



Challenge, Equality & Opportunity

Welcome to Reception at Havannah First School

Our Early Years Team



Miss Storey

Honeybee Class Teacher
Early Years Lead



Miss Elvin

Ladybird Class Teacher



Miss Burns

Caterpillar Class Teacher



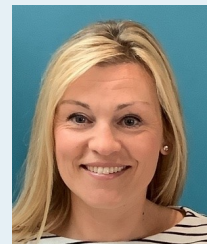
Mrs Bigg

Teaching Assistant



Mrs Watson

Teaching Assistant



Mrs Franklin

Teaching Assistant

Welcome to Havannah First School

We are delighted to welcome you to our school. We are very excited to see our Reception grow from 60 to 90 children in September 2025. We will be adding Caterpillar class to our Ladybird and Honeybee classes in our fantastic Early Years setting. It is an exciting time for your child to start school!

We hope that this booklet is helpful to parents, carers and children in the weeks leading up to your child starting school. We have tried to condense the information so that you are not completely overloaded before you even begin. We will continue to update you once the new term starts and you can ask us any questions along the way.



The Foundation Stage Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development which shape provision in early years settings. All areas of learning are important and inter-connected.

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

- Communication and language
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Physical development

Early years settings must also support children in four **specific** areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Each area of learning and development is implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child initiated activities. The activities that we carry out both in and out of the classroom are carefully constructed to ensure the children's progress across all of these areas. Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to solve problems and to relate to others.

Involving Parents and Carers in the Early Years

We believe that relationships are crucial to learning and that includes the relationship between school and home. We value the contribution that parents and carers make to children's learning. Because of this, we ensure that there are numerous opportunities available for you to get involved with school life; some of which are whole school events and celebrations and some which are just for Early Years. For example, during the year you can expect to be involved in:

- Stay and Play sessions which offer the chance for you to experience the environment and kinds of activities that the children are able to access on a daily basis as well as providing an opportunity to talk with staff on an informal basis.
- Parents and Carers' Evenings which are held twice throughout the school year so that you can discuss your child's progress.
- Class assemblies and events such as fundraisers or Reading Week give parents and carers opportunities to come into school and spend time with staff and children.
- Each half term we send out a newsletter to explain the work that will be covered over the coming weeks. It includes important dates and details the type of activities that could be carried out at home to support your child's learning. We are always available to answer any queries or concerns that you might have regarding your child. Please just call in and see us.
- Star of the Week—for one week in the year, each child has the opportunity to be our **Star of the Week** where they are invited to bring to school items of interest from home. In the past our 'stars' have brought in photographs, an interesting object or story, a member of their family or their pet to show their friends. We will let you know at the beginning of the year when it is your child's turn.



Tapestry

Assessing children is an important tool which enables both teachers and parents/carers to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support. Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the learning and development process.

In school, staff observe and assess how children are learning in many different contexts such as group activities, play, individual activities and interactions with other adults and children. We collect and store our observations electronically using an online Learning Journal called Tapestry. The iPads allow us to make observations of the children on-the-go, and collect pictures and notes about each child from all members of staff, allowing for a wider range of evidence to show how the children are learning and progressing. As Tapestry is online, we can send you photographs and videos of your child directly from the Reception Classrooms. It is very secure and we only allow parents/carers to access the app/website. We hope that this will be a really useful tool in keeping in touch and giving you real-time information about how your child is getting on in school.

We would like to get Tapestry up and running before the children join us in September so that we can share any news and photographs/videos of the environment. Please complete and return the Tapestry permission form as soon as possible.

School Meals and Packed Lunches

All Reception children are entitled to Free School Meals as part of the Universal Free School Meal Offer and we would encourage you to take this up, however children also have the option to bring a packed lunch if they would rather. The school meal menus are available online and are displayed at the office if you would like to know what the choices will be in advance in order to talk to your child about choices.

If you have told us about any allergies, or dietary requirements, then your child will only be able to choose meals which are suitable for them and the kitchen team will do their best to meet your child's needs. School meals are cooked on the premises and are of a high standard following Newcastle's policy on Healthy Eating. Reception children will go first into the hall for lunch, so they will have the time and space to get used to the new routine before older children join them in the hall at 12.00. All Reception staff and lunchtime supervisors will be on hand to help the children, as well as encouraging and checking that children are eating enough.

Children having a packed lunch will sit together with their friends in the hall and will also be helped by staff to make sure they can open all the packages and that they eat the lunch you have given them. Packed lunches should be nutritious and comply to the Packed Lunch Policy (available on the school website). **We also ask that products which contain nuts are not given as part of a packed lunch as we are a nut-free school.**



Primary School Lunch Menu				
week one Monday 12 September Tuesday 13 September Wednesday 14 September Thursday 15 September Friday 16 September	week two Monday 19 September Tuesday 20 September Wednesday 21 September Thursday 22 September Friday 23 September	week three Monday 26 September Tuesday 27 September Wednesday 28 September Thursday 29 September Friday 30 September	week four Monday 3 October Tuesday 4 October Wednesday 5 October Thursday 6 October Friday 7 October	week five Monday 10 October Tuesday 11 October Wednesday 12 October Thursday 13 October Friday 14 October



The School Day

The Reception day is a busy one, filled with an interesting variety of learning activities intended to stimulate the children's interest in the world around them. No two days are ever the same! We aim for children to become independent and self-reliant as quickly as possible and we will support them to establish their new routines.

- Doors open at 8.50am —parents and carers bring children to the Reception courtyard area where teachers will meet the children.
- We have a busy morning filled with funky finger gym exercises, phonics, group maths sessions and lots of busy play.
- Children prepare for lunch from 11.40am. Lunch is eaten in the hall and then children play outside.
- The school day ends at 3.20pm.

The children have daily phonics, literacy and maths as well as activities planned to focus on the other areas of learning. We have an outdoor area which is used to extend and reflect learning activities indoors as well as offering space for physical activities.

Each day, children need to bring to school a clearly named water bottle, a waterproof coat and a bag for their school reading book and diary. It is also useful to pack a spare change of clothes into their school bag.

We also ask that PE kits and Wellington boots are kept in school. Children each have a peg for their belongings. We don't allow children to bring toys to school as they sometimes get broken or lost and so cause the children to be upset. Both classrooms have lots of toys and children have lots of time to play.

We know that children learn well when they are happy, feel safe and know that they are valued. Everyone in our school is equal and we reward children for making good choices in their behaviour. We all follow the Golden Rules and we emphasise the importance of our school values throughout every school day. We are a No Outsiders school and as such we value and teach the Equalities Act through picture books, news and stories.



Communication

Letters and written communications from school are shared with families via ParentMail. It works best through the app and you can use it for paying for trips etc too. Newsletters from Ms McKenna and letters from the Office and the Reception staff will be shared in this way.

We are always available to talk to you briefly at drop off and pick up times. If you need more time to discuss something, you can contact us via telephone or arrange a time to meet. As far as we can, we have an 'open door' policy and you will always be welcome to come and talk to us. No question is too small!

We have an Instagram account @Havannah1st and we use this to celebrate learning and achievements. We don't use Instagram to an-



havannah1st Edit profile View archive
130 posts 229 followers 31 following
Havannah First School
We are a First School on Newcastle Great Park.
www.havannah.newcastle.sch.uk/web



Safeguarding

Safeguarding underpins all work in school. We work with a safeguarding consultancy to deliver staff training so that all staff are up to date on current issues and have the knowledge and skills to identify safeguarding issues and pass these on.

Our designated leads for safeguarding are the Headteacher (Helen McKenna), Deputy Headteacher (Gary Burnett) and Assistant Headteacher (Sue Ward). Please do not hesitate to contact any of us if you have a concern about the safety of any children or adults.

Getting Ready for School

On our school website there will be a link to 'New Reception Starters 25/26' under the Parents/Carers tab. This section of the website is dedicated to you and your children and has lots of helpful information. You will find copies of all letters and guidance we have sent out, including the welcome packs, if you need to refer to them in the future.

We have included a road map to starting to school which will help you to support your child as they prepare for Reception over the coming months. These are mainly based around everyday independent skills your child can be working on to help them with daily life in school. However, we would like to reassure you that this is by no means a check list for things they must achieve by September – all children learn and develop at different rates, and there is no expectation that all children must achieve them all.

We will stay in contact with you during the summer so that we can share any new information which you need for September. We can't wait to get started!