



**Dream Big, Aim High
& Make a Difference**



Reception 2026/27 Parent Information

School Office: 01252 876106
Email: adminoffice@potleyhill.hants.sch.uk

Website: www.potleyhill.hants.sch.uk

Welcome to Potley Hill Primary School. The following information aims to support you as your child transitions into school and completes their Reception year.

Start Date

Children will be split into 2 groups in order to start their first day at Potley Hill. You will be notified by email to tell you which group your child will be in and their start date.

Group 1 – start on Wednesday 9th September for a 'normal' school day - 8.40am until 3.20pm.

Group 2 – start on Thursday 10th September (along with group 1) for a 'normal' school day – 8.40am until 3.20pm.

The classroom door opens every day at 8.40am and they can be dropped off any time between 8.40am and 8.50am, when the register is taken. We expect all children to be punctual so please leave plenty of time to get them into class.

Collection from the classroom door is at 3.20pm daily. Until the end of September, we are offering parents a pick up window from 3.10pm until 3.20pm, which in the early days of starting school will allow a slower pick up routine and allow more time for the adults in the classroom to hand over any important information to you regarding your child if necessary. **From the start of October, collection will be at 3.20pm.** All parents are asked to complete a form identifying the end of the day collection arrangements for their child. Parents may nominate more than one person who has permission to collect their child.

If your child is being collected by someone other than those named on the above form, you will need to inform the class teacher. If notification is not received, we will not allow your child to go until we have spoken to you. This procedure is put in place for your child's safety. In an emergency, you may telephone the school office to inform them of an alternative collection arrangement.



If you require supervision of your child/ren before/after the school day, our wrap-around-care provider is Kidz R Us. The provision is offered on school site with Breakfast Club starting from 7.30am and After-School Club lasting until 6.00pm. Please see the leaflet in your pack for further details.

Book Bags/Rucksacks



You will need to purchase a blue Potley Hill book bag or rucksack for your child from our uniform providers. This needs to be in school every day.

Inside your child's bag should be the following items:

- Up to 2 reading books to support learning (1 x phonics books and 1 x library book)
- Phonics sound mat
- Reading record book

All of these will be explained to parents/carers before we start to use them in September. We also ask for each child to have spare underwear and socks stored in their book bags daily in case of any accidents.

PE Bags

PE bags can be purchased from either of our uniform providers and should match the colour team which children are put into on entry into Reception. Please ensure that your child's PE kit is in school all week. **Every item**, including plimsolls, needs to be named. Although we have timetabled PE sessions, there may be other times that children need their PE kits. We will let you know PE days in September.

The following should be in their PE bags at all times:

- Navy PE T-shirt with Potley Hill logo
- Navy Shorts
- Plimsolls
- Socks (for girls wearing tights in the winter)
- Long Dark tracksuit trousers (for outside activities in winter)
- Optional navy sweatshirt or school jumper for cold weather



We ask that children **do not** wear earrings on PE days. We cannot remove earrings for children so please teach them how to do this themselves in case they need to be removed at any other time. Please provide a named container to keep the earrings in.

Children will be expected to undress and dress themselves for PE independently. For this reason, please choose shirts/dresses that are easy for the children to undo and please practise this at home.

PE bags are brought home every Friday by your child so that PE kits can be washed and returned to school on Monday.

Wellington Boots and Puddle Suits

Please provide a pair of named wellington boots and a named puddle suit or other waterproof for your child to be kept at school. In Reception, lots of learning takes place outdoors and in all-weather types. Children do love to go out and play in the school grounds, but this will only be possible if your child has wellingtons and some form of waterproof in school.

Uniform

The school uniform policy is available via the school website, ([Uniform Policy](#)) and we pride ourselves on a smart appearance and ask for your support in achieving this. School uniform with the Potley Hill motif is available from;

Brenda's Schoolwear, 130 Frimley Road, Camberley GU15 2QN.

Telephone: 01276 469697 or <https://www.brendas.co.uk/collections/potley-hill>

Brenda's offer parents the option of online shopping, usually with next day delivery subject to stock, for a single rate delivery charge.

My Clothing at <https://myclothing.com/potley-hill-primary-school/17291.school> for home delivery

Alternatively, the Potley Hill PTA run a used uniform shop <https://app.uniformd.co.uk/items/163>



Water & Healthy Snacks

Please ensure that your child has a named bottle of fresh water in school every day. Children's behaviour and concentration will be much better if they have access to drinking water on a regular basis.

The bottle needs to be easy for your child to open and drink from; however, it needs to have a valve which stops the water leaking if the bottle is laid on its side.

Your child will receive a FREE piece of seasonal fruit or vegetable every day at school. If your child does not like a particular food, they will be encouraged to try a little bit. Children's taste buds are ever changing, and it can take up to 15 tastes to learn to like a food. Please make us aware if your child has any allergies.

Lunch

Your child has a choice of school dinners that need to be ordered online via the STIR foods app or you can choose to send your child in with a packed lunch from home.



A copy of the school dinner menu is included in the weekly bulletin each Friday. There are 3 or 4 meal choices each day and the menu rotates on a 3-weekly cycle. These are ordered online via the Swift Kitchen App (sign in sheets will be provided).

School dinners are currently free for all children in Reception to Year 2 and provide a nutritionally balanced hot meal. This is known as **Universal Free School Meals**. Alternatively you can provide your child with a packed lunch – these should also be 'healthy' and avoid chocolate covered items, high-sugar items, sweets of any kind and nuts (this includes chocolate spreads which contain nuts). Children are allowed a soft drink to have with their lunch but no fizzy drinks. Please also cut up large items into manageable pieces and ensure that the lunch bag/box is named.

A form will be shared with new parents for completion should your child need an 'Allergen Free' menu choice, this form will then need to be emailed to STIR FOOD info@stirfood.co.uk, we ask that you also copy in the school using the email adminoffice@potleyhill.hants.sch.uk to ensure the school is also aware of any allergies. Please note, you will need to provide medical evidence to Stir of your child's food allergy/intolerance for Stir Foods to provide an Allergen Free Menu.

Lunchtime Supervisors are on hand to help children whenever necessary. The Reception staff will also support the children when they first go into the dinner hall.

We never throw any food away from lunchboxes, anything not eaten will be left in your child's lunch box as this ensures that you are aware of what your child is eating.

YOUR CHILD IN SCHOOL

Curriculum

We offer all children a curriculum which is broad, balanced and differentiated. We believe that children achieve their best in an atmosphere of encouragement, where they feel valued and their individual strengths are recognised and developed. We enable pupils to become self-reliant and self-motivated, showing respect and consideration for others and equip them with skills and attitudes which they will need for life-long learning.

In the Reception year the children follow The Early Years Framework, revised in 2021. For further information on the 7 prime areas covered see our EYFS Policy which can be found on our website.

Class Reading

Children will have a guided group reading session three times a week. They will read the group book in school three times, focusing on a different skill each time (phonics, fluency and speed). This text will then come home to share with an adult, as they will already be confident in the phonetical decoding, so can build self-confidence, speed and comprehension.

Children will also read sounds and words during their daily phonics sessions.

The class teacher will aim to listen to each child individually at least read once a week, and other adults in the class may listen to them read too. This is supported by at least four weekly home reads.

Children will also share one - or several - books as a whole class each day, choosing from a wide range of engaging narratives, poetry and non-fiction. These may also come from the 50 Recommended Reading List, to support their familiarity with these books.



Library Books



A few weeks into the Autumn term, the children will begin to visit the School Library on a regular basis. In Reception, the library books are for you to read and enjoy with your child. Please ensure the library books are in their book bag on library day. We will let you know which day this will be on in September.

Your child will have been working very hard to learn to read and it is also important for them to listen to you read a story. This can build their enthusiasm for books and allows them to listen to the expressions that you use whilst reading.

Mathematical Understanding

We follow a mastery approach to learning at Potley Hill and from the very start of Year R children will begin the Mastering Number at KS1 programme. The aim in Maths sessions is to secure firm foundations in the development of good number sense for all children. You will be invited to a parent workshop to support you with strategies to enable you to develop good a number sense and mathematical understanding with your child at home.

Assessment

In the first 6 weeks of Reception, 'Baseline' assessments will be carried out and the outcome of these assessments will be shared with parents at the first parents evening. Throughout the Reception year, children are continually assessed in the prime and specific areas and we will let parents know whether or not they have met expected standards against each of the criteria at the end of the year.

Outdoor Learning

The children have the opportunity to participate in outdoor learning sessions each Monday morning, which are run by Ms Ward. On outdoor learning days, the children are asked to wear old clothes and suitable footwear, as these sessions take place in all weathers. Pupils are asked to bring their school uniform to school in a bag to change back into after these sessions.

School Productions and Class Assemblies

All the children in Reception will perform in a Christmas production and there will be a further opportunity to take part in a class assembly, to which parents are invited. You may be asked to provide a specific costume which will need to be brought into school in a bag clearly labelled with your child's name.

Illness

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, please contact the school office before 9am by telephone 01252 876106, email absence@potleyhill.hants.sch.uk or in person on the first day of absence and then update school every subsequent day that your child is absent until their return.



If your child has been ill with a sickness bug/diarrhoea, at least 48 hours needs to have passed **after the last episode of illness** before they should return to school. There may be some exceptions to this such as irritable bowel syndrome or illness caused by allergies.

If your child is unwell during the day and we feel that they need to go home, we will contact you immediately on the contact numbers that you have given the school office. It is very important that you keep us up to date with any changes to your contact details by contacting the school office directly.

Please complete if your child has any medical issues/allergies directly on Arbor under the medical section. Also, please remember to let the school office know of any medical changes so that your child's records can be updated straight away.

We are able to administer 'prescribed medicine', such as antibiotics and asthma medication, if your child requires this during the school day. Prescribed medicines can **only** be administered if they have the pharmacists label on them. These will need to be taken to the school office by an adult where you will need to complete a form detailing the prescribed medicine and required dosage. The medicine will be kept in a fridge in the school office if required and an adult will need to collect at the end of each day or if for long term use, such as an inhaler, it is kept securely in the classroom.

We are also able to provide Paracetamol suspension and Antihistamine syrup, with parents' permission, for urgent use when required (consent given via Arbor). However, if you know that your child is likely to need paracetamol/antihistamine during the day, please supply school with this.

Holidays during Term Time

Please note that holidays during term time are NOT usually authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances do not include holiday taken in term time due to cost. There are 13 weeks of holiday built into the academic year and parent/carers are encouraged to plan any holidays within these times. It is Hampshire County Council's policy to issue Penalty Notices to families where children have taken unauthorised leave of 10 sessions or more (5 days) in any 100 day period; these days do not have to be consecutive. Non-payment of Penalty Notices leads to a prosecution unless they have been issued incorrectly. The school does not benefit in any way financially from these Penalty Notices, but all schools in Hampshire follow these same procedures.

Communication

Each child will also be given a Seesaw account when they start school. This is an online resource that allows class teachers to share information with parents, e.g. special events, things to remember, photos from within class. Drop off and pick up times are very busy and staff may not always be available to talk. If you would like to speak to the class teacher or any other member of staff, please contact the school office either by telephone on 01252 876106, or by email to adminoffice@potelyhill.hants.sch.uk and your request will be passed on or a meeting arranged with the class teacher.

We use **Arbor** emails to communicate with parents regarding everyday events such as school trips and clubs, other letters, information and reminders between Bulletins.

Bulletins are sent out every Friday to share school news, events and diary dates with you. This will be sent via Arbor and copies can also be found on the school website.

Telephone Calls are used when we need to talk to parents directly and immediately.

Seesaw (App) is also used by teachers to regularly communicate with parents/carers and children. Everyday messages and information will appear here, as well as homework.

BoomReader (App) is used by parents to communicate their child's reading pattern to the class teacher.

Emotional Health and Wellbeing



Your child's emotional health and wellbeing are paramount. We will endeavour to settle them into school as quickly as possible and support them with any wobbles in the morning. It is often the case that leaving mum or dad is the trickiest time of the day for young children (and sometimes parents too)! We recommend that you keep this time short, give some lovely kisses and cuddles – and then depart. This is not to be unkind, but to help the child move on to the activities of the day quickly and refocus their attention. In the vast majority of situations, children very quickly turn around any upset and are smiling and happy after only a few minutes. For this reason, we will usually give you a quick ring to

confirm they are settled if there are any issues with drop off in the morning – we do not want parents/carers to be worrying all day either! We also run a full programme of PSHE (Personal, Social & Health Education). This includes aspects of mindfulness and children also participate in sessions designed to help them to regulate their emotions such as peer-on-peer massage sessions.

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Reading Books

At school we teach children to read through daily phonics lessons using 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds' phonics scheme. Your child will be reading books from the Collins Big Cat reading scheme that runs alongside the phonics we are teaching. Teachers in the class will provide each child with a text closely linked to the stage being taught at school.

To begin with, your child will bring home a 'lilac' book which may not contain any words, please talk about the pictures and encourage your child to tell you the story in their own words. All children learn at a different pace and some children may find this a little difficult at first.

When your child reads their reading book at home, you will be asked to log this into your child's reading record. When your child reads in school, you will see a comment from staff or another adult. You will also need to write a comment when your child reads at home each day. A record of positive comments and any observations or concerns regarding their reading will help us work together to develop your child's reading skills. Children are expected to read at home a **minimum** of 4 times a week. Each day of reading counts towards this challenge, rather than each book.

Alongside this, you will receive a card with pictures of our 50 recommended reads. As a school we have a 50 must reads challenge for each year group.

As well as a phonics book, children will also be given a library book to read for pleasure. The aim is not for the children to be able to read this to you, but for you to enjoy sharing the story with your child.

Here are some ways that you could discuss the book with your child:

- Encourage them to tell you what is happening in the picture.
- Ask them 'open' questions, beginning with words such as Why? Where? What? and How? This will encourage them to answer using full sentences.
- Ask them to tell you the colour of something in the picture, or how many of an item there might be.

'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds' phonics scheme

 s ss	 t tt	 p pp	 n nn	 m mm	 d dd	 g gg	 c k ck cc	 r rr
 h	 b bb	 f ff	 l ll	 j	 v vv	 w	 x	 y
 z zz s	 qu	 ch	 sh	 th	 ng	 nk		
 a	 e	 i	 o	 u				

By using picture symbols with letters and sounds, your child will begin to learn their initial sounds. These will be sent home for you to practise. Please encourage your child to practise the sound as it is sent home. As each new sound is introduced, a new flash card will be sent home. After a short time, they will be able to use these sounds to build words at home. At this stage, please only use the letter sound, not the letter name.

Each child will also receive a set of high frequency and tricky words on cards (these will match the lists we ask you to work on – the lists will be stuck in the front of children's reading records). These can be used for matching games like pairs or snap and creating short sentences. Please practise the words and sounds with your child daily in addition to looking at their reading book.

If you have any worries about your child's reading, please do not hesitate to speak to one of the Reception team.

Tips on hearing your child read



As parents, you are your child's most influential teacher with an important part to play in helping your child to learn to read. Here are some suggestions on how you can make this a positive experience:

1. Choose a quiet time

Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.

2. Make reading enjoyable

Make reading an enjoyable experience. Sit with your child. Try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. If your child loses interest, then do something else.

3. Maintain the flow

If your child mispronounces a word, do not interrupt immediately. Instead, allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of the letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.

4. Be positive

If your child says something nearly right to start with, that is fine. Don't say 'No. That's wrong,' but 'Let's read it together' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.

5. **Success is the key**

Parents anxious for a child to progress can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect to the one they are wanting. Remember 'Nothing succeeds like success'. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to easier books. Struggling with a book with many unknown words is pointless. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

6. **Visit the Library**

Encourage your child to use the public library regularly.

7. **Regular Practice**

Try and read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best. Teachers have limited time to help your child with reading.

8. **Talk about the books**

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end, and their favourite part. You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.

9. **Variety is important**

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials e.g. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazine, poems and information books.

Please remember that we have an open-door policy and everyone at Potley Hill Primary School is here to support your child in every way as they start their school journey. If you have any questions regarding information found within this booklet or any other queries, then please do not hesitate to contact the School Office.



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