

## Parent Booklet



# Rushen Primary School

Learning and Growing

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# **Introduction**

## **Transition**

We aim for all children to experience a smooth emotional and educational transition to school. We believe that this will ensure positive attitudes towards learning and the best possible progress in the long term.

Effective transition takes time and is a process, rather than an event. Therefore we plan our transition visits and activities in advance and over a period of time.

We aim to establish positive and professional relationships with pre-school groups and parents. We value the contributions of all parties involved with the child, both prior to and after transition. Our aim is to provide a learning environment which builds upon children's previous experiences, in order to meet their needs effectively.

The children's emotional welfare, well-being and engagement will remain our priority. Children should enjoy the transition process. We provide a safe, secure and fun learning environment, whilst challenging and motivating children to reach the highest possible standards in all areas of learning.



Parents are children's first and most important educators - when adults in the Foundation Stage are working together with parents /carers, children are more likely to learn successfully

## Our aims and ethos

We aim to provide experiences that lay the foundations for children's future learning, while fostering a positive attitude towards school and education. Through their experiences, children will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential in all areas of their development.

Our Early Years setting provides a broad and balanced curriculum, both indoors and out, with many opportunities for children to explore and discover alongside their peers, during what we refer to as 'child-initiated activities'. The children will also engage with a range of adult-led whole group and small group learning.

Your child's needs and interests will inform our provision, and each child will be valued as an individual. We believe that children learn most effectively through first hand experiences and being independent whenever possible. Our Early Years staff will celebrate the children's achievements whilst continuing to challenge and guide them in their next steps.



# The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

The EYFS is a framework to support children's learning and development from birth to 5 years (the end of a child's reception year). The framework is based on 4 themes and principles. It recognises children as individual and competent learners. The EYFS is delivered through a well-planned, play-based approach to learning and development.



- Children develop in the context of relationships and their environment, which is unique to each family, and reflects individual communities and cultures.
- The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, actively learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpins learning and development across all areas and supports the child in remaining an effective and motivated learner.



# The EYFS Curriculum

The **prime areas** develop quickly in response to relationships and experiences and both underpin and support learning in all other areas. The prime areas continue to be fundamental throughout your child's learning journey. The **specific areas** of learning include specific subject skills and knowledge. They grow out of the prime areas, and provide important contexts for learning.

The environment and activities provided will allow your child the opportunity to learn the skills they need in order to progress and work towards the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception Year at school.

Prime Areas	
Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Self-Regulation
	Managing Self
	Building Relationships
Physical Development	Gross Motor Skills
	Fine Motor Skills
Communication and Language	Listening, Attention and Understanding
	Speaking
Specific Areas	
Literacy	Comprehension
	Word Reading
	Writing
Mathematics	Number
	Numerical Patterns
Understanding the World	Past and Present
	People, Culture and communities
	The Natural World
Expressive Arts and Design	Creating with Materials
	Being Imaginative and Expressive

# **The Areas of Learning**

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

Children will be supported to develop a positive attitude and sense of well-being. This includes forming relationships, building self-confidence, taking an interest in things, knowing their own needs, telling the difference between right and wrong and being independent.

## **Physical Development**

This area of learning will help improve children's co-ordination, fine motor control, manipulation and gross motor movement. Children will gain confidence in what they can do and feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active.

## **Communication, Language and Literacy**

This includes opportunities to speak, listen and communicate in different situations and for different purposes. There will be opportunities to share and enjoy a range of books, rhymes, music, poetry and stories. Children will be encouraged to develop writing and reading skills through play-based, practical experiences.

## **Problem Solving, Reasoning and Numeracy**

Children will develop an understanding of mathematics through story, rhyme, song, games and exploratory play. They will become comfortable with number, using language to identify, order and compare. They will discover ways to solve practical problems, recognising relationships and patterns.

## **Understanding the World**

Children will be encouraged to explore, ask questions about the world around them. They will build with different materials and learn about everyday technology and its uses. They will find out about past events in their lives, their families and other cultures and beliefs. There will be opportunities to explore indoors and outdoors, observe, make decisions, predict, investigate and find out about how things work and change. First hand experience is essential for the children and trips out, or visitors into school, will be arranged.



## **Creative Development**

Creativity is fundamental and includes art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. Children will be encouraged to express their ideas through a range of experiences, materials and media. We encourage children to think, explore and problem solve creatively.

All areas are of equal importance and many activities will cover several areas simultaneously. Each area is divided up into stages of development and practitioners are able to identify resources and learning opportunities which support individual children and are suited to their developmental needs.





## How the children will be learning

**Play is young children's work: it is the key to learning.**

When playing, both indoors and outdoors, children learn in different ways.

- Sometimes their play will be boisterous and active.
- Sometimes they will be quiet and reflective in their play.
- Sometimes play will be solitary, paired or in groups.

Children need a variety of experiences to help them learn and make progress. All children learn best from experiences that are suitable for their stage of development, rather than their age alone.

When children feel safe, secure and valued and are supported in their play by adults who care about them, they can:

- Explore, develop and make sense of their world.
- Practise and build on ideas, concepts and skills.
- Learn how to control impulses and understand the need for rules.
- Be alone, be alongside others or co-operate, as they talk about and rehearse their feelings.
- Take risks and make mistakes.
- Think creatively and imaginatively.
- Communicate, as they investigate or solve problems.



## Independence

We aim to involve children in taking responsibility and making decisions about their learning as much as possible. We support them to access areas of learning independently and encourage planning, sharing, problem solving, exploring and questioning.

Whilst encouraging independence, adults guide the children's learning, scaffolding language and modelling thinking about learning. Adults interact and make daily observations in order to plan the next steps of the children's learning journey.



It is helpful if the children have some experience in having a go at putting on/hanging up their coats, dressing or undressing and eating using cutlery too. Where support is needed, staff will happily assist and encourage children when necessary. (Children need to be able to use the toilet independently too).

## **Encouraging positive learning behaviour**

At all times, we aim to encourage a positive attitude and effort towards learning.

It is not simply a matter of where your child gets to, but how they get there and what your child discovers about themselves as a learner along the way - the child's 'Learning Journey'.

We aim to collect a diary of your child's 'Learning Journey' in the form of a folder which will be shared with you during the Reception school year.

We want your child to develop their curiosity and be motivated learners. We aim to teach them that it is ok to take risks, challenge themselves and make mistakes and that mistakes are actually a valuable part of learning.

Each half term we celebrate the 6Rs by means of a weekly whole school assembly.

### **The 6Rs**

Readiness	Remembering	Resilience
Resourcefulness	Relationships	Reflectiveness

## The Learning Muscles.

Children learn to talk about the 'Learning Muscles' they need to use, in order to help them become a positive learner.

empathy	listening	collaborating	making links	learning to learn
distilling	questioning	imitating	sourcing	absorbing
keeping going	interdependence	imagining	reasoning	noticing
planning	improving	managing distractions		

In our classrooms we talk about what makes 'a good learner'. The children are encouraged to talk about learning and to recognise and celebrate their strengths, but also to think about how to solve problems and become a better learner. They are encouraged to use a Growth Mindset and to believe that they can achieve and learn new things by being brave, taking risks and enjoying being challenged. This is a whole school approach to teaching and learning and part of 'What We Do Around Here.'

**If we get a bit better each day, we can become a lot better.**

**Stay strong when things go wrong!**

**Mistakes can help us learn.**

**Great things can happen when we are brave!**

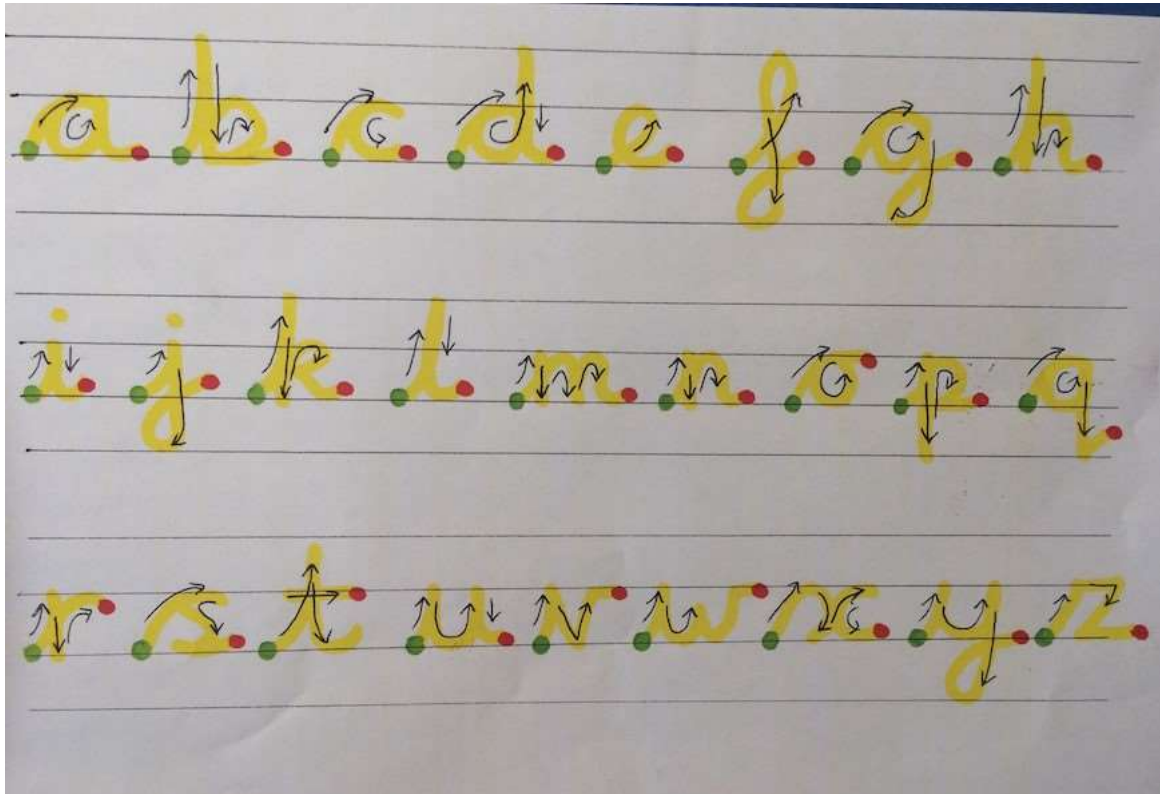
**Want to do it, believe you can do it, try to do it, you will do it!**

## **How you can be involved in your child's learning**

- During transition you and your child will be invited to visit school on several occasions to meet staff and view the environment.
- At the beginning of the school year we have a meet and greet session in our classrooms where you are invited to come to visit the environment, meet the teacher and find out more about how your child will be learning.
- Each term we will send you information about the learning we will be covering and how it links to the different areas of development.
- Please support communication between home and school.
- Show an interest in what your child is doing and talk to them about it. Staff will convey messages about the learning, so that you can support at home.
- Share books with your child, model being a reader and reading for a purpose ie. instructions, recipes, shopping lists.
- Talk to our staff about your child's interests at home. Please feel free to ask any questions and to share information. Our door is always open.
- Help reinforce the correct pen / pencil grip. Having the correct grip is essential, as it is difficult to retrain children to hold a pen / pencil correctly.

## Handwriting

At Rushen Primary School we teach the children a continuous cursive handwriting script from the early stages of Reception through to Year 6. Further information can be found on our school website. This is the formation of each individual letter:



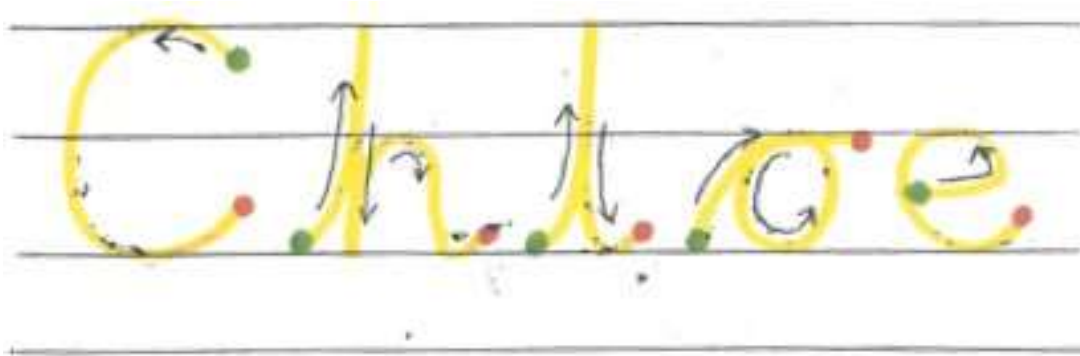
From Reception onwards the children learn to begin on the green spot, follow the arrows along the yellow lines and stop on the red spot (a traffic light system of green for 'Go!' and red for 'Stop!'). Tracing over and under such letter forms, as well as 'writing' them in the air, is complemented by a range of fine motor skills activities which support and develop children's handwriting grip and control.

When the letters are taught as 'family groups' in the early stages, they are taught as beginning and ending with a 'flick'. Later this enables children to join letters, as they have already been learning a fluid style, rather than needing to re-learn a joined letter formation.



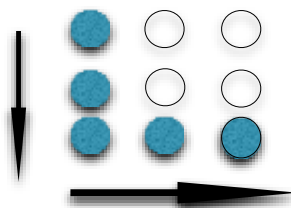
We also believe that seeing letters in this fluid, connected way from an early stage aids progression in phonics. Children can progress towards applying the skills of blending and segmenting sounds, learning spelling patterns and common letter strings, such as 'ea', 'ou', 'oi', 'ch', 'str', '-tch' and 'ing', endings etc. as they will already be familiar with seeing letters as 'chunks' of sounds.

When your child reaches the point of wanting to write, the first most significant word to them is their name. In school each child will have a name card to assist in this, over which they can trace, or from which they can copy. These can be simply made at home and if done so, should use the letter formation consistent with the school's handwriting policy, so as to avoid confusion.



It is important that your child does not begin learning to write their name using capital upper case letters. They will eventually learn that these are used only at the beginning of a name, but if they begin using these letters throughout, it is a difficult habit to break. It can also be quite demoralising for a child to have to 're-learn' the writing of such an important word.

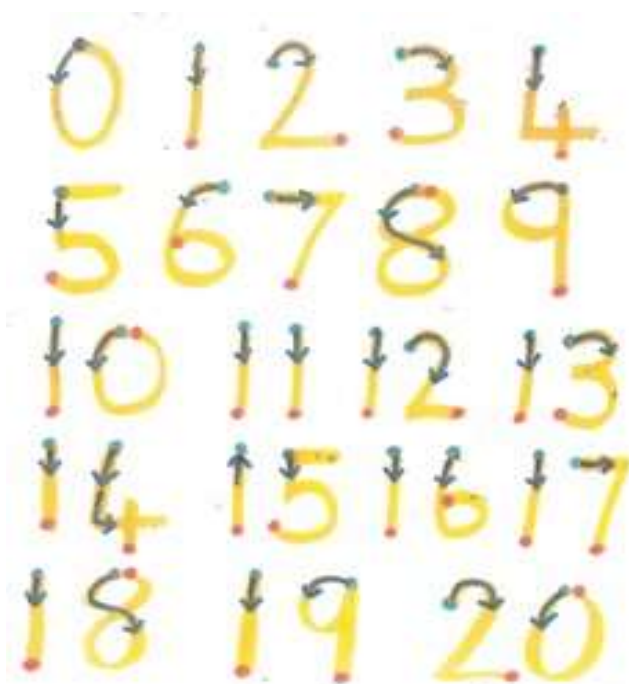
The school subscribes to 'LetterJoin' and practice activities can be accessed from their website, <http://www.letterjoin.co.uk/>. These are best used on a tablet. On a desktop or laptop the username is *rus* and the password is *hen*. On a tablet or iPad the username is *rus* and swipe code:



## Number

Your child requires a secure understanding of the concept of numbers, before attempting to write them. In school your child will learn to count objects, sing number songs, play number and counting games, look for numbers in the environment, sort, match and order numbers.

When your child is ready to write numbers, it is important that the formation taught remains consistent. The following formation is used throughout school.....



Further communication about such things will be made by the class teacher throughout the year. Please do not hesitate should you have any queries. We trust that this information will prove useful as your child begins to take an interest in writing and that it will enable both school and home to support in a coherent and consistent way.

**PARENTS ARE CHILDREN'S FIRST AND MOST IMPORTANT EDUCATORS – WHEN ADULTS IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE ARE WORKING TOGETHER WITH PARENTS/CARERS, CHILDREN ARE LIKELY TO LEARN MORE SUCCESSFULLY.**

## Reception session times

Morning session: 8.50am – 11.50am  
Afternoon Session: 1.05pm – 3.15pm

The children are encouraged to bring in a water bottle on a daily basis. They are also invited to bring in a healthy snack of a piece of fruit each day for a mid-morning break.

Children can choose to eat school dinners or bring in a packed lunch.



At playtimes the children will play outside within a Reception play area until they feel secure and ready to play on the larger playground with the older children in KS1. Throughout the year we will be carrying out activities and projects with Year 6 children, who are our 'Buddies' in school and are here to help us.



## **What children should wear**

Children wear school uniform, which consists of a burgundy sweatshirt embroidered with the school logo, or cardigan, a white polo shirt, black/grey skirt, black/grey trousers and black shoes (not trainers). In the summer, grey or black shorts, or green gingham dresses and sandals may be worn. Any hairbands or hair ties worn to school are to be simple and no jewellery is to be worn.

**Please make sure that any item of clothing your child may take off at any time is named, preferably with a name label. This includes gloves, scarves, hats as well as coats, shoes and jumpers.**  
**Every effort will be made to return named items to children.**

Each week the children will have sessions of PE and will need a kit that consists of shorts, a T-shirt and plimsolls, all of which should be named. You may purchase a school P.E. kit from the School Office. Children come to school dressed in their kit on PE days. During cold weather we also request that the children come to school wearing joggers on PE days.

You will be informed of the days of these sessions during the first few weeks of school. On P.E. days long hair must be tied back and earrings need to be taped, if unable to be removed. It would be better to take earrings out on P.E. days.



## Should I send my child to school if they are ill?

Unfortunately, at some point during your child's time in school they may be ill. When deciding whether your child is well enough to come to school, please consider the following:

- Would your child be able to cope with a full and active day? Children who are unwell find school a struggle and often begin to develop negative attitudes towards school, because they are not well enough to enjoy it.
- Is your child's illness particularly contagious? They may not feel particularly poorly, but certain illnesses can be passed on very easily to other children and staff, e.g. conjunctivitis, impetigo etc.
- Have they been sick or had diarrhoea within the last 24 hours? If so, government guidelines advise that your child should be kept off for a minimum of 48 hours after the last bout and longer if they are still not eating or experiencing further symptoms.
- Will your child require any medicine during school hours? Staff are **not** allowed to give medicine to any child. This includes 'over the counter' medicines as well as prescription medicines. You would have to arrange to come into school to give it to them yourself.
- If a child requires an asthma inhaler or an Epi-pen, these must be kept in school at all times. Forms should be completed and signed at the school office to advise of this. Inhalers and Epi-pens will be kept in a box accessible to staff and must be named. Children will not be allowed to participate on school trips if they don't have their inhaler/ Epi-pen with them.

If your child is too ill to come to school, you must ring the school office to let the school know your child is ill and is unable to attend.

## **What if my child becomes ill at school?**

If your child becomes ill during school, we will try to contact you or one of your designated emergency contacts. Please ensure that you inform us of any changes to telephone numbers immediately, so that we are always able to contact you.

## **What about nits or head lice?**

Unfortunately, nits or lice are just one of those things that spread around schools. The following is a short list of things you can do to help reduce your child's risk of catching them.

- Tie long hair back.
- Check your child's hair for nits (small white eggs) and lice (small and black) every three days.
- Brush your child's hair vigorously after school.
- If you find any nits or lice, consult a chemist for suitable treatments.

## **What about sun cream and sunhats?**

As the weather improves, the children will be spending more time outside. As you will be aware, young children's skin is very sensitive to the sun. We advise that in the summer months you send your child to school with a named sunhat and that you apply sun cream **before** they come to school. If you would like them to have more sun cream applied during the day please send in a bottle of lotion **clearly labelled** with your child's full name. We are not able to apply sun cream belonging to us or to another child.





## **Expectations**

### **We aim to:**

- Encourage your child to do their best at all times.
- Care for your child's safety and happiness.
- Ensure that your child achieves their full potential as a valued member of the school community.
- Provide a balanced curriculum and meet the individual needs of your child.
- Achieve high standards of work and behaviour through building good relationships and developing a sense of responsibility.
- Keep you informed of your child's progress. Available appointment times will be made known to you by the class teacher.
- Be there to listen and help and be welcoming at all times, offering opportunities for you to discuss any matters of concern. You can see the class teacher at the end of every day, briefly, and if you need longer, please just ask. Teachers are available most days except on days where there are prearranged meetings.

### **Behaviour and Relationships.**

- We treat each other with RESPECT
- We use our 'EMPATHY MUSCLE'
- We use restorative practices
- We use conferences to talk things through
- We 'Think, Fix and Reflect'

## **The children should:**

- Demonstrate positive attitudes towards learning, other people and their environment, behaving in a manner which reflects our school ethos and 'What We Do Around Here'.

### **Everyone a learner**

- We demonstrate a 'Growth Mindset
- We love challenge!
- We use the 6Rs to describe the learning dispositions and support our learning
- We use Learning Muscles to describe the skills we use when we are learning and use these to help us achieve the 6Rs
- We use the Learning Muscles to learn how to be a good learner
- We know our next steps...and take responsibility for our own learning.

### **Everyone a leader.**

- We contribute to school life
- We go over and above
- We help others
- We lead clubs and projects
- We have responsibilities.

- Leave toys and personal items at home, unless specifically asked for by the class teacher in support of learning.

**The parents/guardians/family should:**

- Make school aware of any concerns or problems that might affect work or behaviour.
- Support your child in any opportunities for home learning.
- Inform school if your child is going to be absent.
- Avoid posting anything about the school on social media. If you have a question, if you are unsure or concerned, please see the class teacher.

**Together we will:**

- Tackle any special concerns.
- Support your child's learning to help them achieve their best.
- Respect everybody in the school.

We look forward to welcoming you to

Rushen Primary School!

