

Starting School at Southill Primary



This has been written to help prepare you and your child for the exciting adventure of starting school. We aim to give you the information you need and some ideas for how you can help your child get ready for school.

Preparing your child for school

This year there will be a dedicated section of our school website to provide information for you – photographs, information leaflets and resources, links to useful websites and introductions from school staff. We will contact parents via email and provide an Early Years email address for communication. We will provide ideas for home learning activities to help with the transition to school. Staff at school will contact pre-schools to talk about the individual needs of each child.

How to help at home

Here are just a few ideas:

- Share books and stories together as well as singing songs and nursery rhymes
- Play turn-taking games such as simple board/dice games
- Lay the table together to count out things you need
- Use words such as taller/shorter/full/empty when you play
- Encourage your child to dress and undress themselves
- Encourage your child to manage using the toilet by themselves, including washing their hands afterwards.



Settling in at school

During the first few weeks of school the Reception Class staff spend their time really getting to know the children and helping them to settle into the new routines of school. There is usually a staggered start to school life to support a smooth transition.

The Early Years Curriculum

Children learn best through play, trying things out, experimenting and talking. The Early Years Curriculum is an individualised, play-based curriculum which allows the adults to observe and find out about children's interests and what they are able to do independently across a broad range of areas.

Teachers use this information to plan for the next steps in learning and development. The role of the adult is to provide a stimulating environment and opportunities to support children in their learning journey.

Children will spend time each day learning through play, where they can direct their own learning and build on experiences from teacher-led sessions. There will also be short, focused daily teaching in areas such as maths, phonics and shared writing. Adults will take this focus into independent play through talking, questioning and modelling.

Stories and books form a vital part of the curriculum and these often go on to inspire the learning in class during the week. There are opportunities for reading books every day. Talk is also a key focus for us and we build in regular opportunities for making words and vocabulary a priority.



In addition to this, children take part in other activities such as PE, outdoor play, welly walks, nature challenges, music and singing each week.





Supporting your child with their learning

Parents often ask what they can do to help support their child with learning at home – the answer is lots! Most importantly, we ask all parents to read with their children as often as possible. This includes reading stories to your child as this helps them to develop a love of reading and good story language, and it also develops their understanding. Children who love stories, and who are able to talk about and retell stories, have a brilliant starting place when it comes to writing. Reading also includes listening to your child read to you. Little and often is the key – children who read regularly at home for just 5-10 minutes a day, especially in the early years, grow in their confidence as readers. We encourage all parents to set aside some time each day in a comfortable quiet space, when distractions are minimised, to enjoy reading together. If you would like any advice or support with reading we are always happy to help. In the Autumn term we will hold reading and phonics workshops for parents, to give you hints and top tips in how you can support your child with their learning at home.



General Information

Please follow these links to sections of the school website you might find useful.

The school prospectus:

https://www.southill.dorset.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Southill_Primary_School_2017.pdf

Information for parents:

<https://www.southill.dorset.sch.uk/parents-carers/>

Learning at Southill School:

<https://www.southill.dorset.sch.uk/learning/>

Our Reception Class page:

<https://www.southill.dorset.sch.uk/year-groups/reception/>

