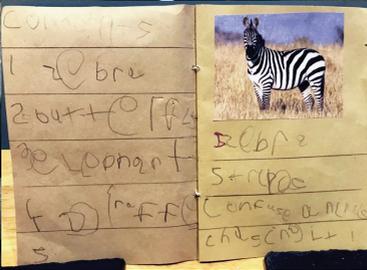




# PARENT HANDBOOK





---

## THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

---

Copyright © Thameside Primary School 2023

Every effort has been made to make the content of this parent handbook correct and up to date at the time of going to press (May 2023), but please let us know if you find any errors or omissions.

A PDF of this handbook is also available on the school website.

### **We welcome your suggestions for improvement**

Please contact us at [ADMIN@THAMESIDE.READING.SCH.UK](mailto:ADMIN@THAMESIDE.READING.SCH.UK) if you can think of anything that will make this handbook even more useful to parents of children coming to Thameside.



## Contents

<b>Welcome to Thameside Primary School.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Ready... Preparing for Foundation Stage .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Teacher visits to nurseries .....	4
New Parents Evening .....	4
Stay-and-play.....	4
How to help your child to be school-ready.....	5
One-page profiles (OPP) .....	6
<b>Steady... Starting school.....</b>	<b>7</b>
Home visits .....	7
Staggered entry for <i>all</i> children (Weeks 1 and 2) .....	7
Full days (Week 2).....	8
Year 6 buddies .....	8
Working parents .....	8
School uniform.....	9
Where to buy school uniform .....	10
Named belongings .....	11
Lost property .....	11
<b>Go! The school day .....</b>	<b>12</b>
What to bring to school .....	12
Access to the school.....	12
Drop-off and collection.....	13
Food and drink.....	14
Talking partners.....	15
Own work .....	15
Birthdays.....	15
Behaviour policy in Foundation Stage .....	16
<b>Learning at school .....</b>	<b>17</b>
Reading.....	17
Phonics.....	19
Writing .....	19





---

## THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

---



Maths .....	20
Tapestry .....	20
Learning and Development .....	21
<b>Life at school.....</b>	<b>22</b>
The school office.....	22
When your child is ill .....	22
Attendance .....	22
Wraparound care: Breakfast Club and Aftercare.....	23
Assemblies and performances .....	24
Visits and outings .....	24
Nature school.....	25
Enrichment activities .....	25
School library open after school.....	26
Thameside School Association (TSA) .....	27
Photographs.....	28
Parent Helpers .....	28
<b>Communication .....</b>	<b>29</b>
Newsletters.....	29
Text messaging .....	29
Letters home.....	29
Parent–teacher meetings .....	30
Twitter .....	30
Website .....	31
<b>About Thameside Primary School.....</b>	<b>32</b>
School structure.....	32
Staff .....	32
Safeguarding.....	33
Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) .....	33
School vision, aims and values .....	34
<b>Notes .....</b>	<b>36</b>



## Welcome to Thameside Primary School

We look forward to welcoming your child into our Foundation Stage class in September 2023. This is an important and exciting time in your child's life, and we are committed to providing them with the best possible education in a safe, happy and caring environment.

This Parent Handbook is designed to answer (almost) all questions you might have – before your child starts school, in the first few weeks after starting school and throughout the rest of Foundation Stage (also referred to as Reception) and beyond.

If you have questions that the Parent Handbook doesn't answer, please speak to your child's teacher in the first instance.





## Ready... Preparing for Foundation Stage

We have a carefully planned transition programme that aims to help your child get to know the school and their teachers prior to their first day at Thameside.

### Teacher visits to nurseries

Foundation Stage teachers will visit 'feeder' settings to meet and observe children in their current setting, and to talk about their learning. These take place in the summer term before your child starts school and are currently scheduled for early June.

### New Parents Evening

An evening meeting for all new parents of children starting in the next academic year (September 2023 to August 2024) will be held on **Tuesday 20 June 2023 at 6pm** in the school hall. During this meeting you will receive more information about Thameside and your child's class and will have the opportunity to sign up for your child's **HOME VISIT**, which takes place at the beginning of September 2023 ahead of **STAGGERED ENTRY**.

**NB** Please note that the new parents evening meeting is not suitable for children.

### Stay-and-play

This is an informal, one-hour session that takes place in the summer term before your child starts in September, so parents and children can meet their new classmates and teacher in their future classroom. Children will be able to play with and explore both the indoor and outdoor areas with their parents and peers, and you will be able to talk to your child's class teacher.

The stay-and-play session will take place on Tuesday 11 July from 9.45 to 10.45am.

## How to help your child to be school-ready

You can help your child get ready for school by practising the following skills at home during the summer.



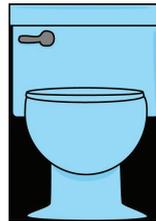
Getting dressed on their own



Doing up the zip on their coat



Personal hygiene



Independently going to the toilet



Cooking or baking together



One-to-one reading



Writing their name



Counting out objects



## One-page profiles (OPP)

Please help your child to complete the one-page profile provided and return it to your child's teacher at the earliest opportunity. This will help their teacher to gain an understanding of their likes and dislikes and how best to help your child in the first few weeks of school.

Mrs Greenaway has also completed a one-page profile of herself.

My Name: Mrs Sophie Greenaway



**What's important to me...**

- My husband and my three sons
- My mum, dad and sister
- Cornwall, which is where I am from
- Spending time with my family
- Hockey as I have played since I was seven
- Staff, children and their families at Thameside
- Reading books
- Being outside
- The sea
- Playing sport and running – I like to keep fit
- Spending time with my friends
- That I do a good job
- Kindness
- Support from the other Headteachers I work with
- Organisation
- Pens and post-its
- Cake, coffee and chocolate!

**What people like and admire about me...**

- I am hard working
- I am friendly
- I help others
- I am a working mum
- I learn from my mistakes
- I always try my best

**How best to support me...**

- Be honest with me
- Cheer me up with chocolate and coffee
- Distract me with a funny story when I've had a bad day



## Steady... Starting school

During Term 1 we will have a settling-in period that introduces children to school life gradually. Good attendance is expected during this time so we can fully support children in the transition to full-time school.

### Home visits

On a home visit, the class teacher and their teaching assistant (TA) come to your home to meet you and your child. These visits are an integral part of the transition process and will be offered to all families, whether their child comes from an Early Years setting (for example a nursery) or straight from home.

Home visits are a valuable opportunity for children, teachers and families to get to know each other and spend uninterrupted time with individual parents and children, share information and answer any specific questions or concerns.

Home visits will take place on the first three days of the academic school year: **Monday 4 September, Tuesday 5 September and Wednesday 6 September 2023**. Please sign up for one of these sessions at the **NEW PARENTS MEETING**.

### Staggered entry for *all* children (Weeks 1 and 2)

Following the home visits, staggered entry will take place for **all children**:

Thursday 7 September	8.40–11.45am	Morning only
Friday 8 September	8.40am–12.45pm	Morning and lunch
Monday 11 September	8.40am–3.10pm	Full day (morning, lunch and afternoon)



## Deferred entry

If you have chosen to defer entry, your child will follow the same process of home visits and staggered entry.

## Full days (Week 2)

**All children** will start full-time (8.40am – 3.10pm) on **Monday 11 September 2023** (the start of the second full week of term).

Parents and careers will be able to bring their children into the classroom **on their first school visit day only**.

Thereafter children must be dropped off at the main Foundation Stage gate, where they will be greeted by their class teacher and walk into the classroom independently.

## Year 6 buddies

During the transition period, teachers and teaching assistants support children in managing their lunch. Every child is also assigned a Year 6 'buddy' who will collect them from their classroom before lunch, help them to wash their hands and eat lunch with them, assisting them with opening packets etc. and providing lots of encouragement.

If children are having a school lunch, we expect them to eat with a knife and fork and encourage them to try new foods.

## Working parents

The transition process is designed to meet the needs of the children. Flexibility for working parents will be considered as long as the individual needs of your child are being met. We will *always* try to give you plenty of notice so that you can make suitable childcare arrangements.

For more information see [HOME > COMMUNITY > WRAPAROUND CARE & CLUBS](#).



## School uniform

We are proud of our uniform and children should take pride in wearing it. Our school colour is maroon and is teamed with grey or black, and white.

### Uniform

- grey or black school trousers, shorts or pinafore dress
- white shirt or polo shirt
- maroon sweatshirt or cardigan (with or without school logo)
- maroon school fleece
- summer dress – maroon or red check pattern

### Footwear

Children should wear sturdy black or brown shoes.

Black trainers (*without* logo, stripes or different coloured laces) may be worn, but your child should have a change of shoes for PE.

### PE kit

Children will come into school wearing their PE kit on the day that they have PE and will stay in their kit all day. During the transition/meet the teacher visits, you will be told which day your PE will be. Our PE uniform is as follows:

- plain black or maroon shorts
- plain white or school logo t-shirt
- plimsolls or trainers

**NB** To promote independence, and for safety reasons, we recommend velcro fastening for all shoes and trainers in Foundation Stage.



## **Jewellery**

Jewellery must not be worn in school although small gold or silver studs are permitted. Children will be asked to remove earrings other than studs and must be able to do this themselves. Only one small stud per ear please.

## **Hair**

Hairstyles should be appropriate for school. Shaved patterns are not permitted. Long hair must be tied up as a precaution against the spread of head lice and for PE.

*Children not wearing the correct uniform will be reminded of our expectations, and we may also contact parents.*

If there is any reason correct uniform cannot be worn then please contact the headteacher.

## **Where to buy school uniform**

Some supermarkets and retailers stock maroon sweatshirts, jumpers, cardigans and maroon or red check dresses. Other items of school uniform – grey trousers and skirts, white shirts and polo shirts – are widely available.

All items of school uniform can also be bought through the M&S School Uniform Service. Go to [WWW.MANDSYOURSCHOOLUNIFORM.COM](http://WWW.MANDSYOURSCHOOLUNIFORM.COM) > **FIND YOUR SCHOOL > BERKSHIRE & OXFORDSHIRE > THAMESIDE**, or direct to [bit.ly/TPS\\_MandS\\_Uniform](http://bit.ly/TPS_MandS_Uniform) (case-sensitive).

This is a direct phone/online to home service only. Returns are free.

All items purchased through the school's M&S uniform page will qualify for 5% cashback to Thameside.

## **Plain school uniform items**

- plain white short and long-sleeved shirts and polo shirts
- trousers, shorts, pinafores and summer dress
- maroon PE shorts and jogging bottoms



---

## THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

---

The following items with the school logo can only be bought through the M&S School Uniform Service:

- white T-shirts
- sweatshirts
- sweat cardigans
- PE bags
- book bags
- caps and winter hats
- water bottles
- back packs
- school fleece  
(from about October)
- winter coat  
(from about June)

If an item shows as not available, please use the 'Register interest' feature – you will then be notified by email when the item becomes available again.

### **Named belongings**

All clothes and other items that your child brings to school should be named, including:

- book bag
- PE kit: PE bag, shorts/tracksuit bottoms, T-shirt, shoes
- all items of school uniform
- coats, scarves, gloves etc.
- water bottles
- lunch boxes.

### **Lost property**

Lost property is held in the Lost & Found box in the lobby at the entrance to the school office.



## Go! The school day

### What to bring to school

Please make sure that your child brings the following named items to school every day:

- book bag with reading book and reading record
- water bottle
- lunch box (if applicable)
- spare underpants (if required – accidents do happen, particularly in the first few days and weeks!).

### Access to the school

Direct access to the Foundation Stage doors is through the small gate to the left of the main entrance to the school in Harley Road.

Children must be dropped off at the gate by an adult.

### School Street and car parking

Since the summer term of 2021 Thameside has been part of a School Streets trial. This allows **closure of Harley Road for cars between 8.30 and 9.15am and 2.50 and 3.30pm** during term time.

Children must be brought to school on foot for the duration of the trial, and if it is successful, the scheme will be come permanent.

Thameside encourages walking or cycling to school. If you choose to drive your child to school, please do not park in surrounding residential streets, particularly Elliotts Way.

Free parking is available in the Waitrose/St Martin's Precinct car parks, only 3 minutes from Thameside.



## Drop-off and collection

### Drop-off

The Foundation Stage gate is opened at 8.40 (5 minutes before the rest of the school). Children must be dropped off at the gate by an adult.

### Late arrival

If the gate is shut on arrival, please take your child to the school office from where they can go through to their classroom.

### Collection

At the end of the school day (3.10pm for Foundation Stage) your child must be collected by an adult at the Foundation Stage gate (where they were dropped off in the morning).

Before your child starts school you will be asked who normally collects at the end of the day. If for any reason a different adult will be collecting your child, you must inform the school, either in person by talking to a Foundation Stage staff member or school office staff, or by email or a phone call to the school office.

### Late collection

Any children who have not been collected by 3.20pm (Foundation Stage) will be brought to the office where staff will contact their parents.

### Dogs

**No dogs** are allowed on school grounds at any time.

### Going to aftercare and after-school clubs

Foundation Stage children attending aftercare or after-school clubs will be taken there by a member of staff. Once your child is in Year 1 or 2 (Key Stage 1/KS1), they will be taken there initially but will be expected to go independently when appropriate.



## Food and drink

### School lunches

School lunches are free for every child in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (Year 1 and 2). Lunch must be ordered online through **PARENTPAY** by 8am on the day. It can also be ordered in advance.



(If you are in receipt of certain benefits, your child may be eligible for free school meals beyond Year 2. Please contact the school office.)

### Packed lunch

If you give your child a packed lunch, please ensure there is a healthy balance of foods – no sweets or fizzy drinks please. **NB** No nuts please, as we have children in school with severe nut allergies.

**Reduce, reuse and recycle:** Thameside Eco Council requests that reusable, washable pots are used where possible to reduce single-use plastics like crisp bags and yoghurt pots. Water is freely available in the hall.

### Milk and snack

Milk is provided free until the Friday before a child's fifth birthday. Every child in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is offered a piece of fruit or vegetable daily.

### Water bottle

Every child should have a named water bottle – containing only water – in school. Children have access to this throughout the day.

### ParentPay

ParentPay ([WWW.PARENTPAY.COM](http://WWW.PARENTPAY.COM)) is an online school payment system that allows you make secure credit and debit card payments for school uniform, lunches and activities such as school trips etc.

When your child starts at Thameside, you will receive a letter with a ParentPay activation code. Once you have activated your account, you can view and (if applicable) pay for meal choices online.



## Talking partners

Children are paired with a regularly changing 'talking partner' who they sit with on the carpet during whole-class learning. This goes along with a no-hands-up policy.

When the teacher asks a question, children have discussion time with their talking partner to come up with a shared answer. The child who will be asked to respond to the question is randomly picked using lolly sticks.

Working with a talking partner means that:

- some children feel more confident discussing and coming up with a shared answer
- over time, children begin to give more detailed answers
- children gradually develop higher-quality talk.

## Own work

- Each term, children will be given an 'Own Work' project. The aim of this is to develop the home-school partnership and give children opportunities to share their independent work with the class.
- Own work develops independent thinking, creativity, language and communication skills. Parents can provide feedback on their children's work through a feedback form.



## Birthdays

We always acknowledge children's birthdays and celebrate them at school: children get to sit on the 'birthday throne', there is singing and a brief Q&A, and they receive a birthday certificate. If you would like to contribute to these celebrations, send in your child with their favourite book to share with the whole class at the end of the day.

Alternatively visit our Amazon wish list to buy books for the class:

[WWW.AMAZON.CO.UK/HZ/WISHLIST/LS/2Y5QWHLHKPAIS](http://WWW.AMAZON.CO.UK/HZ/WISHLIST/LS/2Y5QWHLHKPAIS)

## Behaviour policy in Foundation Stage

Thameside Primary School follows a 'therapeutic thinking approach' to behaviour. Therapeutic thinking promotes positive behaviour that benefits other people and society.

This is supported by daily use of an easily accessible behaviour chart prominently displayed in the classroom.

The rules for the behaviour chart are explained in child-friendly language.

If children display *positive, caring, polite and respectful behaviour* – for example sharing, helping a friend, outstanding progress, polite manners or the effort they make in a particular task – they can move a bumble bee from the flower to the beehive. This is a collaborative task where children have a week to work as a team to move all 30 bumble bees to the hive.

If a child exhibits *inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour* – for example hurting another child, inappropriate language, damaging school property, etc. – they will spend some reflection time in the calm corner, where they will be asked to think about and then discuss with an adult how their actions have affected others and what they could do next time. In Foundation Stage, children spend 3 to 5 minutes in reflection time with a sand timer.

It is at the discretion of the staff to discuss any such events with the parents at the end of the school day.





## Learning at school

The early years of a child's life are an important stage during which the foundations for future development are established.

Thameside's Foundation Stage provides a secure, happy and caring environment in which children learn through purposeful and carefully planned play. We foster children's own interests and offer a wide range of adult-led and child-initiated activities that extend, enrich and develop potential, both inside and outside the classroom.

### Reading

Reading is an essential life skill. Children can only participate and progress in primary and secondary education if they learn to read, and it helps children develop their imagination, vocabulary and comprehension.

Once children are independent readers, choosing what they read and 'getting lost in a book' can be enormously enjoyable and exciting.

Our programme for early readers is almost entirely based on phonics. We use a programme called Read Write Inc (RWI) to develop children's phonic knowledge and fluency in Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2.

From Year 2 onwards, children progress to read a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction books of their choice, graded under the Accelerated Reader (AR) scheme.

**The pace at which children learn to read varies from child to child**, and they may be reading at 'Emerging' or 'Expected' levels at different times.

At various assessment points during the school year, it is expected that children will be reading within the following RWI groups:





THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

Foundation stage (FS)	Year 1 (Key Stage 1)	Year 2 (Key Stage 1)	Year 3/4/5/6 (Key Stage 2)
Learning letter sounds	<b>RWI Purple</b>	<b>RWI Blue</b>	AR
Blending letter sounds	<b>RWI Pink</b>	<b>RWI Grey</b>	AR
Sound worksheets	<b>RWI Orange</b>	<b>RWI Grey</b>	AR
<b>RWI Red</b>	<b>RWI Yellow</b>	Accelerated Reader (AR)	AR
<b>RWI Green</b>	<b>RWI Yellow</b>	Accelerated Reader (AR)	AR

For pupils to attain at National Expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, they must read at the Expected level at the end of Foundation Stage, Year 1 and 2:

	Foundation stage	Year 1	Year 2
Emerging	<b>Red</b> and below	<b>Orange</b> and below	<b>Grey</b> and below
<b>Expected</b>	<b>Green/Purple</b>	<b>Yellow</b>	AR
Exceeding	n/a	<b>Blue</b> and above	AR

### Shared reading

In Foundation Stage, whole-class shared reading is done every day. Each of these sessions – during which an adult reads to the children – has a particular focus (e.g. story language, comprehension, decoding, high frequency words, characters/settings, or rhyming words).

For more information go to [CURRICULUM > READING](#) and to [CURRICULUM > READING > WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS](#).



## Reading books and reading record

Your child will bring home a reading book and the yellow reading record, which should be kept in their book bag for protection. Reading books are usually changed every week as they progress.

Throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, we would like you to **read with your child for a minimum of 10 minutes each day**. Please comment or simply sign the reading record to confirm that your child has read with you.

## Parent helpers

We warmly welcome volunteers who would like to help with reading in school – see page 28.

## Library books

Thameside is fortunate to have a dedicated school library. Children can choose a book from the school library once a week, and parents are encouraged to share the book with their child at home. You will be advised of your child's library day at the beginning of the school year.



## Phonics

In Foundation Stage, phonics is taught in ability groups **every day, initially in 30-minute sessions, then** progressing to 45 minutes. Children's phonic knowledge is carefully assessed every half term and children are re-grouped accordingly. Please go to [CURRICULUM > READING > PHONICS](#) to listen to the correct pronunciation of sounds taught at school.

## Writing

Name writing is an important part of 'early work' in the morning. At the beginning of the year children are encouraged to trace their name and the numbers 1 to 9 using a dry-wipe pen and whiteboard and post the board in the class letterbox. Their writing is praised and displayed in the classroom.



## Maths

In Foundation Stage, maths teaching focuses on numbers and numerical patterns. By the end of Foundation Stage, children at the expected level of development will be able to do the following:

### Numbers

- Have a deep understanding of numbers to 10
- Recognise quantities without counting up to 5
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 and some number bonds to 10

### Numerical patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally

## Tapestry

Your child's progress in Early Years settings is documented in a learning journal in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. We use Tapestry, a secure online learning journal, to record observations, comments, photos and videos of your child's play and learning in and outside the classroom. . Photos or videos are only uploaded to Tapestry with your written permission.

Tapestry allows us to share our observations of your child with you, their parents and carers. We welcome comments on our observations of your child's progress, and you can also add your own observations.



Tapestry is accessed at [HTTPS://EYLJ.ORG/](https://eylj.org/) using a personal log-in. Up to two email addresses can be registered for a child's Tapestry account once you have completed the registration form, which you will receive in due course, along with instructions for using Tapestry.

All Foundation Stage staff have access to Tapestry. Every time they add a new observation, you receive an email notification.

We really hope that you enjoy using Tapestry and that it helps to keep you informed about your child's learning. If you have any questions about using Tapestry, please let us know.

## Learning and Development

The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure progression and continuity of skills in seven interconnected areas of learning and development, or Early Learning Goals (ELG).

**Three prime areas** reflect the key skills and capacities all children need to develop and learn effectively in order to be ready for school:

1. Communication and language (CL)
2. Physical development (PE)
3. Personal, social and emotional development (PSED)

There are also **four specific areas** through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

4. Literacy (comprehension, word reading and writing)
5. Mathematics
6. Understanding the world (UW) – past and present; people, culture and communities; the natural world
7. Expressive arts and design (EAD)

To achieve these ELGs, children work in groups, take part in practical activities, use ICT games and learn to carry out independent research.



## Life at school

### The school office

Mrs Evans in the school office will be able to help with everyday issues and answer most of your questions.

Please go to the school office if you need to:

- deposit medication to be administered during the school day
- make lunch orders through Parent Pay
- make appointments to see staff or Mrs Greenaway.

### When your child is ill

If your child is ill and cannot come to school, you must tell us as soon as possible on the day, either by telephone (0118 937 5551) or by email ([ADMIN@THAMESIDE.READING.SCH.UK](mailto:ADMIN@THAMESIDE.READING.SCH.UK)).

If your child has been **vomiting**, they cannot return to school for 48 hours after the last instance of vomiting; please phone the office if you are unsure about the recommended period to be kept away from school for other health related illnesses.

If your child has Covid symptoms, such as a high temperature, a persistent cough or loss of taste or smell, please do not bring your child to school but follow current Covid guidance for testing and self-isolation.

## Attendance

### Attendance is important because...

- poor attendance can seriously disrupt learning
- national studies show there is a strong link between good attendance and academic progress
- children can feel excluded from their group of friends when they return
- children may not understand some new work and may lose self-confidence.



### Parents should...

- ensure their children are at school on time every day
- make routine medical, dental and optician appointments outside of school hours
- notify school of absence as early as possible on the first day (you may be asked to provide a medical note from your doctor for lengthy absences)
- not book holiday during term time.

### Thameside will...

- track children's attendance
- report attendance and punctuality to parents
- investigate poor attendance
- involve the Educational Welfare Service if attendance fails to improve.

## Wraparound care: Breakfast Club and Aftercare

### Breakfast Club

This is available during term time, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 8.45am. Children are offered a selection of cereals, toast and fruit. Children are able to choose their own resources and activities.

### Aftercare

This is available during term time, Monday to Friday, from 3.15 to 6pm, **except** on the last day of a full term.

Children are able to choose their own resources and activities. They have access to both inside and outside all year round after school.

A light meal – a sandwich, wrap or cold pasta salad, for example – is provided by Caterlink (who also provide the school lunches for Thameside children).





## Staff

Miss Roseaman is the Wraparound Manager. Aftercare is staffed by teaching assistants (TAs) and lunchtime staff from across the school.



## Registering for Aftercare

For any queries regarding Aftercare, please see Miss Roseaman or contact the school office. Registration forms are available from the office.

## One-off or ad hoc sessions

Breakfast Club or Aftercare sessions can be booked on a one-off or ad-hoc basis in advance or on the day, subject to availability.

## Assemblies and performances

Children in the Foundation Stage will take part in a Christmas nativity performance at the end of the autumn term 2023 that parents and carers will be invited to watch.

There will be at least one other class assembly in the spring or summer term. This assembly will take place at the end of the day on a Friday, and parents will be given plenty of advanced notice.



## Visits and outings

Visits and outings are an important part of learning in Foundation Stage, ranging from local mini-outings – for example to Caversham Library or Christchurch Meadows – to whole-day trips by coach to places of interest.

We usually need parental help for outings and welcome your support if you are available.



---

## THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

---

We always tell parents when we are taking children out of school grounds and if we are using public transport. For whole day trips we send individual letters; for mini-outings, we ask parents to sign an annual consent form (**GREEN ADMISSIONS FORM**).

### Nature school

Nature School has been successfully running in Foundation Stage since September 2019. The sessions provide our pupils with regular opportunities to learn, achieve and develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a natural environment.

The sessions currently take place on a Wednesday afternoon from 2 to 3pm at Christchurch Meadows and are facilitated by the class teachers. Each class will go on alternate weeks. Children will be going out in all weathers, therefore we kindly ask that children **bring a waterproof coat, wellies, gloves and a hat** for their Nature School session.

We will also be asking for parent volunteers to come along and support our sessions, so please let us know if this is something you may be able to help with.



### Enrichment activities

These include trips away – to museums and other places of interest, the theatre, or musical and sporting events – or in-school events and activities, such as visiting theatre groups or workshops run by external providers.

Enrichment activities are focused on particular topics and will only be undertaken if they support the curriculum.

Parents and carers may be invited to make a voluntary contribution, and the school and/or the **THAMESIDE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (TSA)** may financially support these activities.



## School library open after school

The library is also usually open to parents and children on **Tuesdays after school**, when children can borrow up to two books.

## Contributions for trips and activities

In certain circumstances we invite parents and carers to make a voluntary contribution towards activities. Voluntary contributions can be made in instalments, by prior agreement with the headteacher.

Parents will be told the cost per child, and no contributing child will be required to subsidise the cost of non-paying children.

For example, your child may, in future, be offered the opportunity to take part in the following trips (costs may change):

- Year 2 beach trip: £12
- Year 3/4 swimming lessons: £30 for 10 weeks (1 lesson per week) per year
- Year 4 camp: £65 for two days of activities and overnight stay
- Year 6 residential trip to Wales: £436 for five nights/six days

Sometimes the school pays the additional costs of supporting curriculum or enrichment activities from school funds, grants (e.g. from organisations such as Berkshire Outdoor Education Trust), or from TSA funds. (Parents have a right to request information from the school about how enrichment activities are funded.)

If an activity cannot go ahead without sufficient voluntary contributions, the school will explain this at the time of requesting the contribution.

If an activity has to be cancelled due to insufficient funds, all monies will be returned to parents and carers.



## Thameside School Association (TSA)

The Thameside School Association (TSA) raises funds for the school through running popular school community events such as the Summer and Christmas Fairs, the hugely successful biannual school discos and social events such as the Treasure Hunt and the Quiz Night, as well as termly cake sales (circumstances permitting). A very occasional newsletter keeps parents informed of forthcoming events and the ways in which money is spent.

The TSA would LOVE you to get involved – it's fun, skill-building and a great way to make friends and support the school as a whole. It is only with your help that the TSA can do its job of raising funds for things that are not covered by the school's budget.

Whatever your skills, interests or experience – YOU can contribute by getting involved at committee level or by volunteering to run stalls, bake cakes, collect raffle prizes etc.

In past years, money raised by the TSA has funded the school library, the stage lighting, the outdoor classroom, a Scrapstore Play Pod, an annual 'enrichment fund' for every class to help with the cost of trips, and more.



To find out more, talk to current TSA volunteers and join our Facebook group – [THAMESIDE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION \(TSA\)](#). We look forward to meeting you!



## Photographs

Teaching staff sometimes take photos and occasionally video clips of children to record the ways in which they learn and experiences they have at school. This material may be used...

- for your child's learning journey in the Foundation Stage
- for displays, to use in class or on the school website and social media
- to record special occasions (e.g. assemblies, special events and trips)
- for professional use (e.g. teacher training, parent assessment evenings, curriculum sharing evenings and parent-teacher meetings).

Occasionally local newspapers are invited to photograph e.g. school productions or the new intake of Foundation Stage children; these photos may appear on the school or local newspaper website.

To give us permission to take and use photos or video material of your child, please sign the relevant section of the **GREEN ADMISSIONS FORM**.

## Parent Helpers

We warmly welcome parent helpers in Foundation Stage and value the support they offer.

Parent helpers can provide support in the classroom in a variety of ways:

- one-to-one reading (training for how to deliver one-to-one reading sessions can be found on our school website at [CURRICULUM > READING > TRAINING FOR READING VOLUNTEERS](#) and must be viewed before volunteering to read with children)
- sharing story sacks with children
- one-to-one interventions (e.g. to support children with counting to 10 or correctly forming letters etc. )

We wait until after the October half term before inviting parent helpers in to give children time to settle in school. A DBS (disclosure and barring service) check, arranged through the school, is required for all parent volunteers.



## Communication

### Newsletters

Every week, parents receive the headteacher's newsletter with school news. A separate Foundation Stage newsletter goes out once a term.

Newsletters will be emailed unless you are not signed up to our emailing system (in which case you will receive a hard copy).

If you would like to receive newsletter by email, please provide your email address and sign the relevant section of the **GREEN ADMISSIONS FORM**.

### Text messaging

Thameside uses the Teachers2Parents service to keep parents informed by text message. We contact you to:

- keep you informed about class and school activities and events
- send reminders (about items to bring to school, inset days, meeting dates, returning paperwork etc.)
- notify you of club cancellations or other changes to the school day
- inform you of lunch menu changes and lost property
- tell you about unexpected school closures (e.g. in the case of severe weather)

If you would like to be included in the free text messaging service, please indicate this by signing the appropriate section of the **GREEN ADMISSIONS FORM**.

### Letters home

From time to time, you will receive letters home, for example about school trips, staff changes etc. Generally letters are sent home in your child's book bag, but you can opt to receive them by email as well.

If you would like to receive letters home by email as well as on paper, please provide your email address and sign the relevant section of the **GREEN ADMISSIONS FORM**.

**Always check your child's book bag for letters home.**



## Parent–teacher meetings

Parent–teacher meetings take place in the autumn and spring term. In the summer term we offer optional drop-in sessions for you to discuss your child’s end-of-year report.

The meetings are an opportunity to discuss your child’s progress and any concerns that you may have.

You can book a 10-minute appointment for parent–teacher meetings using the Teachers2Parents booking system, which will send you a text message and/or email with a clickable link to the available slots.

Up until the end of the booking period (i.e. the day of the first meeting) you can go into the system and change your booking to another available slot. Automatic reminders are sent out a week before the meeting and again one day before.

To ensure you can use the Teachers2Parents booking system, please provide your email address and sign the relevant section of the **GREEN ADMISSIONS FORM**.

If you do not wish to use this booking system or do not have access to the internet, you can book your appointment through the school office.

## Twitter

Thameside a Twitter account. To subscribe to both to get daily updates and photographs of what happens in school, click on the Twitter icon on the school website ([WWW.THAMESIDEPRIMARY.CO.UK](http://WWW.THAMESIDEPRIMARY.CO.UK)).

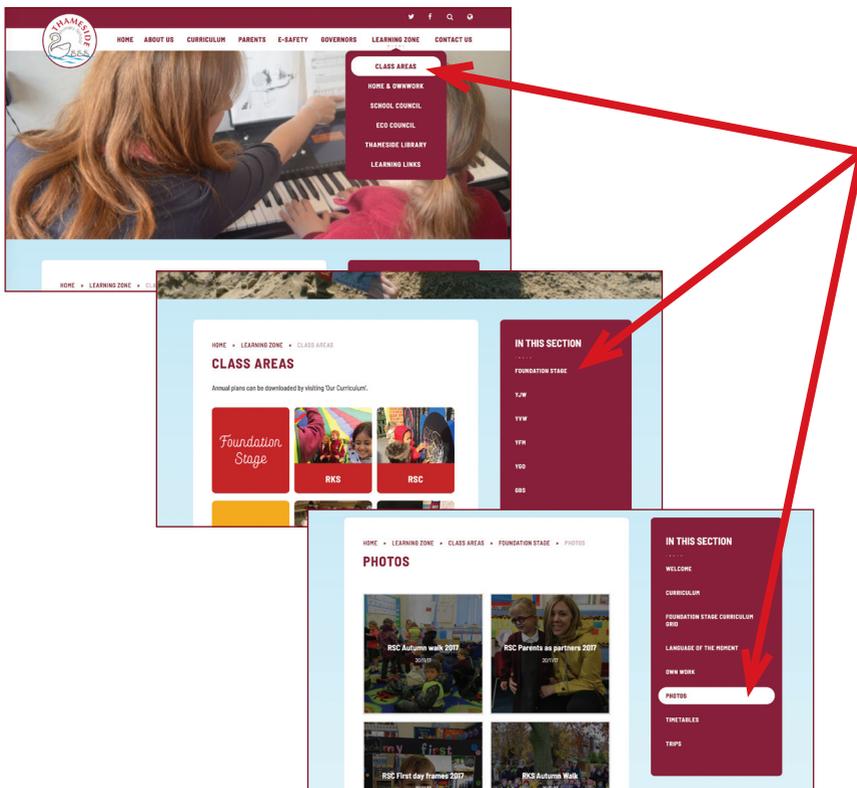
The **THAMESIDE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (TSA)** also has a Facebook page to advertise useful information about forthcoming school fundraising events, among other things.



## Website

For comprehensive information about all aspects of the school, from school policies and the curriculum to class areas, links to **SUMDOG** and much more, visit the school website at [WWW.THAMESIDEPRIMARY.CO.UK](http://WWW.THAMESIDEPRIMARY.CO.UK). Have a look around and familiarise yourself with its navigation.

Class areas can be accessed using the menu at the top (**LEARNING ZONE > CLASS AREAS > FOUNDATION STAGE**). Use the menu on the right of this page to find out general information about Foundation Stage, the curriculum, photos from the school day and special events, the language of the moment, own work, trips etc.





## About Thameside Primary School

### School structure

Thameside currently has two-form entry, from Foundation Stage to Year 6. Year groups are organised in four colour-coded 'teams' comprised of one or two year groups each.

Year	Designation	Age group	Team	Class prefix
Reception	Foundation Stage/FS	Infants	Red Team	R
Year 1	Key Stage 1/KS1		Yellow Team	Y
Year 2				
Year 3	Key Stage 2/KS2 (Lower Juniors)	Juniors	Green Team	G
Year 4				
Year 5	Key Stage 2/KS2 (Upper Juniors)		Blue Team	B
Year 6				

### Staff

Foundation Stage is led by Mrs Thomas (team leader), supported by a team of teachers and teaching assistants (TA) and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) support assistants.

You will be given more details about your child's class teacher and TA at the New Parents Evening. A presentation from this meeting will be available to view on the New Starters Sept 2023 page of the school website ([HOME > ABOUT US > NEW STARTERS SEPT 2023](#)) from **Tuesday 20 June 2023**.

Photographs of all staff can be found in the entrance lobby of the school office and on the school website ([ABOUT US > MEET OUR STAFF](#)).



## Safeguarding

Thameside recognises its legal and ethical duty to promote the well-being of pupils at the school, protect them from harm and take appropriate action where we have concerns. All staff attend safeguarding training which is refreshed every three years.

The Designated Safeguarding Officer is Mrs Greenaway (headteacher). In her absence, matters of child protection will be dealt with by Mrs Burton (deputy headteacher) and Mrs Harkins (inclusion manager).

## Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

At Thameside, we view SEND as part of a continuum and work hard to find a balance between early identification and causing unnecessary concern.

Around 1 in 5 (20%) of children at Thameside need additional support in some form – some for the short term, others for their whole time at school.

Mrs Harkins, the inclusion manager at Thameside, is always happy to meet parents to discuss any concerns or needs. Please speak to your child's class teacher or to the office to arrange a meeting.

Thameside also has its own emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA), who works with children across the school.

Following National Guidance, the school addresses four main areas of need:

- social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMHD)
- sensory and physical needs (SPN)
- cognition and learning (C&L)
- social interaction and communication (SICN) – this includes children with autism spectrum conditions (ASC).

We also use 'waves' of intervention:

- **Wave 1:** quality teaching in all classrooms, with lessons and resources adapted to suit different learners



---

## THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

---

- **Wave 2:** interventions delivered by class teachers or other members of staff (e.g. an emotional literacy support assistant (ELSA))
- **Wave 2+:** support for children with special educational needs or a disability who benefit from interventions at Wave 2
- **Wave 3:** support or advice for children with special educational needs or a disability from external professionals (e.g. speech and language therapist)
- **Wave 3+:** additional support sought through the local authority (Reading Borough Council) for children with special educational needs or a disability
- **EHCP** – support for children with special educational needs or a disability who have a legal document called an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

For more information see [HOME > PARENTS > INCLUSION](#).

### School vision, aims and values

The fundamental principle of our school is that every child is important, and we want them to be the best they can be – academically, socially and in all areas of school life.

Our school is completely inclusive and certainly diverse, with more than 35 languages spoken. We are proud of our reputation for the provision we make for hard-to-reach children.

We expect all our children to make progress in line with national standards and we will remove barriers to learning so that every pupil can achieve.

The school works in partnership with parents and the wider community; and we expect our pupils to contribute to the community through their exemplary behaviour, enterprise and charity work.

All our staff have ample opportunities for continuing professional development. In return we expect them to support each other to become better teachers.



### **Thameside vision**

Our vision is to work together to enable our pupils to become confident, resilient and independent young people who are fully prepared for the challenges ahead, both in education and in the community.

### **School aims**

Thameside aims to...

- provide a well taught curriculum that meets the educational and pastoral needs of our pupils
- enable children to be independent learners and thinkers
- foster a sense of belonging to the community so that children can participate with integrity
- work in partnership with parents
- enable children to be the best they can be.

### **School values**

Thameside's core values are...

- belonging
- resilience
- assurance – confidence
- integrity and independence
- no limits – aspiration and ambition

(or BRAIN, for short!)

Each of these values is associated with behaviours that we encourage our pupils to adopt in all areas of school life.



## Notes



---

THAMESIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

---



**Thameside Primary School**  
Harley Road, Caversham  
Reading RG4 8DB  
Berkshire, UK

**Telephone 0118 937 5551**  
**Fax 0118 937 5552**

**Email [admin@thameside.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@thameside.reading.sch.uk)**  
**Web [www.thamesideprimary.co.uk](http://www.thamesideprimary.co.uk)**

#### **TERM DATES 2023–2024**

**Term 1 Monday 4 September – Thursday 19 October 2023**  
(Friday 1 September INSET DAY – school closed;  
Friday 20 October INSET DAY – school closed)

**Term 2 Monday 30 October – Wednesday 20 December 2023**

**Term 3 Tuesday 9 January – Friday 9 February 2024**  
(Monday 8 January INSET DAY – school closed)

**Term 4 Monday 19 February – Thursday 28 March 2024**

**Term 5 Monday 15 April – Friday 24 May 2024**  
(Thursday 2 May INSET DAY – school closed;  
Monday 6 May Early May Bank Holiday – school closed)

**Term 6 Tuesday 4 June – Wednesday 24 July 2024**  
(Monday 3 June INSET DAY – school closed)