



Houghton Conquest
Lower School
Growing together

Parent Handbook



Robins class 2024 -2025

Dear Parents / Carers,

Welcome to Houghton Conquest Lower School and your child's first year of Primary Education. I am sure we are in for an exciting year of growth and development. I know I am very much looking forward to it.

A key element to ensuring this year is as successful as possible for your child is a strong link between home and school. I have sent home reading books and will be sending home tricky words to practise regularly at home. You can also find more ideas in this booklet to help support your child's learning further at home. Should you need to contact me you can do so by informing the school office or writing a note and putting this in your child's book bag. I am always available at home time each day for short messages or you can also ask for an appointment if more time is needed. Urgent messages should be delivered to the school office.

This term parent consultations will take place on the following dates:

Tuesday 12th November at 3.40 pm - 5.50 pm and Thursday 14th November at 5.00 pm - 7.00 pm.

These will allow for a fantastic opportunity to discuss your child's progress and see their work. Information regarding appointment times will be given out nearer the time.

Thank you for your support.

Mrs M Waby
Robins Class Teacher

Contents

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Robins Timetable

Robins Class Timetable Autumn 1 - Wk 5												
		9:10 - 9:30	9.30 - 10.00			10.45 - 11:55			13:10- 14:40	14:40- 15.00	15.00: - 15:10/15	
M o n d a y T u e s d a y W e d n e s d a y T h u r s d a y F r i d a y	E a r l y w o r k a n d R e g i s t e r 8 : 4 5 - 9 : 0 0	Phonics Lesson 1	Maths 1 - Counting to 5 (Discovery Time)	S n a c k / s t o r y B r e a k A s s e m b l y 1 0 : 1 0 : 0 0 - 1 0 : 1 3 : 0 0 - 1 5 : 0 0 - 1 5	1 0 : 1 0 : 0 0 - 1 0 : 1 3 : 0 0 - 1 5	Literacy 1- Vegetable painting write initial sound - (Discovery Time)	L u n c h 1 2 : 0 0 - 1 : 0 0 : 1 : 0 0	13:10- 14:40		14:40- 15.00	15.00: - 15:10/15	
		Phonics Lesson 2	Practise Reading Sessions x 2 groups (Discovery Time) <u>Observations</u>			Maths 2 - Counting to 5 (Discovery Time)		UTW <u>Harvest Festival - Harvest Crafts</u> (Discovery Time)	Share a Story	Story & home things		
		Phonics Lesson 3	Literacy 2- <u>Healthy Eating/Unhealthy Eating - Fruit kebabs</u> (Discovery Time)			Practise Reading Sessions x 2 groups		Maths 3 - Counting to 5 (Discovery Time)	UTW <u>Farming in the Past/Present</u> <u>Harvest Crafts</u> (Discovery Time)	<u>Whole Class - PE -</u>	Share a Story	Story & home things
		Phonics Lesson 4	Maths 4 - Counting to 5 (Discovery Time)			Literacy 3 Vegetable painting write initial sound (Discovery Time)		HARVEST FESTIVAL - AT THE CHURCH				
		Phonics Lesson 5	Practise Reading Sessions x 2 groups (Discovery Time)			Literacy 4 Vegetable painting write initial sound (Discovery Time)		Music - Chorus (Discovery Time)	Share a Story	Story & home things		
						Fruit kebabs (Discovery time)		Share a Story	Story & home things			

Snapshot of Key Information

People who help us in Robins Class

Mrs Waby
Class Teacher



Miss Phillips
Teaching Assistant

Mrs Coleman
PPA Cover

Mrs Cookham
Forest School

Topics

Autumn 1 - All About Me
Autumn 2 - Festivals and Celebrations
Spring 1 - Once Upon a Time
Spring 2 - Amazing Adventures
Summer 1 - Up Above and Down Below
Summer 2 - Our Wonderful World



Golden Rules


We are respectful and polite
We are kind and helpful
We listen to everyone
We are always honest
We always work hard
We look after property

'Staying on Green but Going for Gold!'



Reading

Reading Record & Home-School Communication



Learning Logs

As part of the Communication and Language Area of Learning, your child will have the opportunity to speak to the rest of their class every week through circle time activities, sharing a story, helicopter stories, Learning Logs as well as interactions through their Discovery Time (learning through play). When listening, they will have the opportunity to respond to ideas expressed by their peers. Dates for the Autumn term Learning Logs can be found below.

Learning Log	Date to be handed in
Share a story (in class)	9th September 2024
My family Learning Log	18th September 2024
Helicopter stories (in class)	23 rd September 2024
Share a story (in class)	30 th September 2024
Helicopter stories (in class)	7th October 2024
Harvest/Autumn Learning Log	14th October 2024
Share a Story (in class)	21 st October 2024
Half term	
My Half Term Learning Log	4 th November 2024
Helicopter stories (in class)	11 th November 2024
Share a Story (in class)	18th November 2024
Seasons - Autumn to Winter Learning Log	25 th November 2024
Helicopter stories (in class)	2 nd December 2024
Share a story (in class)	9 th December 2024
Christmas Learning Log	16 th December 2024

PE

This year Robins will have P.E. on Tuesday afternoons. Please ensure all PE kit is fully labelled with your child's name. PE bags should be left in school on their peg and we will send these home at the end of each half term to be washed.



Forest School

The children will have the opportunity to visit our fabulous forest school in the summer term with Mrs Cookham.

Please ensure your child has suitable clothing in school for their forest school day. This includes wellies, warm leggings or jogging bottoms and a warm long sleeved top.

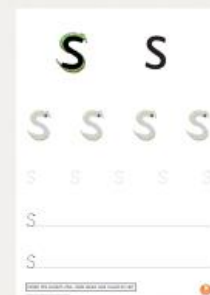
They will also need waterproof trousers and a waterproof top and as the weather gets colder thick socks, a hat, gloves and a scarf would be ideal.



Tricky words

Tricky Words	
Phase 2 - Set 1	
is	
I	
the	

Letter Formation



Phonics

Our Phonics Scheme "Little Wandle" supports the teaching and learning of Phonics in Robins' class. Each new phoneme will have a rhyme to help support letter formation. The children will have daily phonics lessons at school to teach a new phoneme (sound), support them to write the phoneme (grapheme), blend together to build words and write (segment) the word. They will have 3 x a week practise reading sessions to support decoding (blending the word), prosody (reading with a meaning) and comprehension (understanding the text). They will be provided with the weekly book, from the practise reading sessions, to practise at home.

Our School Reading Scheme Explained

Our Little Wandle reading books are arranged into fully decodable books which are matched to their secure phonics knowledge. This will enable them to use the GPC's they know to decode the words and, with practise, develop fluency when reading.

Each class has its own selection of books from which the teacher will match to their secure phonics knowledge. The children will read the book in the 3 x practise reading sessions and then will bring home to read to their grown-ups. This book will be changed every Thursday and relate to their book they have read in their practise sessions that week. Children move onto a different level according to the development of many skills, not just being able to read all the words. There are some reading questions in this booklet to help you discuss stories and books.

Please encourage your child to read lots of different books at home. The children need to discuss many different stories and texts so I would not recommend buying reading scheme books for home.

Reading Strategies

Following our whole school approach to the teaching of reading, and to ensure children are prepared for the National Curriculum as they move into Year One, children in Robins will be taught to read using phonics as the prime strategy.

Children will learn the letters and corresponding sounds and develop the skill of blending the sounds into words for reading, establishing the habit of applying this skill whenever they encounter new words.

They will be supported by practise in reading books consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and skill. As their phonic knowledge increases, they will start to learn 'tricky words' which do not follow the phonic rules and need to be recognised by sight.

Tricky words

Phase 2					
is	I	the	put	pull	full
as	and	has	his	her	go
no	to	into	she	push	he
of	we	me	be		

Phase 3					
was	you	they	my	by	all
are	sure	pure			

Tricky words will be sent out as your child's phonics knowledge develops. We will test these every other week so please try to practise them at home regularly. There are lots of fun ways you can do this such as making up games with them or writing using different media and materials such as chalk, sand or with water and a paintbrush on the patio.

Alongside their phonics learning, children will hear, share and discuss a wide range of high-quality books to develop a love of reading and broaden their vocabulary.

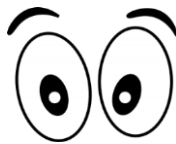
How can I help my child with reading?

Please try to read with your child **at least 3 times a week**. 5 minutes is enough to encourage steady progress while developing a love of reading. Children will also benefit from listening to stories regularly. This helps them to build a wider vocabulary and develop a love of books.

When reading with a child please:

- Encourage them to hold the book and turn the pages themselves.
- Discuss the front cover. What might the book be about? Who could the main characters be? Have they read a book like this before or by the same Author?
- Ask them to read the title of the book to you.
- Encourage your child to follow the text by using their own finger to point underneath the text if necessary.
- Please do make comments in the reading diary and sign your name.
- Discuss the content/pictures/themes/characters/settings in the books and ask lots of questions to check comprehension.
- Encourage the child to use the following strategies if they cannot read a word:

Use the pictures - look at the pictures for clues.



Read around it - read the whole sentence (leaving out the word that they are stuck on),
can they work out the word?



Sound it out - sound out the word using their phonics (if it is phonetically regular).



Read it on sight - think about the Tricky words that they know. Do I know another
word like it "if I know fire, I know wire" etc.



Learning Logs/Helicopter Stories/Share a Story

As part of the Communication and Language Area of Learning, your child will have the opportunity to speak to the rest of their class every week through circle time activities, sharing a story, helicopter stories, Learning Logs as well as interactions through their Discovery Time (learning through play). When listening, they will have the opportunity to respond to ideas expressed by their peers.

Learning Logs - to be completed at home

In the Learning Log, a couple of drawings/photographs/creations will be sufficient (this will become progressive over the year as your child will learn to sound out and write their own words, phrases and sentences). If your child wants to do more than this, **please use no more than the double page with the topic label**. We are looking for imaginative ideas expressed by the child independently through creations, pictures and words. We hope you will enjoy spending time with your child talking about each learning log topic. Just a reminder these are not compulsory, however they do play a huge part in developing the children's confidence, fine motor and communication and language skills.

When completing learning logs please,

- Please encourage children to sound out words for themselves rather than tracing or copying (this is progressive over the year as your child will learn to sound out and write their own words, phrases and sentences);
- Use coloured pencils or crayons to colour;
- Use a separate piece of paper if you would like to use felt-tips or paints, and stick this in;
- Please, feel free to stick in items such as tickets, photographs, leaflets, stickers, natural objects etc.

Helicopter Stories

As a whole class, children will create together their own story characters, settings and their beginning, middle and ending of their story. They will take turns to draw the story and the adult will scribe the words. This will become progressive to the children as they learn to sound out and write their own words, phrases and sentences over the year.

Share a Story (in class)

Children can bring a favourite story from home to share with others. The teacher will read the story and the child will discuss what their favourite part of the story is and why.

Learning Log	Date to be handed in Week beginning...
Share a story (in class)	9th September 2024
My family Learning Log	16th September 2024
Helicopter stories (in class)	23 rd September 2024
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Helicopter stories (in class)	7th October 2024
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Share a Story (in class)	18th November 2024
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Helicopter stories (in class)	2 nd December 2024
Share a story (in class)	9 th December 2024
Christmas Learning Log	16 th December 2024

Handwriting

We use the Letter-join scheme throughout the school for handwriting. Through this scheme letter formation should become familiar and secure. Reception class also uses the Little Wandle letter formation rhymes to support them to recognise and form their letters at the correct starting point.

For our youngest pupils we teach short handwriting lessons, in our Phonics lesson, on a **daily** basis, which will include the following:

- enhancing gross motor skills such as air-writing, pattern-making and physical activities
- exercises to develop fine motor skills such as mark-making on paper, whiteboards, sensory trays etc.
- becoming familiar with letter shapes(graphemes), their sounds (phonemes), formation patterns (we use mnemonics linked to our phonic scheme) and vocabulary
- correct sitting position and pencil grip for handwriting

Module 1 "Print" of the Letterjoin programme teaches handwriting using the printed method. It starts with fine and gross motor skills warm-up exercises, correct sitting position and tripod pencil grip.

It is divided into three sections covering:

- pre-writing patterns

- easy letters and words
- harder letters and words.

At the end of this module, children should be able to recognise and form all the printed, lowercase letters of the alphabet.

Mathematics

Throughout Reception, children will become confident with counting, recognising numbers and subitising using 5 and 10 frames. They will begin to explore the composition of numbers to 10. They will look at addition and subtraction, particularly one more and one less, doubles, odd and even numbers including number bonds to 5 and 10. They will explore 2D and 3D shape, repeating patterns and compare length, weight and capacity through practical experiences.

As a school we are focussing on the Mastery approach to Mathematics. This is a method of teaching that promotes learning through clearly embedding and exploring mathematical concepts, allowing children to realise patterns and relationships when working with number to fully embed their knowledge and ability to manipulate numbers.

Maths lessons generally follow very clear stages of skill development where children are able to explore new concepts in a manner that best suits them. Children are given the opportunity to explore through three key methods:

- **Concrete:** Using manipulative objects and practical representations to solve problems.
- **Pictorial:** Using visual structures and templates to organise reasoning through visual representations or drawings.
- **Abstract:** The written form or a number sentence, using symbols and numbers to explore or communicate a problem (e.g. $3+1=4$)

Throughout the reception year the key focus will be on the **Concrete** method of learning, however, pupils will always be given the opportunity to use **Pictorial** and **Abstract** methods to explore and demonstrate their understanding.

An example of **Concrete** working in Reception:

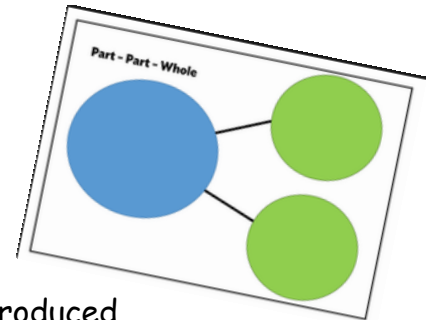
"Child A is playing with three trains. The adult introduces the language of one more and asks the child how many they would have if they added one more train. The child finds another train. The child then counts the trains to discover they now have four trains. The adult asks the child what happened when they got another train. The child and adult work together to explain that three trains and one more train is the same as four trains."

To further challenge the child they could explore this concept deeper by continuing to add another one again or could repeat the challenge at another time using a Pictorial method:

"Child A has drawn a picture of three apples. The adult asks the child how many apples he would have if he drew one more. The child then draws another apple and counts the total number, equalling four. Together the adult and child discuss that three apples and one more is the same as having four apples."

Other Pictorial methods could include using part whole models:

Through this method the child could draw their three trains in one of the smaller circles, one more in the other then the total number of trains in the largest of the circles.



There are many other Pictorial methods that your child will be introduced to during the reception year, however, it is likely most children will continue to use **Concrete** methods.

If the same child were to record their problem solving using the **Abstract** method, they would simply communicate their problem through the use of an **Abstract** number sentence:

$$3 + 1 = 4$$

Knowing that they began with three objects and added one more to make a total sum of four trains. To reach this stage the child would have been taught to fully understand the symbols used as well as how to read the sentence. As with word reading we usually read a number sentence from left to right, therefore, this **Abstract** method could be verbally read as *"Three and one is the same as four."*

Helping Your Child at Home

Supporting the 7 areas of learning in the EYFS

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

- Encourage your child to say please and thank you.
- When playing with your child, support them in sharing toys.
- Allow them to choose some toys themselves and reflect on opinions about these toys; e.g. this is my favourite doll/car.
- Try to support your child in taking turns with others.



Communication and Language

- Spend lots of time talking and listening to your child as you go about everyday activities, such as preparing meals, putting shopping away, etc. Explain what you are doing.
- Listen to your child explaining how they do an activity e.g. how they made a model or played a game.
- Ask your child 'why' questions, e.g. why do they need to brush their teeth? Why do they wear a coat when it's cold outside?
- Read aloud and share books as often as possible, discussing characters, what happens in the stories and what they think might happen next.

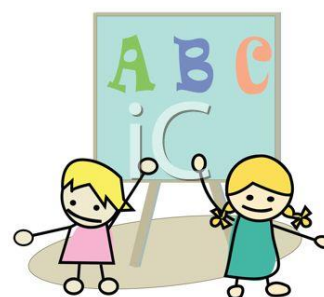
Physical Development

- Encourage your child to handle small and large equipment.
- Ensure your child can dress and undress themselves independently, including doing zips and buttons as this is a big part of achieving their early learning goal at the end of the year.
- Ensure that your child is able to go to the toilet unaided.
- Allow your child to use scissors and develop their skills.
- Allow your child to run, hop, skip, jump and find different ways of travelling.
- Discuss changes to their bodies after exercise; heart beating faster, feeling hot, needing a drink, etc.
- Discuss how they keep themselves healthy e.g. eating a balanced diet, drinking plenty of water, getting enough sleep, washing their hands after going to the toilet and before eating, etc.



Literacy - Reading and Writing

- Encourage your child to read at every opportunity.
- Play word games such as 'I spy' to increase vocabulary and identify sounds.
- Sing alphabet songs and talk about the names of the letters and the sounds that they make - try to think of words that begin with that sound.
- Make shapes of letters out of play dough, write them in sand, write names in birthday cards.
- Encourage your child to sing/say songs and rhymes and tell you their own stories.
- Ask your child about words that rhyme e.g. house and mouse.
- Provide your child with plenty of opportunities for making marks on paper, card, blackboards, etc.
- Try and give them opportunities to 'write' for themselves - lists, signs, cards and invitations.



Mathematics

- Practise counting groups of objects. Pose questions such as, how many altogether? Can we find half? How many would we have if we had 1 more or 1 less?
- Count out loud with your child saying the names of numbers clearly.
- Show numbers to your child, particularly those in the environment e.g. price labels, number plates, house numbers, road names, numbers in the aisles of the supermarket - numbers are everywhere!
- Sing songs or rhymes with numbers in them; 10 in the bed, 5 little ducks, 10 fat sausages, etc.
- Read stories with numbers in them e.g. The Very Hungry Caterpillar.

- Count using fingers as a visual aid.
- Encourage children to identify shapes around them, you'll be surprised what they find!
- Enjoy using shapes and colours to make patterns using paint or felt tips.
- Apply mathematics to real life - size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money.
- Subitise (to arrive suddenly and not count) by showing small quantities in familiar patterns ie: recognising patterns on a dice), or by revealing and hiding numbers of objects.



Understanding the World

- Talk to your child about family members and beliefs, including special times; birthdays, weddings, christenings and other key events in their lives and the lives of others they know.
- Encourage them to explore the natural world and their surroundings, particularly outdoors in their village, gardens, parks, woods, at the beach and draw a map of their journey or animals and plants observed.
- Talk to your child about the changing seasons and what happens to the weather, to plants, the clothes they wear, and so on.
- Allow them to use simple tools such as a small hand trowel to help with digging in the garden.
- Encourage them to feel different textured objects and describe them e.g. rough cloth, smooth pebble, soft fur, etc.



Expressive Arts and Design

- Allow your child to listen to, sing songs and rhymes and explore musical instruments.
- Dance to songs and make up actions to complement them e.g. Wheels on the Bus.
- Engage in role play with your child - pretend to be a train driver and his passengers, or princesses at a party, or act out a story.
- Explore different media; paint, pencils, crayons. Let your child have a



go and be prepared for a little mess!

- Using scissors, glue, adhesive tape and a variety of materials to construct with to encourage different techniques for joining materials.

I hope this Welcome booklet has been helpful and informative. If you do have any questions, concerns or queries then please do let me know and I will be happy to discuss these with you.

I look forward to a fantastic year, getting to know you and your child.

Best Wishes,

Mrs M Waby
Robins Class Teacher

