Children may bring a bottle of water into school to drink throughout the day. Please ensure that this is named. Please note, school policy only allows water in these bottles.

Snacks

All children are offered milk. This is free up to their 5th birthday. Each parent will need to register their child at www.coolmilk.com. Coolmilk will only deliver enough milk for those who have registered. If your child requires a cows milk alternative please let us know.

We are part of the National Fruit for Schools Scheme and have fruit available free of charge throughout the day. Please advise us if your child has any allergies to any of the fruit offered.

We request £5 donation per term (£15/yr) which goes towards ingredients for baking activities, celebrations and some additional snacks not provided by the scheme e.g., cereal and toast, butter, jam etc. which we offer as part of our snack provision.

School Uniform

Please make sure they have all the necessary uniform (this can be an active uniform e.g. navy/black joggers, school t-shirt) and that every item is named. We have found that the 'active uniform' particularly suits our foundation

children as it is comfier for the active learning that is promoted within our unit, and also, much easier for toileting! Further details of this can be found at <https://www.ravensheadcofeprimary.co.uk/uniform-information/>.

At home, help your child to feel as confident and independent as possible. Whenever possible, try to make sure that your child can go to the toilet on their own, (but at first put some spare pants, trousers or skirt and socks in their bag just in case!). Ensure they can put their coat on by themselves and take reasonable responsibility for their own belongings and anything they bring into school. If your child is able, it is very helpful to practice zipping or buttoning up their coat, undressing and dressing and putting on shoes independently.

Your child will also need a pair of named wellington boots in school, at all times. We will spend weekly sessions in our Forest or outdoor area, and these can be muddy in the winter.

Please make sure that your child's name is clearly marked in all their clothing and equipment e.g. coats, cardigans, jumpers, shoes (particularly important as children will take these items off during the day to take part in dressing up, role play, playing in the sand pit etc.) book bags, drinks bottles and sandwich boxes.

We follow an active curriculum. This means that children will have independent access to paint, water, glue, mud etc. Aprons are available and adults support children in putting these on and pulling up sleeves. However, please be aware that children may get dirty whilst investigating, exploring, having fun, and making memories.



Parents have a key role to play in their child's education. They are their children's first and enduring educators and understand their children better than anyone else. By sharing information about their children's interests, strengths and needs, parents can help us to make maximum progress in school.

Your class teacher will at times suggest activities for you to share with your child. These will include sharing books, hearing your child read, learning letter sounds (phonemes) and tricky words. We believe parental engagement in children's learning is vital for them to achieve to their best ability. You will be invited into school every half term to share some learning experiences with your child. We call this time 'Learning Together Days' and they are lots of fun!





Picking up and Dropping off

Foundation One- children are dropped off and picked up at the front entrance of the Foundation/KS1 building at 8.55am in the mornings and 3.25pm the end of the day. During the school day (including lunchtimes), children are dropped off and collected from the main school reception. A member of the team will meet you there at 12pm, if you are collecting at the end of the morning session, or at 12.30pm to collect children for the afternoon session.

Foundation Two- the doors are opened at 8.55am and locked at 9am. The end of the day is 3.30pm. The Foundation Two entrance is situated at the bottom of the steps, on the ks1 playground at the back of the Foundation/KS1 building.

Some children will walk through the door without looking back, others might be more upset. If your child does get upset, stay calm and cheerful. We will work with you to ensure your child is happy and settled. Almost all children are fine once their parent/carer has disappeared - it's the parting that is hard, so try not to draw it out. This is a big step for both you and your child. Allow yourself to enjoy this new experience together.

If you have a problem with your child starting school, please discuss this with your child's class teacher before their first day.

Your child's new class teacher will want to get to know you, as well as your child, so that you can work together. Make sure that you keep the teacher fully informed of any circumstances that might affect your child's behaviour or happiness.

Please make sure you are back at school in good time to collect your child, as having to wait may result in your child becoming anxious. The children will be dismissed from the same doors they came in through.



After school

Children are often very tired at the end of the school session. Let your child unwind and play. Let them talk about their day if they want to, but if not tell them a few things about your day. Some children actually prefer not to talk much about school. Some children are sometimes just too tired and some simply prefer to keep home and school life separate.

If your child is going to be absent from school, please ring the school office and give the reason for their absence. If your child is late for school, please sign in at the main KS2 reception entrance and your child will be taken over to their class by a member of staff.

School attendance is statutory from 5 years of age. If your child is over 5 years and you wish to take them out of school, you will need to fill in a '*Withdrawal from Learning*' form, available from the school office. The Headteacher, Mrs Johnson, will then decide, in accordance with Local Authority guidelines, if your absence can be authorised. Only in extreme circumstances are these days authorised and you may incur a fine if children are withdrawn from school without authorisation.



Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS) is the first part of the National Curriculum, focusing on the distinct needs of children from birth to the end of the Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage is delivered in a range of settings. These include pre-school groups, early years centres, accredited childminders, nursery and reception classes in primary schools and private nurseries.

Foundation Stage learning has seven learning areas:-

- Personal, social and emotional development,
- Physical development,
- Communication and language,
- Mathematics,
- Literacy
- Understanding of the world,
- Expressive Arts and Design.

We also have the characteristics of effective learning that run through all areas.

These are;

Playing and exploring - engagement

Finding out and exploring

Playing with what they know

Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning - motivation

Being involved and concentrating

Keeping trying

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically - thinking

Having their own ideas

Making links

Choosing ways to do things



Children are tracked and assessed using a variety of methods throughout our Foundation classes and a final assessment is completed at the end of Foundation 2, which gives a picture of what progress the child has made and celebrates their skills and achievements. These end of stage assessments are reported to Nottinghamshire County Council and feed into National statistics.

We use carefully planned play as a vehicle and framework to plan and deliver the Foundation stage curriculum and make learning as engaging and fun as possible.



Seesaw

All children attending Ravenshead C of E Primary School's Foundation Unit, have a personal online Learning Journal. We use the Seesaw system, which is hosted on secure, dedicated servers. You will have password protected access to your child's online Learning Journal, and we encourage you to contribute to it by uploading photos, videos and comments of their learning development and experiences at home. This helps us particularly with the special holidays that you celebrate together and those wow moments we are unlikely to see in school. If in these uploads you can comment to say what it is specifically that your child has done independently for the first time etc then it can be linked to an area of learning in their journal. At school we will use it for group photos of special event days, or if there has been a specific wow moment at school.

Please complete and return the permissions form to enable us to set up an account for your child.

Special Educational Needs

We are an inclusive school and aim to provide the best possible education for children regardless of ability and needs. We liaise with our school SENCO, if we feel that children are demonstrating barriers to learning. In these instances, we will meet with parents to discuss these and plan next steps.



Parent Communication

Class Dojo- We use this to communicate with you about class information: we can instantly share messages, updates, and photos from class. It's the easiest way for you to get in touch with staff if it is not urgent. We also use this to post messages and reminders.

Additionally in F2, we use the dojo system to give the children points related to their behaviour. These will be along the lines of them being ready (learning behaviour), respectful (to friends, adults and in looking after their environment), safe (being aware of their surroundings and making safe judgements within their play) and kind (to the people around them). We find that this gives you a talking point for celebrating their achievements with them at home.

If you would like to contact your child's class teacher during the day, please phone the main office and they will pass on messages / arrange a call back time, as staff are not always able to check DOJO throughout the day.

School Office:- 01623 456516 Email:- office@ravenshead.notts.sch.uk
You can also contact the office via DOJO, but please call if you have an urgent message, as these can be missed at busy times.

ARBOR Payment

All payments to school for school meals, trips etc., are made via our online payment system - Arbor. Once your child has started with us, you will be sent login details for this system.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact the school office or see your child's class teacher.

