

Welcome to Meadows First School

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Welcome to Meadows First School

We are very pleased to welcome you to our school!
At Meadows First School, there are 2 reception classes called - '**Goslings**' and '**Cygnets**'. Your information pack will tell you which class your child will be entering in September.



We are pleased to announce that we have gained Early Years Quality Mark since 2014, (recently re awarded in April 2018) which means that we have been recognised for providing the best provision we possibly can for children starting their school journey.

We have also been awarded 'outstanding' from our recent OFSTED inspection April 2019.

The Curriculum and the Environment

We aim to provide a caring and stimulating environment in which the children will feel secure, valued and confident. Our aim is to make learning a pleasurable and rewarding experience.



The children participate in **purposeful** and **structured play**, which is a valued learning experience to help develop their physical, intellectual, emotional and social abilities and give them a sense of achievement. The children follow the Curriculum for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and this is developed within a chosen theme e.g. 'Stars and Rockets'.

They will be encouraged to think and talk about their learning and develop self-control and independence, supported by teachers and teaching assistants in both the inside and outside classrooms.



Communication and Language (C.L)

We love to talk! Talking is an important skill and children need to learn to talk to each other and listen carefully too. Children are given many opportunities to listen

attentively and talk about their own experiences in small and large groups. The children are encouraged to discuss their ideas for the topics studied in Reception – a lot of activities are based on the children's interests and experiences. We actively encourage the children to talk to each other about their experiences and ideas. They are also shown how to be 'active' listeners and to respond to each others' thoughts and feelings. We value your support in encouraging your child to talk about the activities they have done in school.



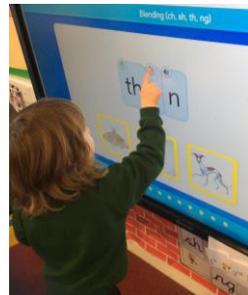
Literacy (L) (reading and writing)



Right from the start we are keen to develop a love of books. Our close links with Bromsgrove library enables us to take the children there regularly. We invite parents to come along too. We aim to foster a lifelong love of reading by sharing books every day with the children. Your child will frequently bring books home to share and enjoy with you, choosing from our selection of both "real" and "phonic based" books. It is very

important that you read with your child **every day** – we have special reading challenges that encourage lots of reading everywhere! Each classroom has a 'book corner' where children choose from a wide selection and handle books carefully.

Phonics – is how we help children learn to read and write, by being taught letter sounds and by encouraging recognition of letter shape and formation. From the moment the children are settled in their new classes, we start phonics and cover all of the sounds that each letter and groups of letters make very quickly. The first 6 sounds they learn are 's' 'a' 't' 'p' 'i' and 'n'. We hold an information meeting with parents as to how you can help your child learn through phonics.





Writing - from the early stages of mark making, we provide lots of opportunities for children to draw freely and begin writing. Children are encouraged to make large arm movements and practise these both inside and outside the classroom through various activities.

At all times they are encouraged to try their own writing with all efforts being valued.

We teach an early pre-cursive style of writing and it is important

that when they form letters they know how to do so correctly right from the start. Please encourage your child to use the correct formation as soon as they show a readiness to write letters and even have a go at their name.



We want to make writing fun and enjoyable and have lots of exciting activities for children to be inspired to write!



Maths (number & shape, space and measure)

We develop children's mathematical understanding of numbers, measures, shape, pattern and data handling through stories, songs and rhymes both in the inside and outdoor classroom. We follow a CPA approach (concrete, pictorial, abstract) to developing maths and this is taught through a daily maths input to the whole class and the children are encouraged to observe number patterns in the environment and daily routines.

The children may sometimes record their work if appropriate in a variety of ways during both focused and child initiated activities, but our main aim is to work practically with numbers and shape in concrete (real life) situations.



Physical Development (P.D)



This is an important area of development – called one of the 'PRIME AREAS'. It fosters the children's awareness of healthy lifestyles and eating, as well as developing a love for outdoor activities and fine and gross motor skills too. Through indoor and outdoor P.E. sessions the children develop their physical control, co-ordination and an awareness of space.



They are given opportunities to use large equipment for balancing and climbing with increasing skill and small apparatus to develop throwing and catching skills.

In order to develop manipulative skills the children handle appropriate tools, objects, construction and malleable materials safely and with increasing control.

They learn how to hold tools such as pencils and pens correctly in order to begin forming letters.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development (P.S.E.D)



This is another of the 3 'PRIME AREAS'. Children learn to listen and talk to each other, to express their feelings and develop understanding of right and wrong. They learn to share and take turns and to treat living things, property and their environment with care and concern. They learn how to keep themselves and each other safe.



Understanding of the World (UW)

Children learn to develop a respect for different religions and cultures and join in with celebrating some of the festivals.



The children are given opportunities to become familiar with the school buildings and grounds. They are encouraged to talk about where they live and become more aware of some features in the local area.

We develop the children's awareness of the passage of time in relation to their families by discussion of past, present and future events of their own lives.

They are given opportunities to explore and recognise features of living things and objects, by testing ideas, predicting changes and discussing outcomes. They are encouraged to ask questions to find out why things happen and how things work.

We use technology to support the children's learning using ipads, the Interactive Whiteboard, a classroom computer, and programmable toys such as Beebot.



The children also have regular use of the computer suite. They also use technology in their role play and in the outside classroom.



The Outdoor Classroom

The children free flow into the fabulous outside area in order to continue learning. Daily activities are planned to provide learning linked to the themes as well as enabling children to explore and develop gross motor skills. The continued improvements of our outside classroom provide opportunities to extend the children's learning across the curriculum. In addition to this, the children also attend Forest School on a weekly basis (see below for Forest School Information).



Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)



Through child initiated and adult led play opportunities we aim to develop the children's imagination. We provide various environments for role-play, linked to a theme.

The children experience directed and child initiated art activities to explore colour, texture, shape and form, using a wide range of materials. It is important they are given the opportunity to freely express their own ideas, choosing from different tools and different media. We often work with outside artists

that come into school as well.

We regularly sing Nursery Rhymes and songs connected with our themes. The children learn to play instruments, developing their sense of rhythm, pitch and their participation and listening skills.





FOREST SCHOOL



What is Forest School?

Each week reception classes will have the opportunity to explore our Forest School area situated in the school grounds by the field. This will take place during the school day. The children will be able to experience the wonders of the natural world whilst engaging in a variety of activities that will support their learning.



“The Best kind of Classroom” (Ian Macmillan)

At Meadows First School we aim to create a happy, welcoming school and learning environment which meets the needs of all the children in our care.

We develop their enthusiasm for learning, to ensure that

they achieve to the best of their ability.

Forest School provides our children with a rich and challenging environment, where they are free to explore and to think creatively and independently.

They are set small achievable tasks which help to build their confidence and self esteem, without fear of failure or criticism.



Clothing:

You will need to send your child to school in **suitable warm clothing** (always with long trousers, long sleeves), such as:

Long warm trousers

Long sleeved warm top

And an extra jumper or sweatshirt

Shoes (no laces please)

Wellingtons (kept in school at all times)

We will provide children with waterproof jackets and trousers

Please bear in mind that these *clothes may get very dirty!!!*

The activities will vary according to the weather and seasons and will enable children to have time to explore a range of activities in an outdoor space. They will be able to link their experiences with the fun and excitement of being outside, as well as developing skills in all 7 areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum – such as



working as part of a group, taking turns and sharing, sorting and matching objects, asking questions about why and how things happen etc. Later on, they will be taught safe handling of tools and equipment and experience sitting around a fire – eating food prepared on it! Forest School will be led by a trained Forest School Leader (which may be the class teacher) and a teaching assistant. The children will be taught safety aspects of being outside (such as not picking and eating found objects) and of course they will develop an understanding and appreciation of the natural world around them.



Hi, my name is Meadows Mouse! You will see me everywhere around school!

Are you ready to learn?

To get a badge you have to be a good learner;
Organised,
Determined,
Focused
Enthusiastic!

The children at Meadows First School came up with these ideas in order to be ready to learn!

We also celebrate 'attendance'. There are attendance badges to collect as well. You cannot learn if you are not in school!

Each week we have an assembly in school that celebrates Meadows Mouse Awards and some children get a badge with me on it!



Am I a Good Learner?



Organised



- I have plenty of sleep and eat a healthy breakfast before I come to school.
- I can bring my coat, book bag and lunch box to school.
- I can hang up my coat and put my book bag away.

Determined



- I ask for help when I need it.
- I try hard and I'm brave.
- I do things in a different way if I'm stuck.
- I am confident to ask for help.
- I always try my very best.

Focused



- I am ready to look, listen and work.
- I can stay and finish an activity.
- I concentrate.
- I can work well on my own and with others.

Enthusiastic



- I smile!
- I'm ready to have a go at everything.
- I am excited about learning.
- I join in.
- I help other people.
- I can talk about what I have done at school and find things out at home.



General Information - please check the school web-site for regular updates at <http://www.meadowsfirst.co.uk/>

The website also has details of our 'Early Years Policy'. You will find lots of information in here in accordance with the EYFS Statutory Guidance. It details our policies on safeguarding, medicines, attendance and daily routines. Some of this information is briefly listed here:

- **Communication** - You will receive weekly newsletters keeping you up to date with events in Reception. Each week a **Reception newsletter** about the activities your child will be covering in the following week is emailed to you and also posted on the website. A hard copy can be obtained from the office.
- **School Newsletter** – At the end of each week there is also a general school Newsletter, which is also published on the website. This contains information about what is happening in the whole school and of any forthcoming events you need to know about.
- **Open Door Policy** – In the mornings, please encourage your child to come into the classrooms by themselves. Either Mrs Hewitt or Mrs Dwyer are on the 'Early Years' doors and will take messages for your child's teacher, as our teachers are busy with all of the children first thing! You are welcome to stay and chat after school with the class teacher or staff.
- **Milk** - Under the E.U. directive, all children under 5 are entitled to free school milk each day. In the term following your child's 5th birthday, milk must be paid for, but it is subsidised by the E.U and is thus very good value. Milk is ordered and paid for half a term in advance. Please ensure you return the order form each half term to secure your child's milk allowance.
- **Free School Meals** – All children in reception are entitled to a free school meal. Some families may also be entitled to additional benefits – please ask at the school office for more information. However, you can still provide a packed lunch if you prefer.
- **Packed Lunches** - If you feel your child would be better with a packed lunch then he/she will need a **named** sandwich box and a **named** plastic flask or a small boxed drink. Please **do not send** fizzy drinks or glass bottles. Please do not send chocolate / sweets in their lunchbox and please **do not send any nuts or anything containing nuts** in their lunchbox, as we do have children with allergies in school.
- **Playtime Fruit** -fruit is provided free for children in Nursery, Reception, Yr.1 and Yr.2 classes. They do not need additional snacks.
- **Water Bottles** – We encourage children to bring in a bottle of water (**not juice**) each day to keep in the classroom. The water is

changed daily and the children take home their bottles for washing every Friday.

- **Jewellery** - should not be worn because of safety hazards eg. P.E., playtimes.. If your child has to wear earrings, they must only be small studs and they must be removed or taped over for P.E. (tape must be provided).
- **Hair** - Long hair should be tied back in a ponytail, bun or plait.
- **Holidays** Under the new Government directive children should not be taken out of school for holidays. However, if it is for **exceptional circumstances**, please ask for an authorised absence form -complete this and return it to the office. It is very important that children attend school every day.
- **Illness** When it is necessary to keep your child at home, please try and let us know the reason on the first morning of absence. If your child shows signs of sickness and/ or diarrhoea, then please keep them at home for **48 hours** or longer, until they have a complete day without symptoms. If for any reason you have to take your child out of school during school hours (e.g. for hospital/ dental appointments) or you bring them late into school, then please report initially to the school office and inform the office staff.
- **Medicines** If your child has been prescribed medicine from the doctor, it is probably better that he / she is at home, being cosseted. If medicine does need to be taken during the school day, please take it to the office and fill in the appropriate form.
- If your child suffers from Asthma and needs to use an inhaler please inform school. We keep a register of children who have asthma and keep their small inhalers in the classroom for their use.

Please inform the school if your child is on long-term medication or has any allergies.

Our School Day

When the children are full-time the structure of the day is that the children come into school at **8.55am**, so that they are ready for the teacher to take the register at **9.00am**. The gates do open at **8.45am** to allow the children time to settle to activities in their classes before registration. Please allow your child to come into school by themselves as the teacher is unable to talk to parents at this time, with so many children coming in. If you do have a message it can be given to either Mrs Hewitt or Mrs Dwyer who are on the Early Years doors. They will pass this onto the class teachers. You are welcome to see the teacher at the **end of** the day, if you need to talk to them in more length about your child.

- When the children are more settled, they will attend a whole school assembly on some mornings. They will also attend assemblies within their year group.

- The children have free flow supervised access to both indoors and outside classrooms, where they will participate in play based learning activities. Some of these are adult led and some are child initiated to encourage independence. In the morning sessions, they will also have their fruit and milk/ water at their snack café in class. Please **do not** send your children to school with biscuits, crisps, chocolate, sweets or nuts (some children have severe, possibly life threatening, reactions to nuts or nut products).
- **Phonics** – every day there will be a phonics whole class session. It is important that your child comes to school every day in order to learn all of the sounds.
- **Maths** – every day there is also a number time where the whole class will do number related activities and songs. Maths will have a very practical emphasis and will be explored both inside and outside the classroom.
- **Lunchtime** is from 11.50am to 12.50 pm. - All reception children are eligible for a hot school meal, - the children are given a main course, a pudding and a drink each day. Details of menus are on the website. However, you may prefer to send in a packed lunch.
- **Playtimes** - Please do not send in toys from home as they can get lost and cause upset.
- The school day finishes at **3.15 pm**.
- When collecting your child please wait in the playground (next to the outside classroom). We work hard to make our outside area an exciting learning environment for the children, **so please do not allow younger children to play in this area after school!**
- Late pick up – in the event of a parent failing to collect a child at the end of the school day, the child will stay with the class teacher for up to 10 minutes, in case of traffic delay. The child will then be taken to the main office where the parent/ carer/ next of kin will be contacted. If this is a regular occurrence, then the attendance officer or head teacher will speak to the parent/ carer to discuss any support needed.
- You are welcome to chat to the teachers and staff at the end of the day – please do not wait for a problem to be sorted out!
- Please check your child's book bag for any letters and messages.
- **Reading** -Your child will have a reading record book for you to fill in daily when you read with your child. Your child may sometimes bring home the **same book**, as we encourage them to spend time revisiting a familiar book in order to talk about it

Uniform - At present the uniform consists of

Green sweatshirts, jumpers, cardigans, polo shirts and P.E. kit with the Meadows First School embroidered logo are available from shops in Bromsgrove, or larger chains – please use the **links on our website** if purchasing online as we can raise funds for school.

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>

Please ensure that your child has a named bag for their P.E. kit plus:

A spare pair of pants and a spare pair of socks **PLEASE NAME EVERYTHING** - INCLUDING VESTS, PANTS, SOCKS AND SHOES.



Boys

Grey trousers – long or short
Green Meadows sweatshirt
White polo shirt
Black sensible school shoes (not trainers)
Wellington boots - kept at school
Waterproof coat
For P.E.
Yellow T-shirt
Black Shorts
Black slip on pumps

Girls

Grey skirt or pinafore or grey school trousers
Green cardigan or Green Meadows sweatshirt
White blouse or polo shirt
Green check summer dress
Black sensible school shoes (not trainers)
Wellington boots -kept at school
Waterproof coat
For P.E.
Yellow T-shirt
Black Shorts
Black slip on pumps

Forest School Day

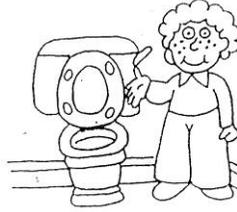
Children will need to come to school in long sleeved clothing and long trousers (even in the summer)
A coat for colder days
Sensible shoes (not sandals) – wellingtons should be kept in school
Waterproofs are provided as we go out in all weathers!

Is your child READY for school?

When your child starts school he / she should be able to:



dress and undress
him / herself



use the toilet properly
and flush after use



tidy up toys and
books



wash and dry his /
her hands



take off and hang up
his / her coat

Here are some things to practise for the start of term!



use a tissue and
dispose of it in the bin



follow simple instructions



feed him / herself
using a knife and fork



share toys and be
prepared to take turns



listen carefully and sit still

We look forward to seeing you in September!