

Welcome to the Foundation Stage



Trenode Primary Academy

2020 – 2021

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Starting School

The first few weeks

When your child starts in the Foundation Class it may be the first time that he or she has been away from you for any length of time, in surroundings that are quite new and with faces that are still unfamiliar. It will be strange and will certainly be challenging and exciting for both you and your child. We understand that for many parents this is a new experience, and one that can be an occasion of some anxiety and emotion. We will try to help you and your child to keep the parting cheerful and positive. This way, your child will feel confident, secure and happy as he or she sets out on this new adventure.

There will be a staggered entry over the first couple of weeks, to give the children time to become used to their new routine and to form relationships with their teachers and peers.

General Information

School times

The school day:

- 8.45am: School gates open and children are greeted onto the playground and into their classroom.
- 9.00am: Register
- 10.45am: Break time
- 12.15pm: Lunch time
- 1.00pm: Afternoon session begins
- 3.15pm: School ends

Please make sure that you are familiar with the times of school sessions. Children do not like arriving to school late; it can feel very unsettling, so please ensure your child is on the playground and ready to learn between 8.45 and 9.00am. If you arrive in school after 9.00am, you will need to bring your child to the main office where a member of staff will accompany them to the classroom.

At the end of the school day it can be quite distressing if your child finds that there is no one there to meet them when they have been looking forward to seeing you. Please ensure you are there to meet your child at 3.15pm prompt. All children need certainty about who will be there to collect them at the end of their day. If you do arrange for someone else to collect your child please inform the class teacher, teaching assistants or the office supplying a password to be exchanged on collection.

Your child will also be more insecure if he or she thinks that you are upset. We are more than happy to give you reassurance that your child has settled in the morning and you are very welcome to ask one of our office staff to check that your little one is alright.

If you wish to speak to the teachers for a longer amount of time please arrange a convenient time to meet after school.

When the children come into the Foundation Stage cloakroom they will have a peg with their name on. They are encouraged to take off their own coats, hang them up and place their water bottle into the container. They will have to do this at playtimes and lunchtimes so it is a great help if the vast majority are independent. We encourage children to put their book bag into the boxes too.

Please make sure every item of clothing has your child's name on, even socks, pants and shoes, then we can quickly and easily return all items to their owner. When trying to encourage independence it is inevitable that items of clothing go missing. We have clear rules and expectations to avoid this where possible, but it does happen. We do appreciate how frustrating this can be; however we ask that you are patient and understanding in these situations. You can also help by reminding your child of where to put jumpers, shoes and coats when they take them off.

School Uniform

All children at Trenode Primary Academy wear a uniform.

Boys are expected to wear:

- blue Trenode Primary Academy sweatshirt
- grey trousers or shorts
- white polo shirt
- black shoes

Girls are expected to wear:

- blue Trenode Primary Academy sweatshirt or cardigan
- grey dress or skirt (KS2 wear a tartan-style pleated skirt or grey trousers)
- grey trousers
- white polo shirt
- grey/black/navy tights
- black shoes
- girls can wear blue gingham dresses when the weather is appropriate



PE kit

In Foundation Stage the children are always moving around and being physical however we do have a weekly PE session to get them used to the equipment and routine of changing. PE kits should include plimsolls or trainers, blue shorts and a blue t-shirt. Please ensure every item is labelled to ensure nothing goes missing. We try to promote independence in all we do, so children may change themselves, therefore at times, despite our best efforts, items may end up in someone else's PE bag or hidden under furniture. Please be patient with us if this should happen. If your child has earrings it is essential for safety reasons that you provide micropore tape or remove the earrings on that day.



Wellies

Foundation children learn in a variety of ways and different environments, including the outdoors, therefore we ask that you provide a pair of wellington boots to leave in school (clearly labelled), so they are able to fully participate in all the Foundation Stage has to offer.

Snack time

All children are given a piece of fruit or vegetable daily for a morning snack as part of our healthy eating plan. Fresh milk is also available free of charge until the age of 5. The children are free to choose when they have their snack during the day.

Pupil Premium Funding

The Pupil Premium is a Government grant which is applied for by parents then paid to schools to support individual children. Not all children are eligible but at Trenode Primary we firmly believe that all children should have support when they need it and that includes helping families who ask us to. If you receive some benefits you might be eligible to apply for this grant. Please complete the form inside the pack or speak to one of the office staff. Please also ask if you are unsure as this money can make a huge difference to your child and the school.



Absences/Illness

Generally, if children are unwell the best place for them is at home with an adult. A sick child will not be able to cope with school activities and if the illness is infectious there is a risk of other children and staff becoming ill. Families must contact school by telephone **each day** of your child's absence. If the absence continues you should keep the school informed. Also let us know if your

child has a medical, hospital, optician or dental appointment in school time as this will allow us to give the correct mark in the register. Please provide proof of appointment.

If your child has had diarrhoea or sickness, please allow **48 hours** free of this before bringing them back to school. If an absence is prolonged, do keep us informed of progress.

Should your child become unwell during school time we may need to contact you urgently, so please ensure that we hold **accurate and up-to-date** information on your emergency contact form. Please inform us in writing of any change that may occur. It is vital that we have up-to-date contact details for parents and carers. Please inform the school office if your telephone number(s) change so we can contact you if we need to.

As well as needing to know about your child's health, it is also helpful if you let us know if your child is upset about something at home, for example a death in the family, a parent going to work away from home for a few weeks etc. If children are upset and we know the reason why, then we can support them much more effectively. In the same way, if anything happens in the Foundation class to upset your child, we will tell you about the incident.

If medicine is required you will need to speak to the office staff about this and complete a form.

Most absences during term time are unauthorised. However permission should be sought if you wish to request time off school for a particular reason. There is a form to complete if you need to request absence from school (available on the website or at the main office) Unfortunately, very few absences can be authorised and for holiday in term time, these can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances. Absence from school has a significant impact on your child's progress and development over time. The government national target is currently 96% and we work hard at Trenode Primary to help you and your child to maintain a high level of attendance. Please do not worry if your child is ill or you are struggling to get them to school; talk to us and we will be able to help.



Asthma inhalers

Children who suffer from asthma should be trained in the use of their inhalers. Younger children's inhalers are kept in a central storage place in their class in a box. All inhalers should be in original packaging and be clearly labelled for the child with correct dosage by the pharmacist or GP.

We appreciate that when your child is unwell you may feel anxious about how they will cope at school. If this is the case, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff. We are always willing to talk through any worries you may have and work with you to do the best thing for your child. Again, you will need to complete a form at the office.

Head lice

Head lice are a part of school life we all wish did not happen! However, at Trenode Primary we realise they do and want to support our families in dealing with them quickly and effectively. Our policy is that, should we see a child with head lice in school, their parents will be asked to come into school to collect them on the same day. Children are welcome back into school once they have been treated.



Playtimes and Lunchtimes

The children have a morning break at 10.45am. At 12.15, the Foundation children eat their lunch in the hall with their friends from across the whole school. We encourage independence, however there are adults on hand to help the children to receive and eat their food. They then have the chance to have an outside play, making use of our extensive grounds.

All children in the Early Years and Key Stage One are entitled to a free school meal. **All children are encouraged to use a knife and fork, so plenty of practise at home would be very helpful.** A copy of the school meals on offer is available at the front office each term.



Learning Through Play in the Foundation Stage

Play helps young children to learn and develop their physical, social, emotional and intellectual skills through doing and talking, which research has shown to be the means by which young children learn to think. It is also how they learn to socialise, as children engage in learning experiences with other children and adults.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a play based framework that childcare providers use as a tool to ensure that children from birth to five years are developing and learning to their full potential. We plan and provide a range of play activities, which help children to make progress in each of the following areas of learning and development:

Prime areas

- *Personal, social and emotional development* involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- *Physical development* involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- *Communication and language development* involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Specific areas

- *Literacy* involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- *Mathematics* involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- *Understanding the world* involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- *Expressive arts and design* involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.



Phonics in the Foundation Stage

As the children enter the Foundation Stage we immediately start teaching Letters and Sounds using an online learning programme called Phonics Play. Using online games and kinaesthetic experiences (using play dough, shaving foam, sand writing etc.) children start to begin to copy the graphemes within the Phonics Play programme.



Some activities are practical and some are within a writing book, practising fine motor skills, pencil control and writing on lines.

In addition to daily phonics sessions, there are planned opportunities for children to practise phonics and writing within the continuous provision e.g. phonics table. Working with a Teaching Assistant some children have interventions for phonics and fine motor skills when this is required. This is adapted on a regular basis to suit the needs of the children.

Tapestry (Online Learning Journey)

We will observe your child to assess how they are learning and developing. We will use this information, along with evidence from photographs, videos and work samples, to document their progress and where this might be leading them. We use an online Learning Journey called 'Tapestry'. This sends a link to your email address with a hyperlink to access your child's recent observation. This system enables you to make a comment on your child's learning and even create your own observations with exciting things they are doing at home. We will also update you regularly through informal discussions and regular written reports.



Reading and Writing in the Foundation Stage

Reading

We teach Foundation Stage children to read by first teaching a systematic and progressive phonics (sounds) programme. We combine 'Jolly Phonics' and 'Letters and Sounds', to provide a thorough foundation for reading and writing. Jolly Phonics teaches the letter sounds in an enjoyable, multisensory way and enables children to use their knowledge to read and write.

The five basic skills for reading and writing are:

1. Learning the letter sounds
2. Learning how to form letters
3. Blending sounds
4. Segmenting sounds in words
5. Spelling 'tricky' (i.e. phonetically irregular) words



Parental support is very important to all children as they all benefit from plenty of praise and encouragement, so your role is hugely important. Children will 'play' at reading, finding their own way through a book, learning that a book means something and is to be enjoyed. Our philosophy is to prompt enjoyment in reading. We prefer to let children learn this vital skill at their own pace rather than push them to finish a book and move on, or up, to the next book or level. It is about understanding the story, making sense of the pictures, understanding and developing an ever widening vocabulary and, above all, about enjoyment and developing as a reader.

Children learn to read at different rates. They are all individuals and their reading is assessed individually to identify what they need. When reading with your child, choose a happy, relaxed and quiet time. Make it a special time for the pair of you, without interruptions. This enhances your child's self-esteem; it makes them and their reading feel important. Try not to force your child to read if they are watching their favourite television programme or if you or they are too tired. We expect **children to read at least three times a week at home.**

Writing

Writing is part of our work in the Foundation Stage and we support children in forming their letters correctly. It is very important that a child holds their pencil in the correct way and we recommend that the pencil should be held in the 'tripod' grip between the thumb and the first two fingers. The grip is the same for both left and right handed children.

We will also be sending home regular 'learning together' sheets which consists of simple, fun activities that you and your children can do together at home. Your help at home in reinforcing the work we do at school will be invaluable. Your child's progress will be greatly accelerated when we work together in partnership.

Language of Learning

We focus on the language of learning with the children, so it helps if you talk about learning at home. We also use characters from the Mr men and Little Miss book series to encourage the children to understand how to learn. Over time, you will be able to have conversations with your child about how the characters help them too.



Mathematics in the Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, a wide range of activities will support the teaching and learning of mathematics. These are just some of the activities your child may experience to help them learn about numbers:

- Observation of number and pattern in the environment and daily routines.
- Board games.
- Large and small construction.
- Stories, songs, rhymes and finger games.
- Sand and water.
- Two- and three-dimensional work with a range of materials.
- Imaginative play.
- Cooking and shopping.
- Outdoor play and playground games.



Learning through play is how our children learn, so we will endeavour to give them a wide range of opportunities to help them to develop their independence and ability to concentrate. These will include activities such as:

- Listening in small groups.
- Finding and using the equipment they need.
- Playing games, for example, becoming familiar with the repetitive structure of throwing dice and collecting objects.

To make sure that the children experience a wide range of activities, Maths in Foundation will be planned using a mixture of the following:

- Some direct teaching.
- Work as a whole class, in groups, and as pairs or individuals.
- Developing an understanding of the number system through counting in various contexts.
- Having opportunities to talk about mathematical ideas.
- Exploring those ideas through well-planned play and practical work.



Helping your child to get ready for school

Use the toilet independently and wash and dry their hands afterwards.

Sit still at meal times and use a knife and fork. Put their empty plate on the worktop.

Hang up their coat or apron.

Dress and undress themselves, putting their clothes into a PE bag.

Use a handkerchief or tissue to wipe or blow their nose and put it in the bin.

Tidy away their toys when finished playing with them.

Put on their own coat and begin to zip it up.

Look after their own belongings e.g. put a letter in a book bag and carry it themselves.