

Starting School



St. Lawrence CE Primary School
Shrewsbury Road
Church Stretton
SY6 6EX

Reception Class Teacher: Lauren Neal

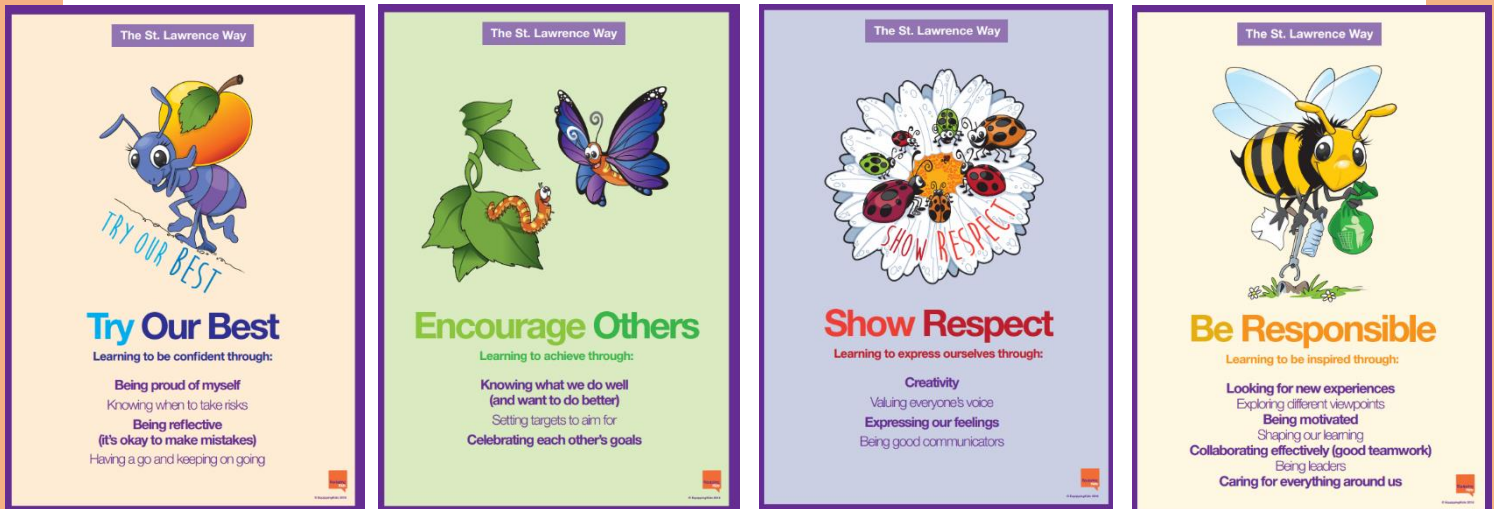
Headteacher: Alan Brannen

Tel: 01694 722682

Email: admin@st-lawrenceprimary.co.uk

head@st-lawrenceprimary.co.uk

Our Values



Our inclusive, community school and nursery is based on broad Christian Foundations. We welcome people of different faiths and those who have none; celebrating diversity and learning about different traditions and cultures from each other. Our children have designed four posters, to explain 'The St. Lawrence Way', which provides a set of shared values which unite us as a school and remind us of our school mission - to always help others and love our neighbours (like The Good Samaritan).

In the Early Years we promote and teach these values through everyday interactions. Children learn how to support and encourage each other as they play, they take responsibility for their belongings, learning to manage their feelings and behaviours, developing their independence and self-confidence. Children learn to make friends, build relationships and work together. Whenever possible, the actions that demonstrate The St. Lawrence Way are noticed, named and praised by the adults working with them. In every classroom and in the playground we encourage a culture of openness, honesty and respect for each other.

St. Lawrence C of E Primary School is located at the heart of the community in Church Stretton. The Headteacher, Governors, Staff and Parents work closely together to ensure that every child's needs are met; that every child enjoys their time spent in school and can make the most of every opportunity to achieve their full potential. Our bubbly children are enthusiastic and always keen to do their best; they learn to express themselves with confidence and creativity. We can't wait for you to be a part of our fantastic school.

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Framework

There are seven areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage:

- Communication and Language
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

All our classrooms, resources and activities are carefully planned to cover all seven areas of the curriculum. New experiences are provided each day, building on what has happened before and taking into account what each child knows and can do. Children are observed closely as they engage, interact and investigate so that next steps in learning are identified.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning:

- Playing and Exploring - Engagement
- Active Learning - Motivation
- Creating and Thinking Critically - Thinking

These underpin the EYFS curriculum and are nurtured across the indoor/outdoor learning environment so that children quickly become capable, confident and independent learners. The ability to focus, concentrate, make links and reflect are all important characteristics developed in the early years that will help a child to continue learning through their lives.



Starting School

All our new children will have an opportunity to spend time in the Reception classroom, getting to know the teachers and teaching assistants. We want children to feel excited and enthusiastic about starting school, so we make it easy for them to adapt, settle and make new friends.

Our 'Discovery Sessions' are offered during the summer term to all children starting school in September. A weekly timetable of visits has already started for children in St Lawrence Nursery.

Our teacher will also visit each Nursery in the area to see the children in their early years setting and talk to nursery staff.

If you feel your child needs a longer settling in period then please talk to us. Some children will know the school already and will feel very confident about starting school, others may feel more anxious especially if they have not been to Nursery regularly in. We can adapt the timetable to meet the needs of your child.



What to Bring to School



Our Snack Policy is the children having 1 piece of fruit and water in their bottle for the day.

Also, at St. Lawrence's we have 'Free Friday' where the children can bring in their choice of a healthy snack.

It is also helpful for children to have their belongings labelled. This encourages the children to take responsibility of their things and helps them to be organised and independent.



Each child has a locker for his/her belongings.

The Classroom

Our classrooms are set up in zones to support children's speech and language development.

The children in our Reception class work across a large room with an outdoor classroom. Children can move freely between the different 'zones' working on their own, in a small group or with a teacher. Every year we move the classrooms around to meet the specific needs of the cohort - some children in our classes require more space to move around safely or quieter areas to be able to focus and concentrate. We always consider the needs of children in the classes when setting up the learning environment.

We have a reading area, mathematical games zone, a circle-time 'gathering' area and interactive whiteboard. Other zones in the classrooms provide opportunities for role play and multi-sensory learning, like play-dough, sand and water play.

Children benefit from working and playing in small groups, where teachers can support early speech and language development, social skills and emotional development.



Staying Safe

All children in our Reception class will learn how to wash their hands effectively and will have access to soap, water and hand sanitiser throughout the school day. It is encouraged that the children achieve toilet training before starting in Reception.

Please be assured that if your child is upset for any reason we will continue to comfort them and we will give physical contact. Your child's emotional wellbeing is important to us and all members of the early years team are equipped to support and protect young children's wellbeing and mental health.

Please talk to us if you have concerns and we will work with you to address any worries you may have.



Learning to Read

In Reception, children are taught the skills they need, to become independent, competent and fluent readers who love books. They are introduced to high quality fiction/non fiction texts that are made easily accessible across the classroom. Children are encouraged to pick up a book to read for enjoyment, to read together with friends and to use books to find out information.

When children start school, they are given a reading record with a picture book to share at home with you. It is important to get into the habit of reading daily with your child - just 10-15 minutes of sharing a book. Use this time to talk about the pictures, ask and answer questions about the characters and text. Find out about your child's favourite books, sing songs and play with rhymes to help your child learn that reading can be fun.

During the first half term in school, your child will start to learn Phonics. This daily programme involves playing games which will help your child to become familiar with the letter sounds (phonemes), the letter names and the letter shapes (graphemes).

Alongside this daily Phonics programme your child will be given a carefully selected reading book. In the early stages, the reading books provide opportunities to practise reading a particular letter and sound. Whilst playing with language, children learn to segment a word (c-a-t) and then to blend the letters together. Gradually, the child will learn to read, building up fluency by reading a book 3 times and enjoyment of reading. Learning to read takes time and the pace is different for each child. When your child reads regularly at home and in school it can make all the difference.

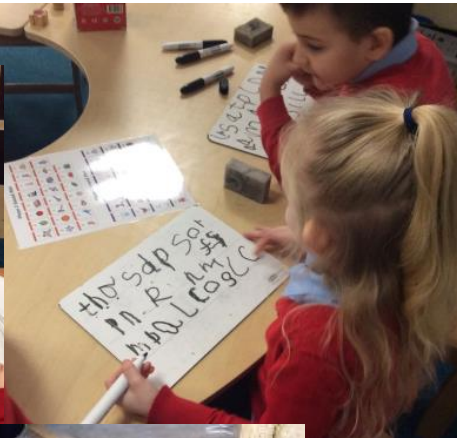


Learning to Write

In Reception, children are taught the skills they need, to become independent, competent writers who love writing. We build on the experiences of mark making in nursery, and encourage young children to 'have-a-go' at the letter shapes, creating messages for their friends, writing captions for models and using notebooks and pens in their role play.

When children start school, they need to develop their gross and fine motor skills to help with writing. Exercises and activities are planned carefully to develop shoulder, elbow, wrist and hand muscles. Play dough, ball games, construction and physical play help to build up the fine motor strength and control needed for writing.

Imaginative games and role play provide opportunities to sequence a series of events, re-enacting and creating stories as a spoken narrative, which can then be written down. The most effective writers in school are those children who have developed an ability to sequence, order and clarify their thoughts before putting them down on paper.



Mathematics

Children in the reception class are taught to use mathematical language in real contexts alongside their play - counting a set of actions or objects in a game, describing the position, size and shape of the different parts of a model. There are two key areas of early mathematics learning that provide a platform which support mathematical understanding as the child moves through the school.

- Number
- Numerical Pattern

In the Reception class children engage in their own mathematical explorations as they play with sand, water, blocks and natural materials.

The teaching in 'Early Years' takes place as the adult plays alongside, encouraging conversation, asking questions and extending the child's vocabulary and thinking. Group learning takes place every day when children are taught how to solve problems, how to think in different ways, create patterns and then change them. Every opportunity is taken to show children how numbers and patterns are needed in everyday life; for example to share out the snack, follow a recipe or keep score.



Home - School Links

Working together with parents and carers we want to make every child's first year in school memorable and successful. It is in the Reception year that we work hard to promote the characteristics of effective learning; attitudes and behaviours that shape a child's learning for the future.

To do this well, we need your support at home - reading regularly, playing games and talking to your child about what they are doing in school. If your child says "We just played!" please remember that is how children learn - every play-based activity has been carefully planned by the EYFS team to teach new skills.

If you have questions or concerns talk to a member of the team. We will invite you to our parent information events early on in the autumn term to share our approach to the teaching of reading and phonics. Let us know if you'd like information on other aspects of education.

If you have skills and interests you can share with the children, please let us know. Each term you will receive information about the themes we are following in school and you can also see and share some of your children's activities via Seesaw. We also use the platform Parent Mail to send you updates and newsletters.

Parent-consultation meetings are held in October and March alongside regular celebration events in the school hall so children can share what they have been doing.

Finally, if you would like to meet with our Headteacher, Mr Brannen, Family Support Worker, Mrs Robinson, or our SENCO, Mr Reynolds, in school please let us know. Family break ups, housing, social and economic problems can all impact on your child's wellbeing in school so please don't forget we can offer confidential help or put you in touch with a wide range of family support services.

