



Park Primary Reception Handbook 2021-22



Park Primary School

Confidence, Creativity, Care and Aspiration

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Park Primary Vision, Values and Aims

Our core values at Park are:

Confidence

A self-confident approach allows the children to tackle all learning opportunities positively, supporting them to take risks and respond to the challenges they face along the way.

Creativity

We nurture children's individuality and self-expression through our emphasis on creativity and the arts and through providing an irresistible learning experience. By being independent and creative learners and thinkers, we expect all children to make excellent progress and achieve their very best.

Care

We encourage every child to care about and have respect for their learning, each other and our environment. By being socially and emotionally intelligent, understanding and caring about themselves and each other, our children will make the right choices and experience positive relationships now and in the future.

Aspiration

Teachers and key adults at Park set high expectations for all children and we encourage children to set high expectations of themselves through taking ownership and responsibility of their learning and always striving to challenge themselves and deepen their understanding.

We also place a high priority on British Values which we value as our own. As well as these core values we expect our learners to:

Be curious

Co-operate

Find things out

Concentrate

Enjoy learning

Have a go

Persevere and not give up

Use their imagination

Keep improving

In Reception the above expectations are seen as the children's Characteristics of Effective Learning, as children develop these they are able to use the skills to learn effectively throughout life. The class teacher will be looking for your child using these skills and planning how to support your child in developing them. These skills are continued to be developed further into Park Primary where the children are explicitly taught these, calling them their 'Learning Powers'.

Early Years Vision, Values and Aims

Reception at Park is a place where curiosity, exploration, communication and creativity of mind are seen daily. Our intent is to deliver the Early Years Framework through engaging and enabling environments, as well as through building exceptional positive relationships. Children learn in Reception through a balance of child-led free-flow activities, adult-led small groups and whole class carpet sessions. 'Free flow' is a term we use when the children can autonomously choose where to learn between the three Reception classrooms and the garden. We believe that much of a young child's learning comes from their active investigation of the world around them, this is why we aim to implement a love of learning and growth throughout each of the learning environments. Children in Reception learn through play and this provides meaningful, rich learning experiences such as building social and communication skills through role play, developing literacy skills through storytelling with small world objects and using their investigative and problem solving skills in block play.



As well as encouraging the children to engage in their own learning through play, we combine an appropriate combination of open-ended play and exploration with direct teaching and adult supported activities. We find that this balanced approach to teaching and learning engages and supports children in reaching their next steps and moving them closer to meeting the EYFS Early Learning Goals at the end of Reception. This means we plan and implement carpet and group time sessions that are planned to impact the children's development towards their next steps for learning. These sessions may include: listening and attention games, phonics, story times, mathematics and personal and social sessions.

We believe a balance of open-ended play and adult directed activities allows for children to see themselves as explorers – active learners with independent attitudes, as well as teaching them new skills and knowledge to extend their thinking and learning.

Learning in Reception



In Reception at Park, as well as an emphasis on enabling environments including use of the outdoors, we believe in learning through play. We use the Early Years Foundation Stage framework (EYFS) to support children's learning and development. There are 7 areas of development within this framework. To the left is a more detailed picture of each of the 7 areas for learning in the Early Years.

We focus on specific parts of the curriculum each month and children are given the monthly 'next steps' to take home so they can continue this learning outside of school. These monthly next steps are worked on throughout the whole of Reception and vary from month to month. An example of the progression of learning throughout the year can be seen in the table below.

	September	December	April
Personal Social Emotional [Making Relationships]	Can play in a group, elaborating play ideas, e.g. building up a role-play activity with others.	Begins to take steps to resolve conflicts with other children, e.g. finding a compromise.	Takes account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity and is managing conflict well
Literacy [Reading]	Recognises own name and shows an interest in learning new sounds	Can read and begin to write simple 3 letter words	Reads simple sentences and talks about them. Beginning to write a simple sentence such as 'it is a cat'
Mathematics [Number]	Represents numbers using fingers, marks on paper or pictures	Consistently recognises numerals 1 to 10 and matches numeral and quantity correctly	In practical activities and discussion they begin to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting

In September we concentrate on implementing routines and building positive relationships that support children in settling into their new environment. We facilitate environments and plan activities that encourage children in becoming more independent in dressing, toileting, using their language to talk about their thoughts and feelings, and forming friendships. By October and November, the children are settled and our expectations move to them focusing their concentration during carpet sessions, joining in with adult-led maths and literacy learning as well as helping them navigate the complexities of developing their personal, social and emotional skills.

Our daily timetable changes throughout the year and as the children's listening and attention skills become more refined, carpet session learning becomes longer. Below is an example of a usual daily timetable from the Autumn Term:

8:55	Children arrive, self register and name recognition, Boogie Beebies dancing
9:10	Literacy/ communication and language carpet session
9:30	Free-flow learning through play in each of the classrooms and garden- adults will support children in small group times and adult directed activities throughout this time
10:45	Tidy up time- phonics carpet session
11:15	Prepare for lunch time, washing hands
11:30	Lunch time
12:30	Afternoon register and mathematics carpet session
12:50	Free-flow learning through play in each of the classrooms and garden- adults will support children in small group times and adult directed activities throughout this time
2:00	Snack and story/song time
2:15	Learning in your own classroom through play- teacher to read with some children each day
3:50	Tidy up and carpet session topic time
3:05	Home time

Reception Classrooms and Learning Environments

Park primary is a 3 form entry school which means we have 3 classes in Reception. The class names are: **Jemison, MacArthur and Seacole**. The classes are named after Mae Jemison – a former NASA astronaut and the first black woman to travel in space, Ellen MacArthur – a sailor who broke the world record for the fastest solo circumnavigation of the globe, and Mary Seacole – a Jamaican nurse who independently cared for wounded soldiers in the Crimean War.

As well as the 3 classrooms, we also have our own Reception garden.



These environments have been carefully facilitated with provision to meet children's interests and learning needs. The provision changes from week to week and almost always includes sand, water and playdough areas, 3 different role play areas such as home corner, space center or pirate ship, a building and construction area, creative table and maths and literacy areas. Maths and literacy are also seen and encouraged throughout each learning area. For example, the play dough table may have a recipe for reading, the home corner will have notepads to make shopping lists and the construction area may have rulers and numbers for measuring towers. The environments are facilitated so that the children learn in ways that are hands- on and purposeful to them.

Key Adults



Each Reception class has a Class Teacher and a Learning Support Assistant (LSA). These key adults work hard with children and their families to build positive relationships and secure attachments. It is alongside parental engagement that teachers are able to meet the child's individual needs as well as plan for a child's next steps for learning.

The teacher and early years practitioners respond sensitively to children's feelings and behaviours and meet their emotional needs by giving reassurance, such as when they are new to a setting, and supporting the child's well-being. We find that by building these positive relationships, children are able to respond and engage in more specific learning such as maths and literacy with the support of these adults.

Forest school and learning outside of the classroom

Forest School is a concept that can be linked back to the early work of some influential educational theorists and has been well embedded in Scandinavian education. It involves children learning in the outdoors for prolonged periods of time. Forest School gives children hands-on learning opportunities in an environment that stimulates all of their senses. It encourages their curiosity, problem solving, independence and gives them the chance to take risks in a well managed way.



FOREST SCHOOL

'The best classroom and the richest cupboard are roofed only by the sky.' Margaret McMillan

Reception children have access to our Forest School areas, over at West Ham Park, and sessions are planned and implemented throughout the year. These are with our designated Forest School teacher who plans for these sessions. Forest School activities include den building, hammock reading, nature hunts, tree and plant recognition, as well as using tools and fires.



There is ample opportunity for children to experience learning in the outdoor environments in Reception. This includes outside opportunities at Forest School, planned sessions at West Ham Park, use of the main school playground and roof terrace, as well as having our very own Reception garden. Children have access to the garden daily through their 'free flow' sessions where they choose their learning environment.



We feel it is vital for all adults in our setting to show an enthusiasm for outdoor learning during every season. We encourage parents to be consistent in their own approach to the outside, including with regards to the weather. We risk assess appropriately for each season and we give the children the opportunity to access the outside daily, whatever the weather. Children get wet, muddy and messy when they play outside and we provide waterproof overalls and wellies on Forest School days. We teach children how to manage messiness and they become better at this as they get older. This is part of their learning and development. We value the outdoors as an essential part of the children's curriculum, learning and development. It is essential for children to learn about the world around them in a hands-on approach where they can make purposeful connections and create meaningful learning experiences.



As part of our Reception curriculum, we plan for school visits. We have a yearly visit to Mudchute Farm and Discover Center in Stratford and we always welcome support from parent volunteers. We also arrange for special visitors to come to Reception such as firefighters, police officers and nurses during our 'people who help us' topic of learning. The most special visitors that our Reception children care for are the chicks and ducklings that we observe hatching during our 'growing topic' in the Spring Term. This exposure to visitors and animals allows a hands-on experience to learning and encourages the children to ask purposeful questions. We also have two school dogs called Filos and Tato, who the Reception children get to meet and later on in their time at Park, children may be involved in wellbeing walks with the dogs.



Online Learning Journeys

In Reception, practitioners make regular observations of the children's learning and development. We call these the 'children's learning journeys'. These observations are stored in each child's individual learning journey on an app called Tapestry. This can be downloaded onto a phone or laptop and can be accessed by parents and carers to see what their child has been learning at school. This includes photos and videos alongside written feedback on children's learning. We encourage parents to add comments including things that their child has become interested in and any new skills that they have learnt at home. This allows us to continually evaluate our resources and start topics and discussions that are relevant to each individual child.

Preparing for Reception- General Information

Transition to Reception

We pride ourselves on having a detailed process that supports families and children transitioning into Park Reception.

To aid in transition to Reception we:

- Talk to nurseries about the children coming from their setting through video calls, phone calls and emails.
- Ask parents/carers to fill out a Google Form which includes information about their child.
- Ask families to set themselves up on our Tapestry account so that children can begin to access some of our learning activities online from their homes in the Summer Term before starting Reception.
- In the Summer Term, two members of staff from Park Primary will virtually meet with parents/carers and their child for a 'home visit' to allow them to ask questions, complete administration paperwork and for the children to talk about or show their home. This is the first of two home visits. The second home visit will take place in the Autumn Term and we are hoping that we will be able to visit families in their homes at this time. The second home visit allows the class teacher and learning support assistant to share information about the start of the term and how the children have adapted to starting Reception.
- We invite children and parents/ carers to 'Stay and Play' sessions in the Summer Term. This takes place after school. It is an opportunity to meet the other children who will be starting in September, talk to the teachers and access the provisions in the Reception learning areas, as well as begin to form relationships.
- Reception children have a staggered entry to school in September to enable children to adapt to the new routines and for staff to make home visits in the afternoon.

School Uniform

At Park we value individuality and creativity and, as such, we have an optional uniform. Messy, explorative, sensory play are essential parts of children's development. We ask parents to ensure their child is wearing suitable clothing so that they can explore paint, food, climb and are not restricted by expensive clothing. We ask that children's names are written onto their items of clothing and that children dress appropriately for the weather on all days. Jewelry is not allowed (apart for religious reasons) and children can wear 1 pair of stud earrings. We do not allow hooped earrings. We ask that children wear appropriate footwear that is comfortable with closed heels and toes.

Lunch time and snack time

We are a school with 'Healthy School' status. This means that we encourage children to eat fruit, vegetables and drink water. We provide snack times for Reception children. Snack time includes a piece of fruit and milk and we also operate a no nuts policy. At lunchtime, children are given an option of 3 meals to choose from as well as choice from the salad bar. In the first term of school, key adults support the children at lunch times, eating alongside them, encouraging them to try new foods and discussing their likes and dislikes.

Toileting

Toileting accidents occasionally happen. When this does happen, two adults will support a child in changing. We encourage children to become independent in changing themselves and using the toilet by themselves. We are grateful that parents support us with this throughout the summer before starting school so that the children are ready to use the toilet by September.

Book bags and items to bring to school



A bag should be provided and can remain in the classroom on each child's specific peg. This can be used to store a change of clothes in case of toileting accidents or becoming too wet from playing outside. We encourage the children to become independent in changing themselves and we ask parents and carers to encourage this at home also. During the settling in period, children may want to bring a specific item or toy to aid in their transition from one setting to another. We ask that these go home each day and that we support children in taking responsibility for their belongings. Book bags can be bought from the school office and have our school logo on the front. We advise that children use this bag for their reading book and record of reading as well as some home learning activities. It is important they bring their book bags daily to school.

When children arrive at Reception for the first day at 'big school' they are usually full of emotions which vary from child to child. We want our children in Park Reception to arrive with feelings of excitement, happiness and confidence, even if they are also feeling a little nervous and this is ok and very normal. We start the transition approach in the Summer Term when the children are still in Nursery. Leaving Nursery and entering Reception can be a big step for children but our door is 'always open'. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to one of the Reception class teachers. The Early Years Foundation Stage is about children and their families working in partnership with us to ensure they succeed and develop a secure foundation for later learning.

To see more about our policies, safeguarding and complaints procedures, please see our school website:

<https://park.newham.sch.uk/>

We look forward to meeting you all soon.