

Welcome to Turtle Class Autumn 2026



Dear Parents and Carers,

A very warm welcome to **Turtle Class and Reception!** We hope you have all had a lovely summer. We are really looking forward to welcoming the children and beginning this exciting first year of school together.

Starting Reception is a very special milestone. During the first few weeks, our priority will be helping every child to feel **happy, safe and secure**. We will spend time getting to know one another, making friends, exploring our classroom and outdoor spaces and becoming familiar with the routines of the school day. Reception is a busy and exciting year, full of opportunities to **play, explore, talk, investigate, create and learn**. We will build on each child's individual experiences, interests and strengths as their confidence and independence grow.

Starting the School Day

At the beginning of the year, we will gently support the children as they learn our morning routines. As their confidence grows, we will encourage them to carry their belongings, hang up their coat and bag and get themselves ready for the day.

Please do not worry if your child needs a little extra reassurance at first. Children settle at different rates and we will work closely with you to make the transition into Reception as happy and positive as possible.

If you need to speak to a member of the Reception team, please talk to us at the classroom door or at home time. You can also contact Mrs Bovingdon by email.

Our Reception Expectations

Throughout the year, we will help the children understand what it means to be **Ready, Respectful and Safe**.

Ready

We will encourage the children to manage their belongings, listen and join in, have a go at new experiences and keep trying when something feels tricky.

Respectful

We will encourage the children to use kind words and actions, share and take turns, listen to others, look after our resources and understand that everyone is special and important.

Safe

We will help the children to follow classroom routines, make safe choices, move safely around school and begin to recognise their feelings and how their actions can affect others. These skills develop over time and we will model, encourage and celebrate them throughout the year.

PE

Our usual PE session will be on **Wednesday morning**. Children should come to school wearing their school PE kit, with long hair tied back and earrings removed. Our first sessions will focus on moving safely and confidently, using space effectively and developing coordination and control through activities involving balloons and balls. The children will also develop their physical skills through regular active play indoors and outdoors.

Our Autumn Learning

The whole-school theme this year is '**Roots – Where Do We Belong?**'

In Reception, we will begin by exploring **ourselves, our families, our new class and our place within the school community**. As the year develops, we will widen this to include our local area, the natural world and the wider world we share.

This links closely with our focus on helping every child develop a strong sense of **belonging** and understand that their ideas and experiences matter. Much of our learning takes place through purposeful play, conversation, stories and carefully planned experiences, both indoors and outdoors.

Communication, Language and Literacy

Talking, listening and sharing stories will be at the heart of our learning.

We will begin with listening games, sound walks and turn-taking activities before introducing our formal **phonics teaching**. Children will gradually learn to hear sounds in words, recognise the letters that represent them and blend sounds together to read words.

Some of the books we will enjoy include **Handa's Surprise, The Cave, Our House, Lost and Found** and **How to Catch a Rainbow**, helping us develop vocabulary, imagination and comprehension. Through our **Baby Koala** guided reading, the children will also begin exploring the wider world, learning new facts and vocabulary and discussing their ideas and opinions. Children will have lots of opportunities for early writing through drawing, mark-making, name writing and gradually applying their phonics knowledge.

Mathematics

Our maths learning will be practical, playful and full of opportunities to talk and investigate.

We will begin with **body counting** before following **White Rose Maths** to explore matching, sorting and comparing. We will also investigate **measure and pattern**. Later in the term, our focus will move towards **1, 2 and 3**, developing a deeper understanding of these numbers through practical resources, games and play.

Understanding the World

Our '**Roots – Where Do We Belong?**' theme will encourage the children to think about themselves, their families and their place in the world. Through **Baby Koala**, we will learn about koalas, their habitats and endangered species, leading to conversations about how we can care for animals and our planet. We will also explore healthy living and food, including fruits and vegetables, different tastes and where food comes from, with an opportunity to make bread.

The children will explore the **life cycle of a chick** and spend time outdoors noticing the **weather, seasons and changes in our environment**.

Beach School

The children will also have opportunities to take their learning beyond the classroom through **Beach School**. These sessions will allow them to explore our local coastal environment, investigate the natural world and learn why it is important to care for the places, plants and animals around us. Beach School will also help develop **confidence, independence, resilience, teamwork and physical skills**, while strengthening the children's connection to the special place in which they live and learn. Further information about dates and what children will need to wear or bring will be shared separately.

People, Communities and Special Stories

We will explore objects, traditions and stories that are special to different people and families.

The children will hear Christian stories including **The Calming of the Storm** and **David and Goliath**, exploring themes such as worry, safety and bravery. We will also begin learning about stories that are special to Muslims, including the story of **Muhammad**. Through these experiences, we hope to develop curiosity and respect for the different families, beliefs and traditions within our community and wider world.

Expressive Arts, Music and Creativity

Creativity will be woven throughout our Reception provision.

The children will explore their identity through **self-portraits** and have regular opportunities to draw, paint, build, model and create. In Music, we will explore how our **voices and percussion instruments** can create different sounds, feelings and moods. Singing, rhymes, movement, imaginative play and role play will also be important parts of everyday learning.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

A particularly important part of our first term is helping the children feel that **Turtle Class belongs to them and that they belong in Turtle Class**.

We will focus on routines, friendships, feelings and emotions, helping children learn to share, take turns, listen to others and work together.

We will encourage increasing independence and, most importantly, help children develop a positive view of themselves as learners — to be curious, ask questions, have a go and understand that mistakes and trying again are important parts of learning.

Working Together

We want every child in Turtle Class to feel **happy, safe, valued and excited about coming to school**. At home, sharing stories regularly is one of the most valuable ways you can support your child. Talk about the pictures, wonder what might happen next and encourage them to share their favourite parts. You can also encourage independence by practising dressing, putting on coats and shoes, using the toilet independently and looking after belongings. Talk together about your child's day, notice numbers and shapes when you are out and about, count everyday objects and encourage questions about the world around them. Most importantly, **every child develops at their own pace**.

Reception is about building strong foundations, developing confidence and nurturing a love of learning. We will celebrate every child's individual progress, achievements and special qualities.

We are really looking forward to getting to know the children and their families and working in partnership with you throughout their first year at school.

Thank you for your support, and a very warm **welcome to Turtle Class!**

Kind regards,

Mrs Bovingdon, Mrs Boulden and Mrs Stilwell