



# **PARENTS' HANDBOOK**

# What people say about our school.



Our school was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2010 at which time it was judged to be outstanding. The inspectors commented.....

*'This outstanding school has many important strengths. One of these is the willingness of all staff to look beyond the limitations imposed by the small size of the school to extend all pupils' horizons and to support their excellent progress.'*

*In the Early Years Foundation Stage the teaching is excellent and clearly results in some outstanding progress. The staff are particularly effective at creating a calm and relaxed ethos where children feel safe and secure in exploring their world."*



*"The school has an excellent ambition and purpose that is shared with all and is continually aimed at raising pupils' standards still further."*

We constantly monitor and evaluate our school to ensure we continue to be outstanding; these are a few comments made recently by visitors and members of the school community.

*"The school is small, but perfectly formed. It offers activities associated with larger schools such as swimming, gymnastics and many other sports activities, and the teaching of languages and world issues. In short it is a small school with a big outlook—and the kids love it."*

*'As a result of high quality teaching pupils and groups make consistently good progress across the school. Where progress is less good, support is provided quickly and decisively.*  
**School Improvement Partner**



*'All the children are good and polite, they seem so happy. It is a pleasure to come here to work.'*  
**School Photographer**



## School Uniform

White shirt, blouse or polo shirt

Grey trousers, shorts or skirt

Royal blue cardigan\*, or sweatshirt\*

Grey or white socks or tights

Black School shoes—Velcro, buckles or lace-up—not slip-ons or trainers

Royal Blue Coat (optional)

Blue & white summer dress (Can be worn from Easter to October Half-term)

A blue baseball cap (optional)

Royal Blue Book Bag\*

Hair accessories **must be in school colours**. Single ear studs and watches may be worn. The children must remove these items for **all** PE lessons.

## PE

Royal blue shorts

Blue polo shirt

Black plimsolls

Trainers for outdoor game (in Year 3 and 4)

Royal blue jogging bottoms for outdoor games

Drawstring Bag

Items marked \* may be purchased at **Wear2School**, North Street, Leighton Buzzard with the “Hockliffe Lower School” logo. (Logo items are not compulsory). Second hand items are sometimes available in school.

# **The School Day**

## **Little Bluebells Pre-school**

This group runs daily from 9.00am to 3.10pm for 2 to 4 year olds offering morning and afternoon sessions. These are run by Bluebells Nursery – for further details of admissions please contact them on 07891377581 or email [emma@bluebellchildcare.co.uk](mailto:emma@bluebellchildcare.co.uk)

## **Foundation: Year Nursery and Year Reception**

The children begin school the term after their fourth birthday. The first two terms are mornings only for children beginning school in January and one term for children beginning school in April. Children may attend the playgroup in the afternoons. In the September after their fourth birthday children attend school full time. Mrs Carter teaches these year groups.

## **Key Stage 1**

Children in Year 1 and 2 work together and are taught by Mr Custance.

## **Key Stage 2**

Children in Year 3 and 4 work together and are taught by Mrs Surgett.

## **The School Day**

The school day is divided into two sessions: KS1 have a morning and afternoon break as well as lunchtime and KS2 have a morning break and lunchtime.

The children attend school for 32.5 hours a week, this includes registration, breaks, lunch and assembly time.

## **Beginning of the Day**

Children should arrive in the school playground from 8.35am onwards. At 8.45am when the doors open the children should collect their belongings and go to their classroom. We encourage children to organise their own equipment in order to develop their independence. The children will be met by their class teacher and enter the school via the classroom doors. .

The playground door closes at 8.55am. If you and your child arrive after this time please come to the front door where you will be asked to sign the late arrivals book.

In inclement weather children go to the classroom from 8.35 am.

## **Bluebells Breakfast Club**

Bluebells offer a daily breakfast club from 8am to 8.45am. Registration should be made directly with Bluebells on 07891 377581.

## **End of the Day**

School finishes at 3.15pm and parents and carers should wait in the playground areas. Children leave school via classroom doors and are sent directly to their parents by a member of staff; this ensures that if you are late your child is safe within the confines of the school. If you have made arrangements for your child to go home with a different person than usual please inform the school by telephone or complete a blue Pupil Collection Notice which can be downloaded from the School website and given into the school office.

If your child is attending an afterschool curriculum club they should be collected from the playground door. Most clubs finish at 4.30pm.

## **Bluebells After School Club**

Bluebells offer afterschool care daily from 3.15pm to 6.00pm. Registration should be made directly with Bluebells. Once your child is registered arrangements can be made for your child to attend any afternoon by ringing 07891 377581. Children who are attending Bluebells afterschool club are collected by the club leader from their classrooms at 3.15pm.

# Healthy Eating

## School Lunches

School lunches are provided by an external company. Please contact the school office for current prices. All meals must be ordered and paid for by midnight on the preceding Thursday using our online school meal ordering service "ParentPay". Orders can be placed weekly or half termly.



All children in reception, year 1 or year 2 will be offered a free school meal under the Universal Free School Meal government initiative.

If you think your child may be eligible for free school meals please contact Central Bedfordshire Council Money and Benefits helpline on 03003008306. It is important to sign up for free school meals even if your child is in reception, year 1 or year 2, so that the school receives as much funding as possible.

## Packed Lunches



Children may prefer to bring a packed lunch. Try to ensure that you pack them a healthy balanced lunch with a mixture of savoury and sweet items, but no sweets or chocolate bars please. If children do not eat items these will be sent home in their lunchboxes so that parents are aware of what their child has eaten and can monitor their food likes and dislikes. The Change4life website [www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/healthier-lunchboxes](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life-beta/healthier-lunchboxes) will give you tips on

creating a healthy packed lunch for your child.

## Drinks

We encourage children to drink regularly during the day so please send your child with a drink in a named water bottle which can be refilled if necessary.



## Milk

Milk is available free until your child reaches his or her 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. If your child is eligible for income based free school meals then he/she will also receive free milk if requested.

The company **Cool Milk** will be providing milk at a cost for children aged 5 and above, which is payable termly in advance. Please contact the school office for current prices. Registration packs are available from their website [www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com). Milk must be ordered and paid for online on the Cool Milk website.



## Fruit and Vegetables

As part of the Government Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Scheme the children in years Nursery, Reception, 1 and 2 are provided with free fruit and vegetables to eat after the morning playtime. If your child is in years 3 and 4 they may bring fresh fruit or vegetables from home to eat at this time.

## Health and Absences

### Absences for sickness

If a child is unwell and unable to attend, school parents must inform the school of the reason for a child's absence on the first day by ringing the school and leaving a message on the dedicated absence line. Absences in excess of 5 days require a written parental note or completion of the Sickness Absence Form (*pink*) which can be downloaded from the school website. This is in addition to the telephoned message.

If a child has an upset stomach or is sick they should not return to school until 48 hours after the last bout of sickness.

### Appointments for medical purposes, days of religious observance or other reasons.

If a child is going to be absent for part of a school session for a doctor, dentist or other appointment the school must be notified in advance either by a written note, an email or completion of the Appointments Absence Form (green) which can be downloaded from the school website. When collecting and returning a child for such purposes parents should ensure that the class teacher and the office are aware. The Signing In Book in the reception area must be completed.

### Holidays in term time

According to updated government regulations (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006) leave of absence during term time will not be authorised unless circumstances are exceptional. Any absences which are not adequately explained will be recorded as unauthorised and the School Attendance Officer informed.

### Medicine

On occasions children return to school not having completed their course of treatment a member of staff may administer prescription medicines at school if the consent form is completed. Only medication prescribed for your child can be given. If the medicine is a 3x daily dose please adjust the timings so that all medicine can be given at home.

### Illness and injury at school

When children have minor injuries during the day general first aid procedures are followed in line with the school's first aid policy. Staff qualifications are regularly updated. If a child is taken ill at school, or injuries are more serious, every effort is made to contact parents.

***Parents must ensure their child's list of daytime contacts is up to date.***

### Medical Information

When children start school the admission form asks for medical information. Please complete as necessary. It is vital that this medical information is kept up to date since conditions such as asthma and allergies can develop at any stage so please inform the school office in writing so that children's medical records can be amended and staff informed.

**Health Checks-** As part of the Healthy Child Programme, every child in Reception will be seen by a nurse to measure their height & weight. Hearing tests are taken as part of the health screening process, upon request, or if a child is known to have problems.

### TO BE HEALTHY

- Give children the knowledge, understanding and opportunity to enjoy a healthy lifestyle.
- Show children how to use their leisure time purposefully.

### TO STAY SAFE

- Give children a safe and secure school in which to learn.
- Help children to contribute as members of a caring considerate school.
- Ensure children show respect for self, others and property.

### TO ENJOY AND ACHIEVE

- Provide an interesting and stimulating range of learning opportunities within and beyond the classroom for every child.
- Bring the wider world into our school by making links with other countries and cultures.
- Encourage children to reflect on their learning so they understand their needs and can achieve their full potential.

## HOCKLIFFE SCHOOL AIMS

### TO MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

- Guide children towards becoming reliable, independent and positive citizens.
- Help children to understand their community, how they can contribute towards it and feel valued as a part of it.
- Value and respect individual and cultural differences.
- Encourage parents and carers to make a positive contribution to the education of their children and be part of the school community.

### TO LEARN SKILLS FOR LIFE

- Help children learn the skills needed to work both independently and co-operatively.
- Encourage children to be happy and confident so they can flourish as individuals and members of the school and wider communities.
- Develop children's self-esteem and encourage them to build a positive relationships with others.



## **Communication**

We welcome parents into school at any time to discuss their child's progress and any concerns. You can speak to your child's teacher at the end of the day when collecting your child from their teacher. Please keep these messages short and if you feel a longer discussion is needed make an appointment with the class teacher or headteacher via the office.

### **Parent Information Events**

For parents Class Information meetings are held by each class teacher at the beginning of the school year in September. Parents have a group meeting with the teacher so they can be made aware of the routines and expectations of their child's new class.

### **Parents Consultations**

Individual Parents' Consultation meetings are held in the second half of the Autumn and Spring terms when teachers discuss a child's progress, next steps in learning and suggest how parents can support their child at home to achieve these targets.

### **Reports**

Parents receive a written report on their child's progress in the summer term and parents are invited to make an appointment to discuss this report with the class teacher.

### **The School Website**

The school has a colourful and informative website which is regularly updated with information of events and pictures of children's learning.

[www.hockliffelowerschool.co.uk](http://www.hockliffelowerschool.co.uk)

### **Communication with Parents**

Letters, emails and text alerts are sent regularly or as appropriate to parents to keep them informed of events and issues at the school. Letters will be sent home in the children's book bags or emailed. They can also be downloaded from the school website.

### **Parents' Noticeboards**

Information for parents is displayed on the outdoor Parents' Noticeboard by the playground door. Day to day messages are placed on an A-frame notice board which is put on the playground whenever necessary.

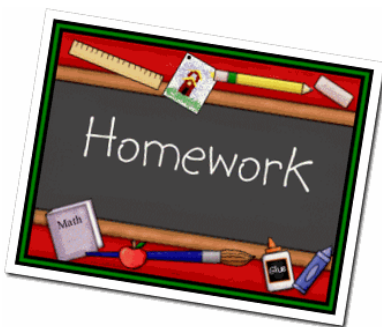


## The Curriculum

At Hockliffe Lower school we encourage children to develop a love of learning by providing an exciting thematic based curriculum which will inspire their interests and motivate them to achieve to the best of their ability.

The termly curriculum for each class is shared with parents and carers via a Class Curriculum Newsletter, a copy of which can be downloaded from the class pages on the school website.

Topics studied include; Egyptians, The Rainforest, Romans, Children in World War Two, Seaside, Transport, People from other lands, Houses and Homes, Toys and Games, In the Garden, Animals from other Lands, Our School and Our Village.



We believe that a child's education is a partnership between parents and the school. To encourage this, teachers set homework so that parents can share in their children's learning. All children are asked to read at home with their family and each child has a Home School Link Diary where instructions and observations on progress can be shared. As the children get older, homework will include learning spellings and practising mental maths skills.

In Years 1- 4 children are given Learning Logs with cross curricular investigation tasks and maths challenges to complete at home; this gives the children the opportunity to explore a learning challenge in a style which is most effective and enjoyable for them.

## The Curriculum cont.

### Assessments

The children are regularly assessed on their progress through the curriculum in order to plan the next step and identify strengths and weaknesses. Targets are set for groups and individual children.

In addition the DfE requires three formal assessments to take place to monitor standards:

- The Early Years Learning Goals are used to measure the children's attainments at the end of the Foundation Stage.
- A Phonic Screening takes place with children at the end of Year 1.
- The National Standard Assessment Tasks and Teaching Assessments (SATs) are made towards the end of Key Stage 1, when the children are in Year 2;

Parents are informed of the outcome of these assessments.

If you would like to see your child's records you may request this.



## Forest School Ethos and Principles

Forest School is a learner-centred approach that interweaves with the ever-changing moods and marvels, potential and challenges of the natural world through the seasons, providing opportunities for exploration and discovery. The Forest School principles aim to ensure that all learners experience the cumulative and lasting benefits that Forest School offers.

1. Forest School is a long-term process of frequent and regular sessions in woodland or a natural environment.
2. Forest School takes place in a woodland or natural wooded environment to support the development of a relationship between the learner and the natural world.
3. Forest School offers learners the opportunity to take supported risks appropriate to the environment and to themselves.
4. Forest School is run by qualified Forest School practitioners who continuously maintain and develop their professional practice.
5. Forest School uses a range of learner-centred processes to create a community for development and learning.

## Forest School Sessions at Hockliffe Lower School



In Year R Forest School sessions take place once a week throughout the year. Activities are planned to reflect the seasons and take place in all weathers apart from high winds and storms. Appropriate outdoor clothing is essential in ensuring that children are able to fully participate in learning.



As in the principles of EYFS, learning through play and developing social skills are important aspects of Forest School. Children are taught practical skills at their individual level of development and then are allowed the freedom to apply these to their chosen activities.



## **Clubs, Councils, and Out of School Learning.**

At Hockliffe we aim to provide a variety of clubs and activities at lunchtime and after school which give children the opportunity to develop their interests and fitness.

### **Lunchtime Clubs**

During the lunch break children are able to take part in various sports clubs over the year like Trigolf and Energize—Be Fit, Be Healthy.

Each day there is a supervised team game like quick sticks, football, tennis or netball. A variety of other play equipment for individuals like Lego and skipping ropes are also provided.

### **After School Clubs**

Different clubs are run after school each term including; sewing, science, art, sports, cookery, Lego and gardening clubs. We aim to provide at least 2 clubs per term. Clubs usually run for 4 sessions and a charge is made depending on the cost of tuition and resources required to run the club.

### **School Council**

The School Council is a group of students who are elected to represent the views of all pupils and to get involved in the way the school is run. Each September two pupils from each year group are elected through a ballot system. At the first meeting a committee is set up consisting of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Publicity Officers. The council discuss issues about the school environment or behaviour and sanctions.

### **Eco Council**

The Eco Council is a committee chosen by our pupils to lead our school in raising awareness of environmental issues. They work with the rest of the school and the wider community to decide which environmental themes to study and what the school will do to address the issues.

### **Music Lessons**

A variety of music lessons e.g. Clarinet, keyboard and piano lessons are offered at the school through visiting tutors and are paid for individually. Other instrumental tuition can be provided by contacting the county music service at [www.inspiringmusic.co.uk](http://www.inspiringmusic.co.uk).

### **Out of School Learning**

Throughout the year the children will be involved in many visits and activities to support and enrich the curriculum. For some of these events costs will be involved and parents will be asked to make a voluntary contribution. Money is often donated by the H.S.A. or School Fund to additionally subsidise these activities.



## **Behaviour and Security**

### **Behaviour**

The school has a clear expectation of the behaviour that is expected from all pupils in the school and promotes a core set of positive values for life. A code of behaviour is established with the children and applied consistently within the school community based on Restorative Approaches. The children are expected to show kindness and respect towards each other and the school environment. They learn to work and play together in a way that shows tolerance and understanding of each others needs. Positive behaviour is emphasised and rewarded however there is a ladder of consequences for inappropriate behaviour which is applied by staff; children are encouraged to consider their actions and find appropriate ways to modify their behaviour in future. Incidents of bullying, racial or religious prejudice and sexual harassment are not tolerated. Should you have any concerns regarding such issues with your child in school, it is not appropriate to approach parents of other children involved; please bring your concerns directly to the class teacher or Headteacher as advised in our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.

Copies of our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies are available on our website.

### **The Role Of Parents**

Parents have an important part to play in the development of social behaviour. Children first learn patterns of behaviour at home. When the children begin school this becomes a shared responsibility between school and home. Parents should encourage their children to have self-respect, concern for others and the environment and self discipline.

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns regarding behaviour with the class teachers or Headteacher.

### **Values**

Each half term the school has a focus value that they explore in PHSE lessons and assemblies such as courage, co-operation and respect. Children who demonstrate this value are given awards. Parents are informed what the value is so they can encourage this at home. They are also asked to share examples with the school of how their child demonstrates this value at home.

### **School grounds**

The school ensures that the children are safe and secure when on school premises. Parents and carers are asked to support this by closing gates and doors when used. The black gates at the playground are padlocked when parents leave in the morning and re-opened at 3.05pm.

## Behaviour and Security cont.

### Car Park

The school car park is small and there is only room for staff and visitor parking. If you drive your child to school please park, with consideration for residents, in the two housing estates at the bottom of Woburn Road and walk your child up to the school. Children should never walk to school unsupervised or be allowed into the car park unaccompanied by an adult. When there are school excursions the large gates to the car park will be closed from 3pm so the children can get off the coach safely on their return. Please do not park your car opposite these gates to ensure that the coach has sufficient room to manoeuvre safely into the car park.

### Before and After school

At the beginning and end of the school day it is the role of the parent to supervise their child and we would ask that you encourage the children to show the same respect for the school property and each other as they do during the school day. **Children are not permitted on the field or apparatus before or after school.** At the end of the school day children should vacate the school premises as soon as they are sent to their parents/carers.

### Visitors

Visitors need to use the front entrance, sign in and have their identity checked. The children are told not to open the door to visitors.

