



**Houghton Conquest**  
Lower School  
Growing together

# Parent Handbook 2025-26

## Owls Class



# Who is in Owls class?



**Mrs Wadeson**  
(Monday - Thursday am)



**Mrs Blake**  
(Thursday pm - Friday)



**Mrs Sebborn**

# Golden Rules and Core Values

The children are reminded daily of our Golden Rules and Core Values. We aim to develop positive behaviours so that everyone sees themselves as part of a happy learning community



## HOUGHTON'S CORE VALUES ARE...



### **RESPECT**

FOR OURSELVES, OTHERS AND OUR ENVIRONMENT

### **HONESTY**

TO TELL THE TRUTH

### **RESILIENCE**

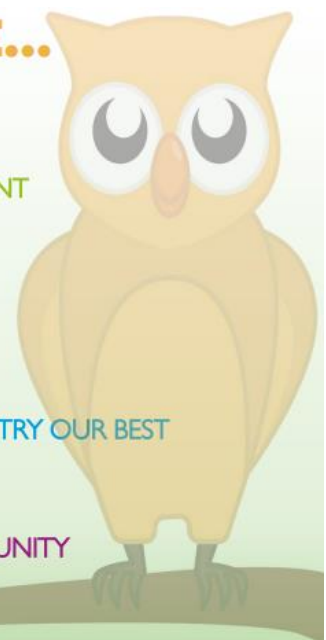
TO BE DETERMINED, WORK HARD AND ALWAYS TRY OUR BEST

### **PRIDE**

IN OUR WORK, OUR SUCCESSES AND OUR COMMUNITY

### **TEAMWORK**

TO BE FRIENDLY AND WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS OUR GOALS



Dear Parents/Carers,

We hope you find this booklet useful and it helps you to support your child's learning in Owls class at home.

During the year there may be times when you have questions about your child's learning or there may be things you need to inform school about that may affect your child's learning.

You can contact us by informing the school office, writing a little note in the home school communication book, a telephone call or contact us via our class email address [owls@hcschool.org.uk](mailto:owls@hcschool.org.uk). You can also ask for an appointment if more time is needed and we will get back to you with a convenient time. Urgent messages could be delivered to the member of staff on gate duty.

There will be consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms which will provide opportunities to discuss your child's progress and see their work.

Provisional dates can be found below although more information will be sent out nearer the time.

- Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025
- Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Thank you for your support.

Mrs Wadeson and Mrs Blake

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# Learning at Home in Year Two

We expect children in Year Two to be completing *no more than one hour* of homework each week. Children in Owls Class are expected to complete the following Learning at Home on a weekly basis:

- Reading at home: 3 times a week (5 minutes each time)
- Home Spelling book: 3 times a week (5 minutes each time)
- Maths homework: no more than 15 minutes (start after October half term)
- Learning Log activities (optional)

## Reading

Owls should read at home three times a week for five minutes each time; please make a short note in your child's reading record to show they have read. If your child is still reading Little Wandle books these will continue to be changed once a week after they have read with a teacher in school. If your child is reading the reading scheme books, they will be encouraged to change their books independently when they have finished reading it. Reading records will be checked every day and stamps will be awarded to those children who have read three or more times at home that week. Once six stamps are earned, the child will receive a Reading Reward for their efforts; these are given out during our Celebration Assembly.

**Please ask your child questions about their reading to help their progression. Suggested questions are included in this booklet and in your child's reading record.**

## Home Spellings

Your child will bring home a 'Home Spellings' book which is to be completed three times per week. A list of spellings can be found at the beginning of each main page and should be practised three times during the week with the date at the top of the column. Please fold the pages to help your child follow our Look, Cover, Write, Check strategy (See spelling book for information on this strategy). Please ensure your child brings their Home Spelling book back to school on a Friday.

**Spellings will be set on a Monday and will be collected on a Friday.**

## Maths learning

After October half term, the children will be bringing home a maths task which will be set weekly on a Wednesday and needs to be completed by the following Monday. These tasks link to our learning in school and should be completed as independent as possible. The children will receive a resource pack that will support their learning. Later on in the year the children will receive a log in for 'TT rockstars (a programme to support the children's timetables)'.



By the end of year 2 children should be able to read and spell...

<u>first</u>	<u>good</u>	<u>home</u>	<u>house</u>	<u>because</u>	<u>ball</u>	<u>bed</u>	<u>not</u>
<u>girl</u>	<u>took</u>	<u>came</u>	<u>about</u>	<u>saw</u>	<u>call</u>	<u>but</u>	<u>got</u>
<u>sister</u>	<u>would</u>	<u>name</u>	<u>out</u>	<u>your</u>	<u>called</u>	<u>dig</u>	<u>did</u>
<u>over</u>	<u>should</u>	<u>made</u>	<u>our</u>	<u>door</u>	<u>school</u>	<u>must</u>	<u>very</u>
<u>water</u>	<u>could</u>	<u>make</u>	<u>now</u>	<u>more</u>	<u>last</u>	<u>just</u>	<u>will</u>
<u>people</u>	<u>put</u>	<u>take</u>	<u>how</u>	<u>or</u>	<u>laugh</u>	<u>much</u>	<u>from</u>
<u>back</u>	<u>push</u>	<u>time</u>	<u>down</u>	<u>live</u>	<u>half</u>	<u>has</u>	<u>his</u>
<u>had</u>	<u>pull</u>	<u>can't</u>	<u>off</u>	<u>love</u>	<u>after</u>	<u>as</u>	<u>him</u>
<u>have</u>	<u>another</u>	<u>want</u>	<u>if</u>	<u>do</u>	<u>next</u>	<u>an</u>	<u>ran</u>
<u>their</u>	<u>brother</u>	<u>don't</u>	<u>boy</u>	<u>new</u>	<u>night</u>	<u>man</u>	<u>many</u>
<u>than</u>	<u>these</u>	<u>jump</u>	<u>where</u>	<u>little</u>	<u>her</u>	<u>once</u>	<u>too</u>
<u>them</u>	<u>with</u>	<u>may</u>	<u>there</u>	<u>old</u>	<u>so</u>	<u>again</u>	<u>two</u>
<u>then</u>	<u>three</u>	<u>that</u>	<u>here</u>	<u>seen</u>	<u>some</u>	<u>help</u>	
<u>when</u>	<u>by</u>	<u>what</u>	<u>were</u>	<u>been</u>	<u>one</u>	<u>who</u>	

...in addition to the 100 keywords (caterpillar words) that your child brought home in year 1.

Year 2 children are also expected to be able to read and write the following list of common exception words correctly.

<u>door</u>	<u>children</u>	<u>cold</u>	<u>beautiful</u>	<u>path</u>	<u>eye</u>	<u>many</u>	<u>half</u>
<u>floor</u>	<u>wild</u>	<u>hold</u>	<u>fast</u>	<u>bath</u>	<u>whole</u>	<u>busy</u>	<u>about</u>
<u>poor</u>	<u>climb</u>	<u>every</u>	<u>last</u>	<u>plant</u>	<u>clothes</u>	<u>again</u>	
<u>because</u>	<u>most</u>	<u>everybody</u>	<u>past</u>	<u>hour</u>	<u>could</u>	<u>people</u>	
<u>find</u>	<u>only</u>	<u>even</u>	<u>after</u>	<u>move</u>	<u>should</u>	<u>Mrs</u>	
<u>kind</u>	<u>both</u>	<u>pretty</u>	<u>father</u>	<u>prove</u>	<u>would</u>	<u>Mrs</u>	
<u>mind</u>	<u>told</u>	<u>great</u>	<u>class</u>	<u>improve</u>	<u>who</u>	<u>parents</u>	
<u>behind</u>	<u>old</u>	<u>break</u>	<u>grass</u>	<u>sure</u>	<u>whole</u>	<u>Christmas</u>	
<u>child</u>	<u>gold</u>	<u>steak</u>	<u>pass</u>	<u>sugar</u>	<u>any</u>	<u>money</u>	

# Help your child with **spelling**

## **Different media**

Provide different media for children to write and make marks with e.g. paint and paintbrushes, chunky markers on large paper, chalk on the pavement or patio, dry-wipe markers on the mirror or using fingers in shaving foam, or custard. You could also encourage children to explore making marks on a computer or tablet device.

## **Flashcards**

Have flashcards, letter tiles or similar items around for children to use to spell out words.

## **Make a copy**

Children could copy out the spelling list in alphabetical order or from shortest to longest.

## **Grab a dictionary**

Have a dictionary to hand for looking up unfamiliar words

## **Narrow it down**

Narrow down long lists and focus on 4 to 5 at a time.

## **Get moving**

Use physical activity - for each letter of the word get children to do a star jump, walk up or down a step, touch their toes etc.

## **Games**

Make the list into a game - try playing hangman, making word searches or coming up with crosswords.

## **Shout out**

Encourage your child to spell words out loud on long car journeys or when walking to school.

Encourage your child to read.

**Good readers are often good spellers!**



# Learning Logs



Learning Logs are one of the ways we promote learning at Home. We hope that your child will enjoy completing the activities and that they encourage you to work with them to complete the tasks.

## How they work

Learning Logs are sent home every term.

Inside will be a number of **optional activities**, which you may wish to complete to support your child's learning at home. Complete the activity or activities you prefer - the choice is yours!

## How can I do my work?

- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Drawing
- ✓ Diagrams
- ✓ Photographs
- ✓ Anyway you see fit - the more creative the better!



## Learning Log Guidelines



## When are they due?

Learning Logs are handed out during the term of each new topic in Owls and should normally be returned by the date set on the activity sheet.

## Presenting my learning

- ✓ A double page should be used
- ✓ Please only use grey pencil for writing
- ✓ Coloured pencils for colouring - not felt tip pens
- ✓ Use rulers to draw lines



"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.



*Involve me and I learn."*



- Benjamin Franklin

**WORK HARD & BE  
PROUD OF WHAT  
YOU ACHIEVE**

# Our Reading Scheme Explained

To support early reading and writing we have chosen 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' as our Phonics Scheme. This is taught explicitly in Early Years and Year 1 with some cross over into year 2 to support children who are not yet secure in age related phonic knowledge. As part of the scheme, which you will be familiar with from the tail end of last year, are linked reading books. Our Little Wandle reading books are fully decodable and are matched to each child's secure phonics knowledge. This enables them to use the phonemes (sounds) they know to decode the words and, with practice, develop fluency when reading.

Once children have a secure phonic knowledge and have moved past the support of 'Little Wandle' in Year 2, our reading books are arranged into colour coded boxes which link to the National Curriculum. In the past couple of years, the Friends of Houghton Conquest have funded some wonderful new reading resources for your children to use at home.

We use a variety of 'reading schemes' in our school including Rigby Star, Project X and Oxford Reading Tree, to support independent reading. We have a clear reading progression system that runs through the school and we regularly assess the pupil's progress against this to implement additional support and/or challenge. Teachers talk to the children regularly about their strengths and areas of development and communicate with parents via children's reading records. All reading books are colour-coded to indicate level of difficulty.

## **To promote a love of reading, we:**

- Read aloud daily to children to introduce them to new authors and styles of writing,
- Encourage and model reading for pleasure and establish an appreciation and love of reading,
- Ensure that reading is made fun by teachers and other adults, providing excitement and inspiring the imagination,
- Establish and develop a varied range of texts in the classroom,
- Hold an annual World Book Day event,
- Work with parents and carers to ensure that reading is regularly shared at home, promoted by our reading reward scheme,
- Each class has its own dedicated 'Book Nook' reading space,
- Celebrate a range of authors and illustrators across varying genres.
- Reading Breakfast events, where you can come and read with your child, whilst enjoying a delicious breakfast.

**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.**

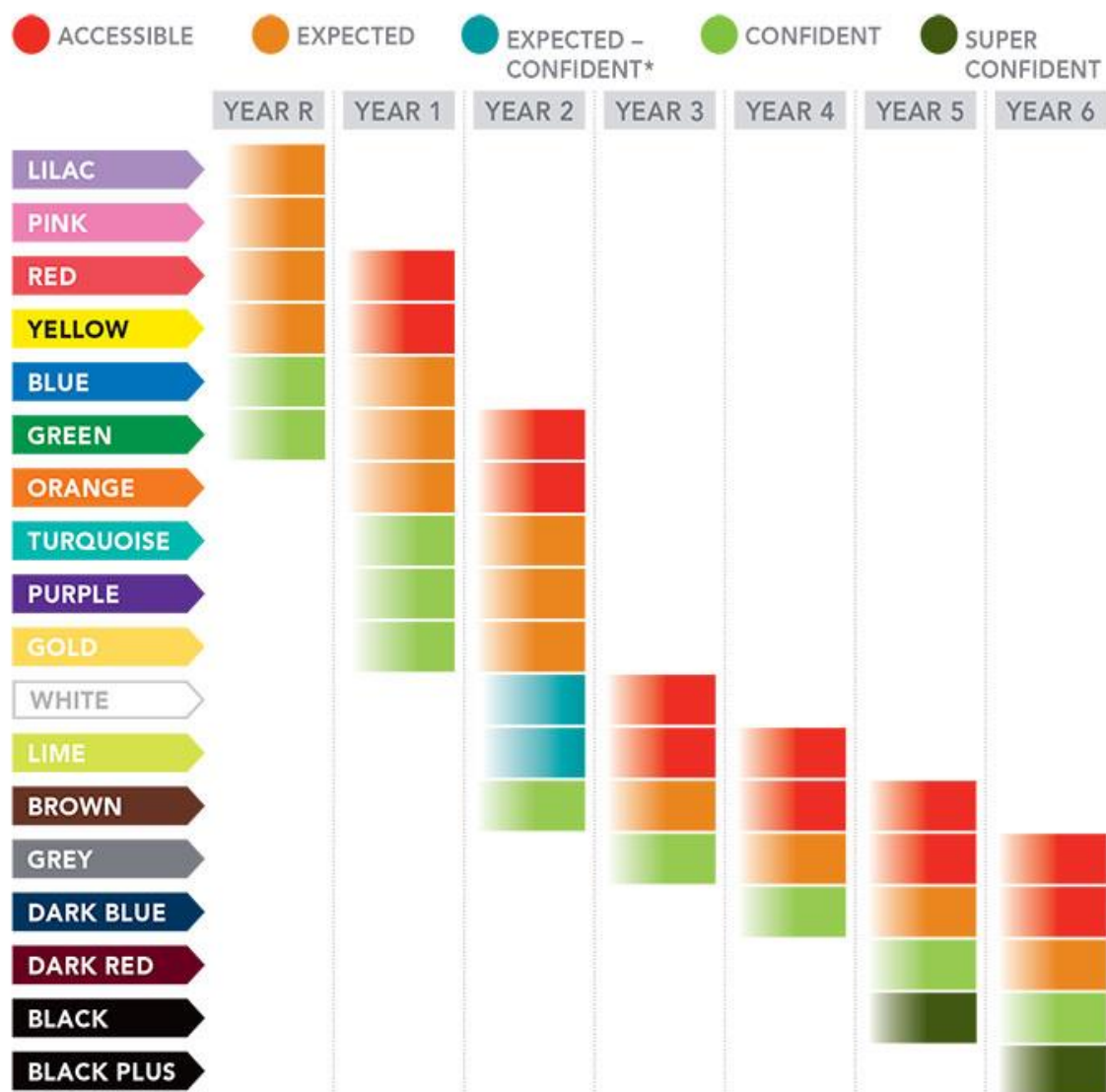
If your child brings home a book which they have read previously, use the opportunity to talk about it - Why have they chosen it again? Can they remember what happened? Remember, we all like to re-read a good book!

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

Owls should read **three times a week** for about five minutes each time. Please make a short note in your child's reading record each time. Stamps/ticks will be awarded to those children who have read three or more times a week, checked every Monday. When the children have gained six stamps/ticks they will receive a Reading Reward for their efforts; these are given out during our Celebration Assembly.

## Our Reading Scheme Colours

All children are different but as a general guide these are where your child is expected to be.



\* adjustment made to keep in line with new expectations for reading

# Reading Strategies

I use the pictures to help me.



"C-AR-P-E-T"  
"CAR - PET"  
"CARPET"

I segment and blend words I don't know.

I look for smaller words inside words.



"tEACHer"



"en - joy - able"  
"Enjoyable"

I can break words down into chunks.

I use punctuation to help me make sense of what I am reading.



I go back and read a word or sentence again if I don't understand it.

I read on to see if I can work out the meaning of a word I don't know.



I listen to what I am reading to see if it makes sense.



Help your child with

# reading

## I spy

Play 'I Spy' games.  
Can you find words beginning with...? Can you find a picture of a ...? How many ... can you see?

## Ask questions

Ask questions about the story as you read it e.g. What is the story about? Why do you think they made that choice? Was it a good choice? Why did that happen? What do you think will happen next? What was your favourite part of the story? Why?

## Make it fun

Enjoy reading together. Give characters funny voices and engage with the pictures. Make a game out of finding words that rhyme or start with the same sound.

## Create

Use reading to inspire drawings or new stories.

## Be seen

Make sure you are seen reading. Keep books and magazines at easy reach.

## Get out

Go to your public library regularly. Find the books you loved as a kid to read together.

## Go online

Look online & in app stores for appropriate word & spelling games.

## Make space

Have a special place or a certain time when you read together.

## Read everything out loud.

Books, poems, nursery rhymes, newspaper & magazine articles, food labels... anything that is close to hand!



## How can I help my child with reading?

As a parent you are probably helping your child with reading much more than you may realise. If your home contains books, magazines and catalogues that your child sees you reading (you are modeling skills they need to learn), you read to your child and talk together about familiar stories, also, if you use printed materials to find things out, then your child already has a head start in this area.

- Remember that **talking** about reading is very important, so if your child is sometimes reluctant to read aloud, discussing a book will also help to develop reading skills.
- Concentrate on **enjoyment** and grasping the meaning rather than absolute accuracy.
- Keep reading time **relaxed**, comfortable and pleasurable, in a quiet corner, with the television turned off.
- Talk about the cover and read the title before rushing your child into the text, asking questions such as: what do you think it will be about; what sort of book is it; have you read one like this before?
- Look through the book, noticing interesting pictures and words, then read the opening together.
- Don't correct too quickly. If your child makes an error suggest having another go, searching the pictures for a clue, sounding out the first letter or reading on before you 'tell' the problem word. Try some of the reading strategies.
- If your child is really struggling, take over the reading yourself so that it remains a fun activity and let the teacher know.
- When your child brings home a book that has been read before ask for a summary before reading it again, then discuss the book at a deeper level than last time.
- As your child progresses, talk about authors, characters and plots or what new information has been learnt.
- Join your local library and use it regularly. Watch out for storytelling events, summer reads and reviews of new titles.

# Reading Questions

## To help your child develop comprehension skills

### Knowledge

Where is the story set?  
When did the story take place?  
Who are the main characters?  
What does the character look like?  
Where does the character live?



### Comprehension

What is happening?  
What happened at the end of the story?  
Who is telling the story?  
Which parts of the story do you like best?  
Which parts describe the setting?  
What problem does the character have?

### Analysis

How do you feel about...?  
Why did the author choose these words?  
How has the author shown the character is afraid?

### Application

Can you think of another story with a similar theme? With the same issues?  
Can you think of another story character that acted this way?  
What idea would you borrow from this story if you were to write your own one?

### Evaluation

What makes a successful story?  
Which one is better? Why?  
Could the story be improved? How?  
Who would enjoy reading this story?



### Being critical

What is your opinion about...?  
What evidence do you have to back up your opinion?  
Have the views in the text affected your opinion?  
What would the main characters think about...?



At Houghton Conquest Lower School we are having a big focus on handwriting this year. We will be continuing to use our 'Letter Join' scheme and handwriting will be taught three times a week.

In Year 2 we will be continuing to practise the formation of letters and eventually moving onto joining our handwriting, as stated in the National Curriculum. Children who struggle with handwriting will receive intervention.

Using cursive handwriting encourages children to slow down, take care in their letter formation and promotes pride in their work. We encourage children to practise their handwriting at home, as well as at school.

Below is an example of how we join our letters. We **do not** use lead in lines, as we feel this is an easier progression from printing to joining.

a b c d e

f g h i j k

l m n o p

q r s t u

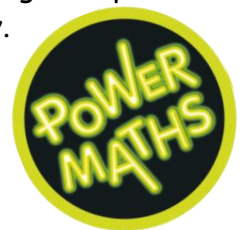
v w x y z

the big dog

# Maths Mastery

At Houghton Conquest Lower School, Maths Mastery has been developed to ensure that every child can achieve excellence in mathematics. It provides pupils with a deep understanding of the subject through concrete, pictorial and abstract approaches. This ensures pupils fully understand what they are learning.

At Houghton we use the Power Maths scheme as it is a UK curriculum mastery programme designed to spark curiosity and excitement and nurture confidence in maths. This programme is an enriched approach that cleverly combines interactive teaching tools, rich and quality textbooks, and practice books. A continuous and embedded approach to teacher support and professional development throughout. It is built around a child-centred lesson design that models and embeds a growth mindset approach to maths and focuses on helping all children to build a deep understanding of maths concepts. It embeds a deeper understanding of maths by utilising concrete, pictorial and abstract approaches so that pupils understand what they are doing more, rather than learning to repeat routines, pupils are given the opportunity to fully reason as well as develop fluency.



## Concrete

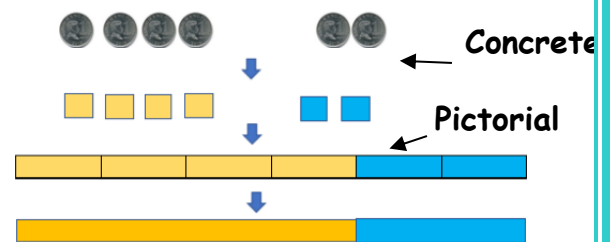
Concrete is the '**doing**' stage where they use concrete objects as the model. This approach brings a mathematical concept into reality by allowing children to experience and use some physical resources to reason and solve problems.



Concrete

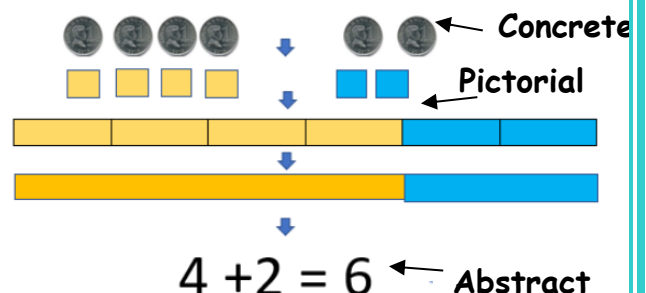
## Pictorial:

The pictorial is the '**seeing**' stage where the children see the representations of the objects using varied templates, such as a part whole model or a bar model. It encourages children to see a mental connection between the physical objects and abstract concepts by looking at the pictures, circles, or any model that represents the objects. Building or drawing a model makes it easier for children to visualise the problem.



## Abstract:

The abstract is the '**symbolic**' stage, where children can use abstract symbols to model problems. Once a child already has a solid understanding of 'Concrete' and 'Pictorial' then we can introduce the 'Abstract'. In this stage, problems are represented using the symbolic concepts, such as numbers and mathematical symbols, for example the four basic arithmetic operations (+, -, x, /).



## Owls Class Visits

Term/Topic	Details	Type of visit	Cost breakdown
Summer Term  Into the secret garden.  Curriculum focus: Literacy, Science, Geography & Art	<b>Trip to Swiss Gardens-</b> (subject to confirmation) Visit to include: - Bean hotel workshop -Texture bingo activity -Plant finder trail activity -Sculpture trial activity -Antique bus ride around garden	Off site (all day)	Coach - £375 Entry to garden - £6.50  Cost per child (based on 23 children): £22.80
Summer Term  Into the Secret Garden  Curriculum focus: Science, Mathematics and Geography	<b>Walk around Houghton Conquest.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify how the village has changed over time.</li> <li>Identify historical landmarks</li> <li>Read and create maps linked to Geography</li> </ul>	Off site (one afternoon)	Free
<p><b>Costs are based on 2024-25 prices and may increase subject to supplier.</b></p> <p><b>Permission letters advising of the exact cost will be sent out near the date of each visit.</b></p> <p><b>Please note that the type and number of trips per class take into account a number of criteria including the age of the children.</b></p>			



## Owls Timetable

**DEAR = Drop Everything and Read**

	8:50 - 9:00	9:10-9:30	9:30 -10:15	10.15 - 10:30	10:30 - 10:45	10:45 - 11:40	11:40-12:00	12:00 - 13:00	13:00 - 14:00	14:00 - 14:05	14:05 - 15:00	15:00- 15:10
Monday	Register / Morning Task/challenge/ SEMH activity/spellings	Phonics	Maths	Break	Assembly	Literacy	Spelling/ Guided Reading	Lunch	Computing	Movement Break	PE	DEAR Time
Tuesday		Phonics	Maths			Literacy	Guided Reading Library Session		Science		Science PH SE	DEAR Time
Wednesday		Phonics	Maths			Literacy	Guided Reading		PE		RE	DEAR Time
Thursday		Phonics	Maths			Literacy	Guided Reading		Art		Music	DEAR Time
Friday		Phonics	Maths			Literacy	Handwriting		Guided Reading History/ Geography		Golden Time	DEAR Time

Our timetable will likely change throughout the year, but you will always be informed of any changes that affect PE days and other events.

# Notes