

Welcome to our School

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for taking a look at our school prospectus. It gives me a chance to share something of our happy, thriving school with you.

My name is Alison Wootton and I am proud to be the Headteacher of this wonderful school. Withymoor is a friendly, inclusive school where all children are encouraged to achieve their full potential in every area of school life. We are privileged to have fantastic children and staff, Governors, parents and carers who all share our high expectations of attainment, achievement, behaviour and attendance. All adults in school are committed to safeguarding and building strong relationships with children that support their emotional, spiritual and academic growth. If you would like to see the school for yourself, please make an appointment so that I can show you how we are all 'learning together, aiming for excellence'.

Our children are happy in school and this is reflected in their outstanding behaviour and level of engagement in their learning. This is something which is often commented on by visitors to our school.

Our school motto is: ***Learning together, aiming for excellence*** and we strive to reflect these values in everything we do.

Parents are welcomed into school and are involved in a number of ways, from induction into Reception Class and on throughout their child's time at Withymoor. We achieve this through parent workshops, consultation evenings, information evenings, and opportunities to be involved in trips and visits. This is, of course, in addition to the performances that children throughout the school put on for their parents to come and share.

I hope you find our prospectus provides all the information you need, but if you would like to see the school for yourself, please let us know so that we can make an appointment to show you around.

Alison Wootton
Headteacher

Contact Details

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Headteacher: **Mrs Alison Wootton**

Deputy Headteacher: **Mrs Rebecca Tong**

CEO of Hales Valley Trust: **Mrs Rebecca Cox**

Stay and Play: 01384 818534

Stay and Play (under separate management to school) provide before and after school care as well as during all school closures.

Parental Involvement

Parents are welcomed into school regularly to involve them in school life and to keep them fully informed about their children's learning.

There are two parent consultation evenings during the year, one in the Autumn term and another in the Spring. At the end of the Summer term there is a comprehensive written report produced giving details of attainment in all areas of the curriculum and attitude to learning. Parents are also invited to Open Mornings or Afternoons during which they can participate in some fun activities in class with their children.

We aim to ensure that parents are informed about the curriculum so that they can help their child at home more confidently. To this end we periodically hold parent information evenings and workshops in areas such as maths, reading and phonics where parents can come and listen to a short presentation, ask questions and look at teaching resources used in school. Curriculum overviews are included on our school website.

The Friends of Withymoor parents' association hold events during the year to raise money for school. Using the funds raised, they pay for things such as the children's Christmas parties, refreshments for Sports Day, our Year 6 Presentation Evening and equipment in school.

Parents are also encouraged to share experiences by joining us for events such as Celebration Assemblies, Class Assemblies, Easter bonnet parades, Nativity plays and Sports Day.

Behaviour and Ethos

At Withymoor we promote a high standard of behaviour and an atmosphere where all members of the school are valued as individuals. The school believes in the development of self esteem, respect for others and self discipline.

Our school rules are:

Be kind
Be respectful
Be safe
Be ready to learn

Treat others as you would like to be treated

We also promote in school the British Values of: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith.

Pupils are expected to be polite and to show respect for other people and property. In class, children should join in the lesson to the best of their ability by listening carefully, answering and asking questions and by taking part fully in activities. At Withymoor great emphasis is placed on positive reinforcement of behaviour through praise. Children's confidence and self-esteem are developed through encouragement, incentives and rewards, both verbal and written. Stickers and Class DoJo points are awarded for helpfulness, kindness to others, positive attitude, politeness and effort in work.

Aims of the Behaviour Policy

- to develop a moral framework within which initiative, responsibility and sound relationships can flourish;
- to enable children to develop a sense of self worth and a respect and tolerance for others;
- to nurture an environment in which children feel safe, secure and respected.

Our objectives are that children show:

- self confidence;
- self control;
- respect and tolerance for others;
- pride in their achievements;
- an interest in their activities;
- empathy with others' feelings;

and that children develop:

- responsibility for their learning and their environment;
- an independence of mind and self esteem;
- a sense of fairness;
- an understanding of the need for rules;
- a respect and tolerance for others' ways of life and different opinions;
- the ability to accept fair criticism;
- non-racist and non-sexist attitudes;
- a persistent approach to tasks;
- an acceptable reaction to bullying and abuse.

Our full behaviour policy can be viewed on the school website.

Uniform

Winter Uniform

Girls

Grey skirt or pinafore
White or maroon blouse
School sweatshirt or maroon cardigan/sweater
School tie
White/grey socks
Black shoes
Maroon Fleece (for outside)

(No trainers or open-toed sandals)

Boys

Grey trousers
White or maroon shirt
School sweatshirt or maroon sweater
School tie
White/grey socks
Black shoes
Maroon Fleece (for outside)

(No trainers or open-toed sandals)

Summer Uniform

Girls

Pink and white school dress (stripes or check) or
Grey skirt with white blouse or plain white polo shirt
Plain white or maroon cardigan or school sweatshirt
White or grey socks
Shoes or sandals with low heels for safety reasons

(No trainers or open-toed sandals)

Boys

Grey
White or maroon polo shirt
School sweatshirt or Maroon sweater
White/grey socks
Black shoes

(No trainers or open-toed sandals)

P.E. Kit – Boys and Girls

Black shorts
White plain tee shirt
Black slip-on pumps
Track suit/trainers for games

There is no specific style mentioned in the list of uniform and all items may be bought from most of the chain stores. School sweatshirts may be purchased at Totally Uniform in Park Street, Kingswinford.

Jewellery

The wearing of jewellery to school is discouraged, although an inexpensive watch is allowed. If your child has pierced ears, only one pair of studs should be worn for safety purposes. These must be removed for P.E. If you decide to have your child's ears pierced, please arrange this to take place during the summer holidays so that studs can be removed for PE on return to school.

Nose studs and body piercing are not allowed.

We ask that children's hairstyles are sensible and appropriate for school, in particular, no shaved patterns, elaborate colours or accessories. Long hair must be tied back for PE.

School Organisation

We are a two form entry school and have a published admission number (PAN) of 60. This means we can take 60 new children into our Reception Class each September. Children are initially placed in one of two registration groups following consultation with their pre-school setting and will usually stay in these groups unless teachers feel a mix of classes would be beneficial for the children as they move through school.

In the summer term before the children start school our Reception Class teachers discuss each child with the pre school practitioners and their parent/carer so that we begin to know each child as an individual. Children who attend our own pre-school setting have an opportunity every week in the second half of the summer term to spend some time in Reception Class to become familiar with both the environment and the staff. Children who do not attend our pre school setting are invited to as many of these sessions as they are able to attend. There is also an opportunity for the children to spend an afternoon in their new classroom with the teacher they will have the following September. During this time, parents are invited to a meeting where they are given information about school routines and expectations.

When they first begin school the children spend their first year in Reception Class where they follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Their learning and progress is recorded in their own individual folder known as a 'learning journey' and this is shared with parents at regular points throughout the year.

The children then progress into Year 1, followed by Year 2, which together form Key Stage 1. During this time, the children learn together as a class, sometimes working in a small group, either independently or supported by an adult, with work being differentiated according to the children's needs. At the end of Year 2 another assessment is made, showing achievement against the Key Stage 1 curriculum. These assessments are reported to parents.

Following the end of Key Stage 1, the two classes move up to Year 3, which is the first year of Key Stage Two. There are four years in this key stage and so Year 6 is their final year in primary school. In years 3-6, the classes learn in a similar way to Key Stage 1. At the end of this year there are statutory tests (SATs) which again are reported to parents, along with the national average results.

Organisation of the School Day

Doors open at **8.30am** and children are welcomed into class. Morning registration is at **8.45am** and, whilst we do appreciate that sometimes late arrival is unavoidable, we do ask that parents make every effort to ensure their children are on time for school. If children arrive late for school (i.e. after 8.45am) entrance will need to be via the school office at the front of school.

Lunch is from **11.45pm – 12.45pm** and the school day finishes at **3.15pm**.

Children in KS1 and KS1 get a morning break of 15 minutes and can bring a healthy snack to school to eat at this time. Children in Reception are offered milk, fruit and snack during break time and children in Years 1 and 2 have a piece of fruit.

Water is freely available throughout the school day and, in line with our Healthy School Status, is the only drink children are allowed in the classroom. Water fountains providing filtered and chilled water are available along each corridor. Every child in KS1 and KS2 is allowed to bring a water bottle to store their water in, which can be regularly refilled throughout the school day. Foundation Stage classes make their own arrangements for the provision of water. Children may drink their water at any time except during assembly.

A two course hot dinner is available every day and these are currently free to all children in Reception and Key Stage 1. Children in KS2 have to pay for a hot school dinner unless their family are eligible for free school meals – please see Miss Robins in our school office for more information. A packed lunch from home is an option for all children.

Curriculum

Our curriculum must meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum as determined by current legislation. Beyond this our aim at Withymoor is to make the curriculum as engaging, relevant and challenging so that children are excited and inspired to learn.

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** there are seven areas of learning and development which are all inter-connected. Three areas are particularly important in igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These are: communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. Our EYFS curriculum is also designed to develop each child's literacy, mathematics, expressive art and design and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Each of these areas of learning are implemented through planned, purposeful play and through a mix of adult-led and child-initiated activity. This approach is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, to think about problems and relate to others. As the children grow older, and their development allows, the balance shifts towards more activities led by adults to help children prepare for more formal learning in Year 1. Early reading (Phonics) is taught through the Little Wandle Phonics scheme, and this continues into Key Stage 1.

In **Key Stages 1 and 2** teaching of reading, writing and maths follows the statutory National Curriculum programmes of study. We encourage children to develop a passion for reading from an early age by offering a wide range of texts and genres. In Years 1 and 2, while children refine their basic decoding and comprehension skills, until children are confident enough to tackle 'free reading'. In writing lessons, emphasis is placed on writing to inform and entertain the reader using correct grammar and good presentation.

The **PE** curriculum includes games, gymnastics, dance, swimming and outdoor adventure activities. There are at least two hours of PE per week, and this provision is enhanced by a wide variety out of school sport activities, including football, and multi-skills. We also have some school sports teams that sometimes have the opportunity to play against other Dudley schools. In addition to this, Sports Coaches support lunchtime activities and after school clubs.

Music is delivered through the 'Music Express' scheme of work throughout the school. The units are based upon a similar theme in each year with clear consolidation, development and progression throughout. We have a thriving school choir that performs both in and out of school and that has performed at prestigious venues such as Birmingham Symphony Hall. Children are also given the opportunity to learn a musical instrument in Key Stage Two through our partnership with Dudley Performing Arts. Some families also choose to invest in private or small group tuition for their children so that they can learn the violin or a brass instrument. A company called Rock Steady offer weekly lessons in school to play instruments such as drums, keyboard and guitar – there is an additional charge for these.

· We teach **Religious Education** in accordance with the Dudley Agreed Syllabus and the Discovery RE scheme of work. The agreed syllabus summarises the key principles of Religious Education as follows: Identify, name, describe and give accounts, in order to build a coherent picture of each religion; explain the meanings of religious language, stories and symbolism; explain similarities and differences between, and within religions; give an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues; reflect on what might be learnt from religions

in the light of one's own beliefs and experience, and identify and respond to questions of meaning within religions. Children are also given the opportunity to visit places of worship in order to enhance their understanding of different faiths and beliefs.

The remaining **Foundation Subjects** within the National Curriculum (art & design, history, geography, design technology) are taught, along with **Computing** (coding) which is taught both as a subject in its own right and also as a tool across the curriculum to facilitate learning and communicate ideas.

Scientific knowledge and understanding is also taught across both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and children are challenged to apply their learning to practical problems and prove that their conclusions are reliable.

The curriculum is enhanced as often as practically possible by learning outside the classroom. This could simply be within the school grounds, but we regularly take the children out into the local area and at least once during the course of the year the children have the opportunity to go out to the theatre, a museum or other place of interest.

Information about the curriculum in each year group for each term of the school year is available on the school website:

www.withymoor.dudley.sch.uk

Please see information about Attendance below:

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance at school is crucial to raising standards of education and to ensuring every child can meet their full potential. Our Governing Body takes very seriously its responsibilities for pupils' attendance. In line with Governors in most other Dudley schools, they have agreed the following attendance policy:

We ask that parents:

Ensure that their child is able to attend school for the whole academic year by making medical appointments out of school time wherever possible, avoid booking any holidays during term time or encouraging their child to stay at home for unjustifiable reasons.

If you feel that your child has an illness which may warrant them remaining at home then you must:

Consider first of all whether you feel that your child may be a little unwell, but would still be able to take part in the majority, if not all of the school's activities. In this case, you should still send your child to school. Should your child become unwell during the day and/or where the school feels that they are no longer able to participate in school activities, the school will contact you to collect your child.

If you feel that your child cannot take part in the school's activities and would be better remaining at home then you must contact the school as soon as possible **on the each day of absence** before 9.30am.

The person ringing will be asked to identify themselves and clearly give the reason for the absence. This information will be recorded. A series of codes are used for each child and for each school session. The codes are used by all schools so that reasons for absence can be easily and universally monitored. Each code will record whether the absence has been authorised or unauthorised.

The Headteacher may decide to use a code that authorises a child's absence due to:

Leave agreed by the Headteacher

Day of religious observance

Medical/dental appointment that can't be arranged out of school hours

Genuine illness or stay in hospital and/or consequent recuperation at home following medical treatment

Prevention from attending by an unavoidable cause e.g. exceptionally bad weather coupled with the inability to arrive in school safely e.g. wheelchair users

Attending a family funeral (this must not however exceed an agreed period of absence)

Exclusion – a temporary or fixed term exclusion will be recorded with code 'E', a permanent exclusion will be treated as authorised absence until the child is removed from the school register.

Unauthorised codes are used where it is felt that the reason given does not justify the absence. This may include:

A shopping trip

A birthday

Attending a pop concert/football match

Lack of usual transport – the parent must demonstrate that every effort has been made to get the child to school safely

Taking a holiday or period of leave that has not been approved by the Headteacher.

Where no reason for the absence is given, the absence will be unauthorised.

Although we recognise that on occasion absence from school is unavoidable, we do at Withymoor have a target of 97% attendance. Good attendance is celebrated throughout the school year during assemblies and certificates are awarded every term to recognise individuals who have excellent attendance. There is also a trophy and extra playtime for the class with the highest weekly attendance.

We aim to work closely with parents and carers if they are having difficulty getting their children to school. Absence is closely monitored in school and any concerns about attendance are communicated quickly so that, as a school, we can offer help and guidance. Where an attendance continues to cause concern a referral will be made to Dudley's Education Investigation Service.

Leave of Absence

Any request for 'leave' e.g. holiday absence, must be made in writing using the school leave of absence forms. These must be received by the Headteacher no later than 20 working days before the proposed leave is due to take place.

The Headteacher does have a discretionary power to authorise leave but **this is not an automatic right**. In making an application for leave, the adult(s) with parental responsibility must make the case that their child will need to be treated differently from the norm. There will be no exceptions for families who are split e.g. a request from one parent may be approved but another request from a second parent or family member may be unauthorised. It is the responsibility of both parents with parental responsibility to make their applications for leave; each application will be considered fairly using the criteria set out in the policy.

Please note that holidays during term time are not authorised unless there are 'exceptional circumstances' which would not be expected to be repeated within an academic year, or to occur regularly throughout a child's school life. Reasons such as, 'it's cheaper', or 'fits in with work patterns' are not classed as exceptional circumstances.

Where an unauthorised holiday results in a child being absent from school for five consecutive school days or more, a referral will be made to Dudley's Education Investigation Service and this may result in a Penalty Notice and fine.

The full Attendance Policy can be viewed on the school website.