

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Great Gaddesden Early Years ! We hope you had a good summer and that your child's time in Nursery and Reception will be enjoyable and exciting. We would like to share some of the class routines and give an outline of the teaching and learning that will take place.

Our priority this term is to ensure that the children are settled, feeling safe, happy and secure in their new environment. We will support the children to build relationships with the other children and adults in their class. Our aim is for the classroom to be a busy, fun place where the children can develop the skills to become independent and enthusiastic learners.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum covers 7 areas of learning and development. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development Personal,
- Social & Emotional Development

We also support children in four specific areas through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. These areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive Art & Design

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. The children are encouraged to select and use the resources independently, challenge themselves and develop their critical and creative thinking skills. We would like to reassure you that if your child is not bringing home a vast amount of paper work, it does not mean they are not learning! Throughout all these areas of learning, opportunities are given to children to experience a language rich environment, to develop their skills in expressing themselves and speak and listen in a range of situations.

Our topics are based around the interests of the children in our class and will tend to be either about 1 or 2 week, or a topic area that covers the whole half term of learning. The topics planned include the following:-

Settling in: The first half term in EYFS is all about settling in, getting used to new routines, trying new things and beginning to build relationships.

Super me, Super you, Super hero!

Autumn

A day in our classroom: - As the children come in, there will be a selection of 'Busy Fingers' activities for them to choose. These are designed to strengthen the muscles in the children's fingers (fine motor skills), which support pencil grip and dexterity.

There will be a short carpet session where we will sing our 'hello' song, talk about the weather and the days of the week and seasons. We will do a 'wake up shake up' movement song and introduce disco dough (using fingers to manipulate playdough to music). We will also show and discuss the activities that will be set up in the continuous provision.

The children are then able to learn independently, indoors and in the outdoor areas. During this time, adults will be supporting the children individually and in groups.

There will also be a daily phonics session. This is a significant part of the EYFS curriculum and concentrates on developing the children's listening skills.

The aspects covered are, in Nursery - Foundations for Phonics :- sharing high quality poems and stories, nursery rhymes and action rhymes, listening and attention, oral blending, moving onto grapheme-phoneme correspondence in phase 2 in Reception.

Weekly sessions The children will change their library books on a Monday, so please ensure that the library books are in book bags every Monday so they can be changed.

Each week, the children will have a Wild Wednesday session, which will include a Forest School session in the nearby woods. The children will enjoy activities such as collecting sticks and leaves, making dens, handling tools and using twigs to write in the mud, as well as some camp fire cooking. Please ensure your child has a named pair of wellies in school. The Forest School session will be on a 4 week rota with the Forest School teacher Mrs Ansell, The school will provide waterproof overalls for the children to wear in damp/wet weather.

We also plan to do lots of cooking this year, which offers the children valuable learning opportunities as well as being such fun. We ask for a voluntary contribution of £5 per term to support this activity. On a Monday afternoon, the children have P.E. fun in the Penfold. This is led by Coach Jack and during these sessions, the children will develop a range of physical skills through a variety of fun games and activities.

After half term, the children will join the school in church for our Friday Collective Worship. This starts at 9:10 a.m. and parents are very welcome to join the school in church for this. To end the week, we will have a yoga session on Friday afternoons.

We look forward to working together this year and developing the children's love of learning. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Kind regards,  
The EYFS Team  
Mrs Benson, Miss Carty, Mrs Redman.