

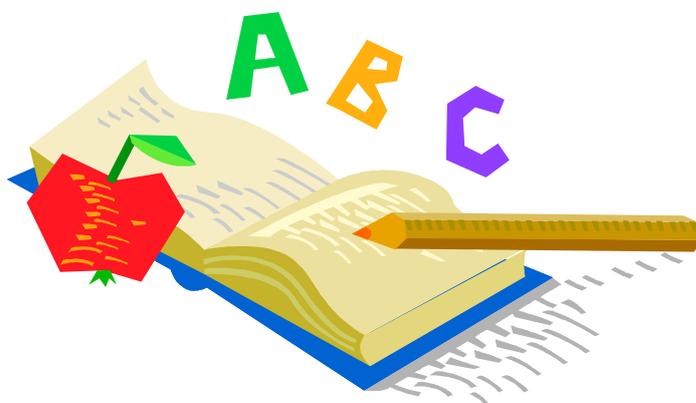
# Starting School

Broseley Church of England  
Primary School  
Foundation Stage

Mrs E. Davis

# Contents

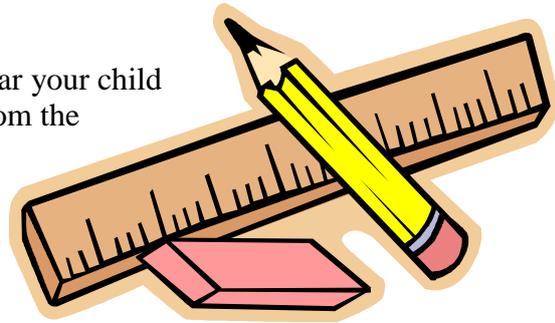
Induction arrangements.....	3
What curriculum will my child be following?.....	4
How will my child’s progress be tracked and assessed? .....	5
Some of the most frequently asked questions.....	6
So how can I prepare my child for school?.....	9
In conclusion.....	14



The time has come for your child to start school and we look forward to meeting you at this exciting time in your child's life. The preparation that you do for and with your child will be a valuable start to your child's schooling. It is this partnership between home and school that is so important making the initial transition as smooth and happy as possible and continuing throughout school life.

## **Induction Arrangements**

In the September of the year prior to the year your child will start school, you will be sent a form from the LEA asking you to choose your preferred school. You must return this by the date given, to the school of your choice. Should you require any help in registering do not hesitate to contact us.



In early spring term you will receive a letter concerning the decision made on schooling for your child.

The term before your child starts school, you will be offered a home visit date. This is a chance for us to visit you and for you to meet your child's teacher. This gives us a chance to find out more about your child, and discuss any concerns, medical queries you may have, and share information you feel important.

You are then invited to attend a family session where you stay with your child for an afternoon. You can meet other starters and spend time in the reception class. You are also able to meet the Head, and order our school uniform.

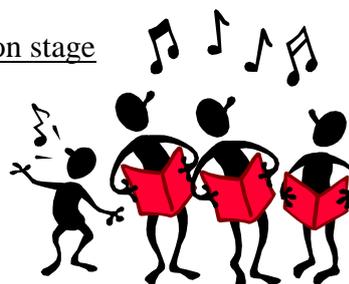
Your child then visits for a further half day, where they stay on their own for lunch.

Therefore we hope that by the time your child starts, they and you feel familiar, comfortable and relaxed about school.

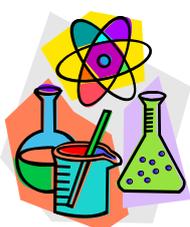
Over the summer holidays you will be asked to make a scrap book all about your child. This really helps them share information about home and helps us get to know them better. They will share this with their new friends in September.

## What curriculum will my child be following?

When your child starts school they will be in the foundation stage of their development. This begins at age 3 and continues until the end of their reception year. If your child has attended any pre-school establishment they will have been following the same curriculum but at an earlier development level.



The curriculum splits learning into 3 Prime areas and 4 specific areas. They are:



**Prime areas**

- Communication and Language;
- Physical development;
- Personal, social and emotional development

**Specific Areas**-Literacy;  
-Mathematics;  
-Understanding the world; and  
-Expressive arts and design

Each area has ultimate learning goals which it is intended will be reached by the end of the reception year. Obviously, some children will progress further and begin the Year 1 national curriculum and others will take longer to achieve their goals.

To achieve these goals there are a series of 'development statements' to ensure progression. At the end of the school year you will receive a written report under each of these areas informing you of progress made. You will also be invited to a Parents meeting after half a term to



discuss how your child is settling in and where we feel they are in their development. Of course, any immediate concerns on both sides can be discussed as and when necessary. There is also a parent consultation meeting in the Spring term.



## Outdoor activities

Your child will also be able to have regular outdoor learning sessions in our woodland area. This is a very exciting initiative. For these sessions your child will need to arrive at school dressed in old clothes (we will get very muddy!) and bring their school uniform to change into. They will need a waterproof coat and wellies. Please ensure this coat is separate to their school coat. We will let you know when the sessions will start.

## **How will my child's progress be tracked and assessed?**

When children start school, we will complete a 'baseline' assessment. This will help us provide and plan the next steps for your child. Our assessments are all made on informal everyday observations and activities rather than formal tests, creating an ongoing portfolio of development. As parents you are asked to contribute to our assessments by sharing your observations from home. This begins over the summer holidays before they start when you are asked to complete a scrap book as a way to help us get to know your child. They will bring this home with them after their final induction visit.

Throughout the year, you will be able to contribute to our evidence through the 'Special book'.

We will discuss their progress with you at Parent Consultation Meetings, as well as an end of year report. If we have any concerns, we will discuss these with you, and likewise please feel free to discuss any issues you have.

At the end of the year, your child will be assessed against the expected outcomes for Reception children, called the early learning goals.

## **Some of the most frequently asked questions**

### **What are the school day times?**

Doors open at 8:45 am. Children should be brought into the classroom by the parent/carer. The register is taken at 8:55. If any child is not in school by 9am, they will be recorded absent. If you are late you will need to report to the office. Lunchtime is 12-1pm and home time is 3:10pm.

### **What do they need for P.E?**

Children are able to take part in P.E, wearing black or navy shorts and a white or green t-shirt. Please name them! Sometimes we work outside and black/ navy jogging bottoms and trainers will be necessary then as outside kit.



### **What do I do if my child is ill?**

If your child is absent from school for any reason we must be informed as soon as possible. This can be by telephone, letter or given verbally by another adult. Our register system requires a code to be given for each absence and any unauthorised absence must be recorded. If we do not have a reason for absence by 9.30am we will ring you to find out why.

This is for your child's safety.

### **How can I get involved in School life?**

We have an active P.T.A who are always looking for new members! You are welcome to come into the classroom to hear readers, if you can spare an afternoon a week. We are obliged to carry out a police check on anyone wanting to work with young children.

We are part of the Family Learning Network, where parents of reception age children are invited into School one afternoon a week to find out more about early literacy or numeracy skills. This will aid your understanding of how children learn in order to support your child.

### **How do I purchase school uniform?**

On your family session induction afternoon, you are able to place orders from the PTA. After this there are order forms permanently in the secretary's office. Returned orders are then passed on as soon as possible. Money with your orders please.

### **How will I find out about day to day events?**

The oldest child in each family is responsible for taking home letters. There is also a notice board in the Creative Room for further information. On Mondays The School Newsletter is emailed sharing whole school activities and achievements, as well as news and information. If you do not receive this please pop into the office to ensure we have the correct email address. Also check the school website for information.

### **What can my child have for dinner?**

You can choose on a daily basis, your preferred choice between dinners or sandwiches. Dinners are free for children in Reception and KS1 and are delicious! Your child will be offered a free drink of milk or water or cartons of fruit juice are available to buy at the cost of 40p. The menu is on our website and Facebook page.



### **Does my child need tuck?**

We are lucky enough to be involved in the ‘Fruit for Schools’ programme, where your child is given a piece of fresh fruit each day to eat mid-morning. We feel it is very important to form good eating habits to ensure a healthy lifestyle from this very early age.



### **What happens if my child is ill/hurt during the school day?**

We will try to contact you immediately on contact numbers given. It is very important to ensure these are kept up to date. If we could not contact anyone and we felt your child needed immediate medical help, we will use your consent to take them to the doctors/hospital whilst trying to contact you. If a small injury takes place, a written information sheet is sent home, which you will be asked to sign for.

### **Why does my child never want to talk about school?**

Often children feel once they have done an activity, there is no need to talk about it. They often will answer ‘nothing’ or ‘can’t remember’, especially if they are tired. This is all perfectly normal. Try not to worry; often things come out at different times and places.

### **What do I do if I’m worried about something?**

If your child tells you something, or relates an event that you are worried about, firstly remember they will only be telling you from their own perspective! If you are at all concerned it is best to come and speak the next day, to prevent unnecessary worry. Try to remember incidents happen every day, which we **always** deal with. Rest assured we would speak to you if we felt it necessary.

### **What happens if my child appears to have a special need?**

If we feel your child has a special need of any description, we would always discuss our concerns with you. Obviously, we want to help as much as we can and the next steps depend on the nature of the need. There is a very comprehensive system set up in school to support your child, which would be discussed with you.

### **Will my child be able to have regular drinks?**

We have invested in individual water bottles for each child. This is a named bottle which they bring to School each day filled with water. It is then put in the classroom where the children are given regular access to sips of water to ensure they are hydrated at all times. We feel this has obvious health and subsequent learning benefits, though it is important to remember only water has this positive effect and nothing else is acceptable. The first bottle is free. Subsequent bottles are available from the office for a small cost.

### **What happens if someone else is picking up my child?**

Please ensure staff are informed of regular arrangements so we know who is picking up your child. If this changes, it is vital you inform the school. This can be done by telephone, a written note/email or verbally. We cannot accept a message via your child, without your permission. Please do not send another person without letting us know( even family members) as we will have to ring you to confirm arrangements. Obviously this is for your child's safety.

## **So how can I help prepare my child for school?**

Your role and attitude as a parent is vital in the way your child enters school. A child who feels confident about going to school will do better than a nervous child. You want your child to go to school thinking this is going to be a good thing to do and to feel happy about the adventure. Remember that you will probably talk about school to a lot of people. Even when you think your child is not listening, you can be surprised!

You can help your child in a number of ways.

### **Socially**



Being at school means being with other people, adults and children alike. Coming to school means coming face to face with a large group of unknown people, which can be very daunting. Therefore it is helpful for them to know a few friendly faces through pre-school establishments.

As children do get to know each other they have to learn how to relate. This can be difficult but an important life skill. Children are natural learners and are encouraged constantly to play co-operatively in large and small group situations. They will be expected to take responsibility for their own actions and possessions. They will need to be respectful of others, equipment and the school environment.

### **Practically**

On entering school it would be helpful to your child if they could master the following basic skills:

- Dress themselves
- Blow their own nose
- Toilet themselves
- Use a knife and fork
- Put on their own coat and shoes.

## **Prime Areas**

### **Communication and language**

#### **With speaking and listening at home**

Encouraging your child to discuss how he/she feels and what he/she thinks about situations encourages reflective thinking. He/She should be able to talk also about imaginative situations and play.

He/She should be able to listen carefully to stories, tapes, DVD's, videos etc and respond by asking questions and retelling or discussing a picture about it.

He/She should be encouraged to follow simple instructions. You can make these more complicated to where a child can remember and carry out three separate follow-on actions. Try to make this part of everyday situations, not a training session!



#### **With speaking and listening at school**

Your child will be encouraged to listen to others and the teacher in all situations. They will be asked to work collaboratively and be encouraged to listen and react to others ideas. Language and communication is a vital life skill and transcends all areas of learning.

### **Physical development**

This gives the child the opportunity to have the experience of using a range of large and small apparatus, developing an awareness of body parts and space. We encourage the child to begin to move with control, co-ordination, confidence and imagination. There is also the opportunity to handle a range of tools, objects, construction and malleable materials with increasing control.

### **Personal, Emotional and Social Development**

This area refers to developing confidence to try new activities and to initiate ideas, whilst continuing to be interested, motivated and excited to learn. It also refers to developing concentration levels and maintaining attention. It allows children to respond to significant experiences, showing a range of emotions as appropriate. It encourages children to develop respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people, and expect others to treat them with respect. It also develops independence in dressing/undressing as well as personal hygiene.

## **Specific areas of learning.**

### **Literacy**

#### **With reading at home**

To develop reading, you should help your child to understand that print, in books and elsewhere in his surroundings, has meaning. Encourage him/her to recognise his/her own name and to understand that the words in his/her books provide the story. He/She should be encouraged to show an interest in reading picking up books to look at on his/her own, as well as choosing books to be read to him/her. Develop the interest by talking about pictures and characters, likes and dislikes. Try to provide a mixture of familiar and unfamiliar books, including non-fiction, as well as poetry and rhyme books.

He/She will be beginning to recognise individual letters in his/her name and pick them out in his/her environment. Encourage him/her to 'hear' the sounds of the letters through games such as I spy, and 'odd one out'. We also send home 'tricky words' to be learned as sight words. They cannot be blended.

#### **With reading at school**

When your child enters school, he/she will be entering an environment, which is rich in language. Your child will take part in a wide range of literacy activities on a daily basis. We also follow the



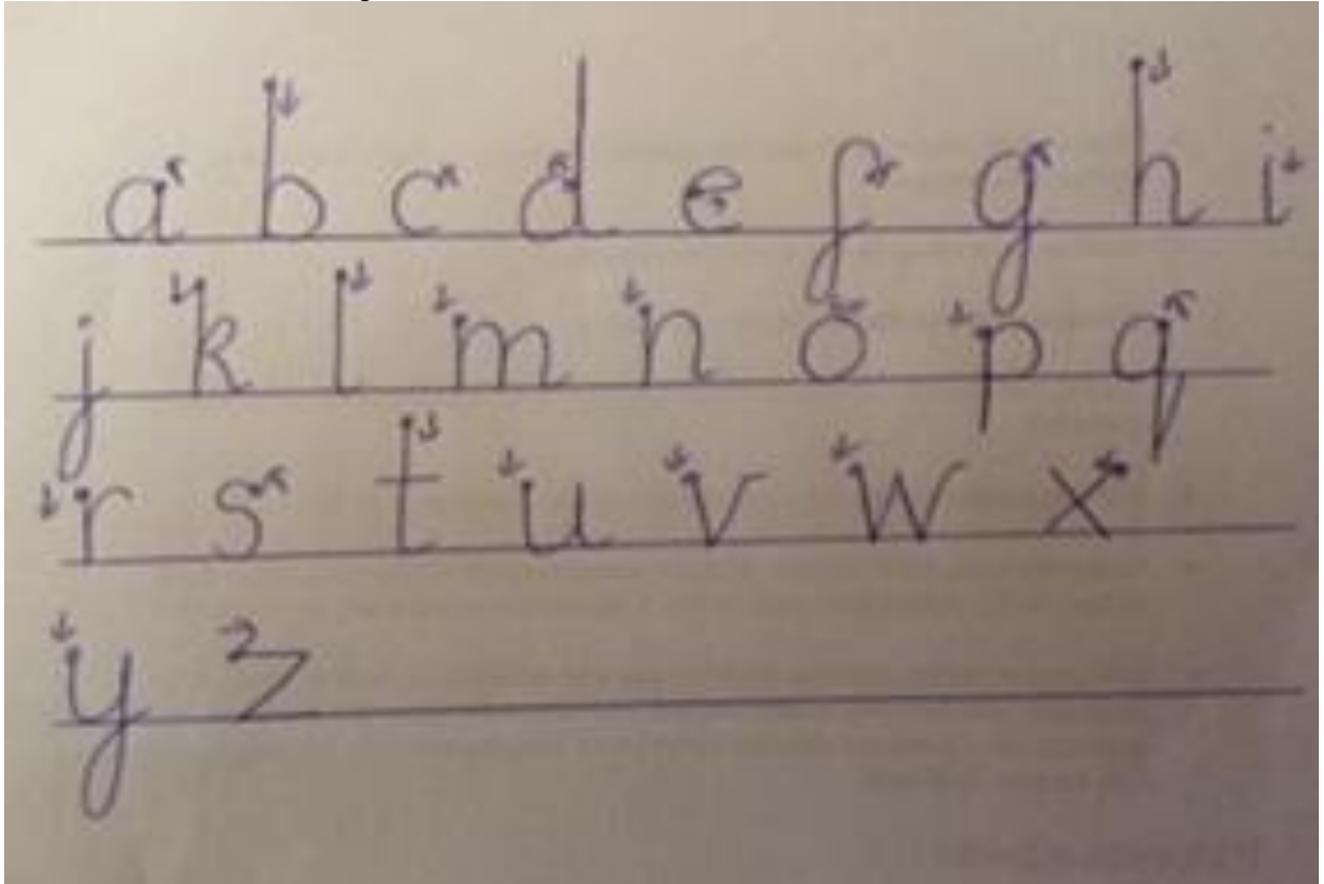
phonics scheme 'Letters and sounds' which is a daily synthetic phonic approach. He/She will be given an individual reading book, which should be returned daily. This is a chance for you to share and support his/her reading development. At the beginning the emphasis is upon story telling, directional skills and enjoyment through picture books. This allows us to assess the right time for

your child to be introduced to books with text and a growing vocabulary. A reading diary is sent home for you. Feelings and observations about your child's reading can be recorded offering a valuable link. Your child will also take part in a guided read session twice a week.

#### **With writing at home and school**

At first, children should be trying to communicate meaning through mark making and drawing. It is very helpful for them to see adults writing and to know that writing has meaning and purpose. This could be shopping lists, postcards, letters etc. As they progress they will begin to try and form their own letters/squiggles. This is an important developmental stage and should not be dismissed. You can praise your child and scribe for them underneath the conventional way of writing. Eventually they will begin to see the consistency of spelling and will learn some keywords. This will then lead onto the using their knowledge of phonics to attempt their own spelling. We call this skill 'segmenting'.

The formation of letters taught in school is as follows;



Children are taught lower case initially, with capitals used only for beginnings of names and at the beginnings of sentences later on.

## **Mathematics**

### **With mathematical development at home**

Grasping mathematical skills is always easiest when there is an element of fun in an activity. It is best learned in a real situation. You do not need specialist equipment it can all be done in the home and local environment. Offer opportunities for him/her to develop skills in number (counting, adding and subtraction), sorting, sequencing and ordering everyday objects.

Bearing these points in mind, encourage as many of the following skills as possible.

- Compare objects to see which is the longest, tallest, thickest....
- Talk about a set of things, e.g. “which is the longest pencil?”

- Predict which of two objects will be the heavier.
- Count, read, write and order numbers up to at least 10 (go beyond if mastered).
- Know that counting from 1-10 means there are 10 things here.
- Know that where there are, for example 7 oranges, there will still be 7 however arranged.
- Add or take away using everyday objects.
- Estimate the number of objects in a bag.
- Copy, continue or devise a repeating pattern (necklace making/wallpaper pattern)
- Do the same sequencing with shapes or low numbers e.g. 1,2,1,2,1.....
- Compare and order objects without measuring them into tall, taller than, tallest; cold, warm, hot; and so on. Use correct vocabulary to describe.
- Use opportunities such as table laying and cooking to extend the child's language and develop mathematical and scientific concepts. Where appropriate, introduce precise descriptive language-circle, rectangle, square, full, empty, half full.

### **With maths at School**



Your child will take part in a range of mathematical activities every day. Encourage your child to show you the games we play, as many are practically based.

### **Understanding of the world.**

This area allows us to explore children's natural curiosity, about themselves, their environment and the world in which they live, now, in the past and the future. It is largely topic based, with a new theme each half term. We encourage children to use all of their senses to investigate objects. We encourage them to talk about their ideas and perceptions and develop language skills. A rich variety of stimuli are used for this work including real experiences, outside speakers, artefacts, trips, books, and videos. We encourage



knowledge and understanding through an enquiry approach, developing questioning skills.

We recognise the importance of technology in our ever-developing world, and children have the opportunity to use I.T to enhance all areas of the curriculum, as well as separate discrete teaching. We also have an interactive whiteboard in each classroom. The children will be encouraged to learn to use an iPad, microphones, 'talking tins', BeeBots, C.D players and other electronic toys.

## **Expressive Arts and design Development**



This area allows children to explore, express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings using a widening range of materials, suitable tools, imaginative and role play situations, including movement, designing and making, and a variety of songs and musical instruments.



## **In conclusion....**

We hope this booklet has been helpful in preparing you and your child for school life. We want it to be a very happy, secure and positive time for you all. If there are any additional concerns/queries you have do not hesitate to contact us.

Mrs Emma Davis (Head of Foundation Stage.)