



# SNOWSFIELDS, TOWER BRIDGE and ROBERT BROWNING PRIMARY SCHOOLS

## EYFS WELCOME PACK

**Home Visit Date:**

**Start Date:**



Welcome to our Schools! Snowsfields, Tower Bridge and Robert Browning are part of the Bridges Federation.

We are pleased that you have chosen our school for your child. Here is some more information about our Nursery and Reception classes, to help you know what to expect when your child starts in September.

### Nursery Places

All of our Nursery places are part time for 3 days a week- Monday to Wednesday. School starts at 9.00am (the morning gate opens between 8:45 and 9am) and finishes at 3.30pm. It is important that you bring your child to school on time and collect them promptly. It can be distressing for a child to arrive late or be the last one to leave!



### Reception Places

Reception places are full time. School starts at 9.00am (the morning gate opens between 8:45 and 9am) and finishes at 3.30pm. It is really important that your child arrives on time and is collected promptly.

### Enrolment and home visits

Before your child starts school in September you will be invited to attend an enrolment meeting and 'stay and play' session at the school. This is an opportunity to meet the class team, for us to get to know you and your child and to find out about their preferences and routines. The class team may also visit you and your child at your home. This will support your child in settling into our school.



### The Curriculum

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This has seven areas of learning including three prime areas: Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development; and four specific areas: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World and Expressive Arts and Design. These are taught through topics which have been carefully planned to engage and interest the children. We encourage parents to contribute to the planning too by letting us

know what your children are interested in. We will provide you with further information about the curriculum through the Google Classroom where the topic web is posted each half term.

## What to bring to School:

Please bring a spare set of clothes to school (labelled with your child's name) in a bag to hang on their peg. This is in case your child has an accident or takes part in some messy play! Bring a bookbag or a small backpack. Bookbags can be purchased through the school office. Your child will use this bag to bring home their reading book and home learning activities. Also please bring a water bottle labelled with your child's name.



Make sure that your child has appropriate clothes for outdoor play- warm clothes for the winter, waterproof coats for the rain and a sunhat and sunglasses in the summer.



Please do NOT bring toys or games from home (unless asked by the teacher). Also please do NOT send your child with snacks or drinks (unless it is part of their packed lunch).

## The School Day

### *'Stay and Play' 8.45-9.15am*

School is open from 8.45am and children are able to come into the



classroom from this time. In both Reception and Nursery we invite parents to weekly 'stay and play' sessions between 8.45am and 9.15am. During this time you will be able to play with your child at a range of activities. The practitioners will use this time to show you what your child has been learning and share their observations with you. This is also a chance for you to share things with us that your child has been doing at home. We want to work in partnership with parents and 'stay and play' is one of our key ways of doing this. Younger siblings are welcome to stay but please



ensure that they are supervised closely at all times. You must not use your mobile phone during stay and play.

### *Group Session*

Following 'stay and play' or free flow 'settling in' play the children will come together as a group on the carpet for a short time. During this time they may be learning Literacy, Mathematics or other areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This session could include stories, games or music.



### *Focus Groups and Free Flow Play*

After the children have sat together, they will then have the opportunity to work in small groups with a practitioner (focus groups) and to choose from a range of independent activities across the setting. These activities are really important in helping children to develop their skills across the curriculum. During this time the practitioners will talk to, listen and observe your child to assess their learning and plan next steps on their learning journey.

### *Outdoor Play and Learning*

Outdoor play and learning are a key part of our provision. The children spend time everyday outside, whatever the weather! It is important that you send your child to school in appropriate clothing so that they can access the outdoor environment. It is also helpful if they have a pair of wellies in very wet weather, at these times they should also bring their normal, school shoes, in a bag so they may be comfortable inside.

### *Snacks and Drinks*

During the morning the children come together for a snack of fruit and/or bagels. Water is available throughout the day. We also provide the children with a drink of milk later in the day.

### *Letters and Sounds (Phonics)*

Before lunch the children gather together again in groups. Children begin by developing their listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment before moving on to start learning their letters and sounds to support them with reading and writing. More information on how you can support your child with this at home is available on the Google Classroom.

### *Lunchtime*

All Nursery and Reception children are entitled to a free healthy school meal. You can also choose to send in a packed lunch, which must be healthy and balanced. An example of a healthy packed lunch would be:

- Sandwich / Rice dish
- Carrot sticks / tomatoes
- Yoghurt
- Fresh fruit / fruit snacks.



It is expected that the lunch choice is kept the same for a half term to allow your child to become used to it. Should you need to change your child's lunch option you will need to tell the school office.

### *Afternoon Provision*

The provision in the afternoon follows the same pattern as the morning, with Group Sessions, Focus Groups and Free Flow activities. The children usually finish the day with a story.



### **Collection of Children at 3.30pm**

Children will only be released from class with an authorised person, as identified by yourself. Should you wish for anyone else to collect your child please let us know before the end of the school day. We request that you inform us of the name of the person collecting to ensure children are safe. We do not allow anyone **under the age of 16** to collect a child from Reception.

### **Settling In**

We want children to feel safe and happy in school. It is a big step for children to start in a new environment, either in Nursery or Reception and how quickly they settle will depend on their previous experiences. We will support the children with settling and we advise that after a short period you say goodbye and go quickly to avoid confusion. If your child is finding it hard to settle we will work with you on an individual basis to make an agreed plan of action.

## Reception

In Reception we aim to have all children to stay all day from their start date in September. If we feel that they need a slower transition period we will talk to you about this. A separate policy is available for parents who wish to defer their child's Reception class place.

## Nursery

Children in nursery have different starting dates to allow for settling. Your child's start date is at the top of this letter. Some children will be ready to begin full time very quickly, especially if they have been used to full days in another nursery, but some will need a little longer. If your child needs a longer time to transition to full days and this will be discussed on an individual basis.

## Before Starting School

There are lots of things you can do at home to help your child get ready for school. If they are joining Nursery, share your child's interests at home and have conversations with them about what they like and don't like. Spend time with groups of other children to support their social interaction especially if they haven't been in a nursery setting before.

If they are joining Reception, read some books about starting school from the library. Show them how to hold a pencil. Show them their name and help them to recognise what it looks like. Count different objects with them so they are familiar with numbers.

Help your child to become as independent as is possible by encouraging and helping them to:

- Use the toilet and wash their hands
- Dress themselves
- Use a tissue to wipe their nose
- Share toys and take turns
- Put their toys away in the correct place.



Please also visit the following website for more support and information about your child starting school

[Getting ready to start school](#)

## Behaviour

At school most children behave well and follow our rules and routines. Each school has a set of values that are introduced to the children in a child friendly way. We use a system of rewards to praise children for doing the right thing. They will earn 'dojo points' throughout the day for things such as 'teamwork,' 'resilience' or 'working hard.' They may talk about their name going on the sunshine or rainbow if they have been good or they could also earn a purple slip for brilliant learning.

If a child does not follow the rules, then they are given a warning to change their behaviour. If they continue to not follow the rules they may have a short time out period and their name may be moved to the sad cloud. If this happens we will talk to you about their behaviour and how you can help support us at home.





## Supporting the Children

Each child is assigned a key person who will support with settling, pastoral care and planning for individual needs. If you are concerned about your child's development or progress please let us know and we will make some time available to talk to you .

In addition to our Class Teachers, Nursery Nurses and Teaching Assistants we also have Learning Mentors who work in all three of our schools supporting children and families with a range of needs, including behaviour, social skills and emotional wellbeing. They are all trained as Mental Health First Aiders.

Helen Viggiani (Co Head Tower Bridge,) Joanne Cranmer (Co Head Snowfields,) and Anna Mulhern (Co Head Robert Browning) lead early years in each of the three schools. They also lead on Inclusion and support children with additional needs, ensuring they have the right provision in place to enable them to feel happy and make progress.

## Learning journeys and assessments

Your child's interests and achievements are recorded through observations and photographs added to a whole class digital learning journey.

When the children start school the first two weeks are a period of observation and assessment. This enables us to gain a picture of what children can already do and their personal interests.

In addition to our own observations of the children, we are also required to complete the Reception Baseline Assessment. This short screen-based assessment is designed to enable the government to measure progress more fairly across the school from Reception to Year 6. Most children in Reception will complete this in the first few weeks after starting school.

Throughout the year, the children's progress is monitored. We meet termly with class teams to discuss how children are progressing and identify any areas in which they may need further support.

## Home Learning

We want to work in partnership with you. Children make more progress when their parents are working closely with the school. We expect you to read with your child regularly and talk with them about the book. When they are ready they will be given a reading journal so you can share your thoughts with us.

Your child will be given a login to their Google Classroom (GC). The half termly topic webs and homework project sheets will be shared on GC for you to access. There may also be additional resources and links to websites that you can use to support your child at home.

Children may also receive logins for our online learning platforms such as Reading Eggs, Teach Your Monster to Read, Purple Mash or Mathletics. These all have activities to support your children's learning at home.

You can also see what your child is learning through the google classroom.

## Importance of play and toy library

In our federation we believe in the importance of play for all children's development, not just for those in their early years. The statutory framework for early years states that,

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.'



Whilst we refer to 'home learning' above, it is equally (if not more) important that you make time to play with your child/ren at home regularly.

We offer a 'toy library' in each of our schools to give families the chance to borrow a range of toys to use at home. The early years teams will provide more details about these when your child starts school.

## Screen Time policy

Over the past 5 years much evidence has emerged about the negative consequences of screen time, smartphones and social media across society, but in particular for children. The impact of these technologies are particularly felt during the key developmental stages and have proven to have significantly negative consequences for many young people.

Some of the evidence around the impact of this technology includes;



**Toddlers sleep is significantly improved when screen time is removed** – A UK study tested the impact of removing toddler's screen time in the hour before bed, and replacing it with non-screen-based activities (puzzles, books, play etc...). The toddlers, aged 16-30 months, who no longer used screens in the hour before bed slept better and woke up less frequently.

**Five year old children's behaviour and attention in school is directly linked to screen time** – A study in Canada found that 2+ hours of screen time in children aged 3-5 was linked to clinically significant behavioural and attention problems. In this study, high levels of screen time was a stronger factor behind behavioural and attention issues than any other factor.

For children in the early years guidance suggests that they should be only accessing up to 2 hours of appropriate TV per day and/or short video calls to close family and friends. They should not have access to screen time during meals or at least one hour before bedtime.

Sharing books and playing with your children are excellent alternatives to screen time - please see section above for our recommendations. We can also signpost play sessions at children's centres and a range of other family activities in the local area - these are shared weekly in our school newsletter.

## Sickness and Absence

We want your child to attend school every day so that they do not miss out on their learning. If your child is sick and unable to attend, please telephone the school office by 9.00am to report their absence or contact us via the Arbor App. If you are unsure please send your child to school and let us know, we can call you if they feel worse during the day. Often children feel better when they get to school and see their friends.

## Holidays

**Please do not take holiday during term time. Absence for holidays cannot be authorised. If you take your child on holiday during term time you risk losing their place in school.**

## How We Keep In Touch:

*about your child's development*

- Through 'Stay and Play' where you are able to discuss your child's progress and share your experiences.

- You can request to meet your child's teacher or arrange a phone call at a convenient time.
- Parents / carers are invited to Pupil and Parent Review Meetings twice a year in November and February where we will discuss your child's progress in depth. You will receive a letter about making an appointment nearer the time.

### *about the school*

- Weekly newsletters with news and information are sent out via email to families every Friday - please check your email weekly for these or ask in the office if you would like a paper copy.
- General information and news can be found on the school website.
- Our school and class Bluesky feeds also are a good source of information about what is going on in school – links to these can be found on the school website.

## Uniform

At Snowfields and Tower Bridge, children wear navy blue jumpers or cardigans, white shirts and grey trousers, shorts, skirts or blue and white dresses. At Robert Browning, children wear red jumpers or cardigans, white shirts and grey trousers, shorts, skirts or red and white dresses.

Please make sure your child wears sensible shoes to school. They will be running, riding bikes and exploring the climbing frames so need to be able to do this is footwear that is suitable and safe!

Sweatshirts with the school logo can be purchased online, however this is not essential. Any uniform in the right colour is acceptable. Please use the following website and search for the school you require <https://price-buckland.co.uk/>

Children should not wear jewellery to school. However, if your child has pierced ears, they may wear small studs only. Watches are allowed.

Please help your child to become independent with their own dressing (this is a prime area of learning in the curriculum). Send them to school in trousers or skirts that they can easily undo by themselves to go to the toilet. Teach them how to fasten their coat or jacket. Avoid laces on shoes until your child is able to tie these, this also applies to their P.E shoes.

**Please ensure that all clothes are named so that they do not get lost.**

## Allergies and Health

We will ask you about any health conditions that your child has, such as asthma, as well as any food allergies. Please keep us updated if this changes during the year. We are not allowed to give medicine to children at school, with the exception of inhalers and other prescribed medicines. These must be labelled with the child's name and a form completed.

## First Aid at school



We have a qualified first aider at school with the children at all times. If children have a serious accident anywhere on the body or any type of bang to the head we will inform you by telephone. Please make sure your contact information is kept up to date by letting a member of staff know. It is school policy to contact you if your child has a bang above the shoulder. These bangs are not always serious but even so we will phone you to let you know. Please be understanding that small children do have bumps and bangs and talk to us if you have any concerns.

## **Trips and Visits**

When they are settled, the children go on many walks and visits in the local area. We will ask you to sign a general consent form at the enrolment meeting. These local walks will link to the topic that the children are learning about.

The children also go on planned trips involving public transport. When these take place we will write to you and let you know. We will also ask for an annual donation towards these trips.

## **Donations**

From time to time we will ask you to make donations to school to help us with our fun activities. The children learn a lot through regular cooking activities. We ask you to donate money towards ingredients, usually £1 per half term. We also ask for donations such as empty boxes for our model making activities. Please look at the class notice boards to see what you can donate to help out!

## **Assemblies and Performances**

Reception and Nursery perform a winter concert at the end of the Autumn term and at the end of the year there will be a 'Sunshine class' celebration of learning performance to recognise all that the children have achieved. We will let you know when these will take place. We will also let you know if there are any other special events that you can become involved with such as our Summer Fair or Sports Day through our newsletter.

## **Healthy Start Scheme**

What is Healthy Start?

If you're more than 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, you may be entitled to get help to buy healthy food and milk.

If you're eligible, you'll be sent a Healthy Start card with money on it that you can use in some UK shops. We'll add your benefit onto this card every 4 weeks.

You can use your card to buy:

- plain liquid cow's milk
- fresh, frozen, and tinned fruit and vegetables
- fresh, dried, and tinned pulses
- infant formula milk based on cow's milk

You can also use your card to collect:

- Healthy Start vitamins – these support you during pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Vitamin drops for babies and young children – these are suitable from birth to 4 years old

<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk/>



*This booklet has been written to help make starting school a happy event for you and your child. This will be one of the first big steps in your child's life and with your support we aim to make it as happy as possible. It is important that a positive partnership between parents/guardians and teachers is fostered at this early stage. We believe that your child will benefit from this co-operation between home and school.*

*We aim to provide the highest quality education in the EYFS through a curriculum, which is tailored to their developmental needs. We hope that this booklet will answer any questions you may have about the Foundation Stage, but if you have any further queries, please see a member of staff.*