BILTON GRANGE

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

RECEPTION PARENTS' HANDBOOK 2026-2027

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WELCOME TO RECEPTION!

Whether you are transitioning from The Nest, or from an external setting, starting in Reception will always feel quite special. This is the start of your child's formal schooling journey, and with us at Bilton Grange, we really hope that their journey will be happy, successful and full of adventures! It is always worthwhile, at the start of any academic year, reminding parents of our mission statement and aims at Bilton Grange. These aims underpin our curriculum design and decision making.

Our Mission

To provide a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment in which children can discover their talents, develop their potential, contribute to the community and lead happy, fulfilled lives.

Our Aims

- To ensure children feel happy, safe and confident and see every school day as an adventure
- To provide a truly outstanding educational experience for all pupils that fosters excellence, breadth, a love of learning and a sense of fun
- To develop children with strong moral and intellectual character which is informed by spirituality, shaped by practice and celebrated by community
- To be a community which promotes equity, diversity and inclusion in a culture of respect and acknowledgement where each child is valued for what he or she can offer
- To encourage minds that are global in their outlook, resilient, reflective and willing to contribute to the world around them

Starting a new academic year (and maybe even a new school) can be an exciting but sometimes daunting time for parents and pupils alike. We have created this booklet to help answer some of your questions and we hope that the information will make for a smooth transition, whilst not overloading you with facts.

If there is anything else you need to know or there is something you wish to discuss, please contact the Pre-Prep secretary; we will always do our best to help.

Mrs Katie Gedye
Assistant Head Pre-Prep

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

The Headmaster is Mr Gareth Jones (hmpa@biltongrange.co.uk)
The Assistant Head Pre-Prep is Mrs Katie Gedye (kg@biltongrange.co.uk)

School Address: Bilton Grange Preparatory School, Dunchurch, Rugby, CV22 6QU

Useful Contact Details		
Pre-Prep Secretary (Pauline Timms)	01788 810 287	pti@biltongrange.co.uk
Main Reception	01788 810 217	bgsec@biltongrange.co.uk
Bursary	01788 818 244	billing@biltongrange.co.uk
Headmaster's PA (Mrs Julie Campbell)	01788 818 208	hmpa@biltongrange.co.uk
School Nurse (Mrs Cathy Gunn)	01788 818 226	cjg@biltongrange.co.uk

YEAR GROUP STRUCTURE

Reception is split into 2 classes, each led by a form teacher:

Class Names	Form Teacher	Contact Details	Teaching Assistants
Dove	Mrs Hickman	axh@biltongrange.co.uk	Mrs Douglas Mrs England
Lark	Miss Nicholson	mln@biltongrange.co.uk	

The Pre-Prep includes Nest (Pre-School) to Year 3. Once children leave the Pre-Prep, they move over to Prep, transitioning through the following year groups: Juniors (Year 4), Thirds (Year 5), Fourths (Year 6), Fifths (Year 7) and the Sixth Form (Year 8).

TERM TERMINOLOGY!

Term	Time of year
Advent Term	September to December
Lent Term	January to March
Trinity Term	April to June/July

All term dates can be found in the termly calendar, and for the year ahead, on the School website.

MEET THE TEAM – LEADERSHIP, TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF

Katie Gedye
Assistant Head Pre-Prep

Gareth Jones
Headmaster

Pauline Timms
Pre-Prep Secretary

Cathy Gunn
School Nurse

Mireille Everton
Assistant Head Pastoral

Nicola Sodhi
Assistant Head Teaching and Learning

Maja Nicolson
Reception Form Teacher

Arabella Hickman
Reception Form Teacher

Julieann Hallissey
Head of Learning Development and SENDCo

Angela Douglas
Teaching Assistant

Jennifer England
Teaching Assistant

Kirsty Smith
Swimming teacher

Michelle Neale
Den Coordinator (After School Care)

Lucy Lee
Den Assistant

Dani de Souza
Den Assistant

SPECIALIST SUBJECT TEACHERS

Kirsten Gray
Head of Pre-Prep Music

Alex Carlile
Art and Reception Teacher

Shirley McLean
Librarian

STRUCTURE OF THE DAY (MONDAY TO FRIDAY)

7.30 am – 8.00 am	Breakfast Club (chargeable)
8.00 am – 8.20 am	Early Birds Club
8.20 am – 8.45 am	Form period
8.45 am	Latest arrival and registration
9.00 am – 3.30 pm	Daily timetable of lessons and breaks
3.30 pm	Collection for Reception children not staying for Den
3.30 pm – 5.00 pm	Den – after school session 1 (chargeable from 4.00 pm)
5.00 pm – 6.00 pm	Den – after School session 2 – (chargeable, including Supper).

For those with siblings in Prep, these children may be escorted to the gallery at 6pm, for ease of collection.

DROP OFFS AND PICK UPS

Drop off in the morning is at the Reception classroom doors (8.20 am – 8.45 am). You will be able to come into the cloakroom area before saying goodbye. The Form Teacher and Teaching assistants will be there to meet and greet and support your child to come happily into the classroom. It is perfectly normal for children to be a little wobbly at drop off time. Generally, they are quick to settle once in and we will always let you know if there is anything to be concerned about.

At pick up time (3.30 pm), Parents again collect from the classroom doors. This is usually a good time for some information sharing about your child's day. Please do always ask if you would like more time with your child's Form Teacher, as a meeting can easily be arranged.

The morning Form period (8.20 am – 8.45 am) is an important time, where pupils and staff can work together prior to the start of lessons, and so we do encourage our pupils to arrive for this, if it is possible.

WRAP AROUND CARE

Breakfast Club (7.30 am – 8.00 am)
Breakfast is eaten in the Pre-Prep, usually consisting of toast, cereal and yogurt. This is bookable in advance via Pauline Timms and a charge will apply. Please give a minimum of 24 hours' notice for booking or cancellation. Please arrive prior to 7.45 am if you would like your child to eat breakfast.

Early Birds (8.00 am – 8.20 am)
All children have the option of arriving from 8.00 am, where they are supervised, either outside or in The Den. There is no charge for this service and you do not need to book in.

After School Activities
Generally, after school activities begin from Year 1. We do offer an optional swimming session to Reception children, which is usually held after school on a Tuesday (to be confirmed). There is no cost for this activity, but children do need to be accompanied by an adult. It is a play based, fun and relaxed session where our swimming staff support children and parents in the pool to develop swimming technique and water confidence. Communications are sent, regarding this, after the start of the Advent Term, once children have settled in.

The Den – After School Care (3.30 pm – 6.00 pm)
After school, children can transfer to the 'Den' where care is offered, with additional charges beginning at 4.00 pm, until 6.00 pm. The Den is a supervised play session outside, if the weather allows, and if we are inside, various activities are provided, such as arts and crafts, Lego and small world. All children staying from 5.00 pm will be given a two-course hot cooked tea, the menu for which is displayed on the board in the foyer. If you wish, your child may be brought over to the Main School Reception at 6.00 pm, so that you can collect at the same time, and location, as an older sibling. After School care should be booked in advance with the Pre-Prep Secretary, or by signing up on the lists held in the Foyer. If you require last minute after school care, please speak directly with Pauline Timms. If you are needing to contact The Den after school, and the main switchboards are not available, the direct dial number is 07502 549130.

EXEATS

During each term, you will usually find two Exeat weekends. These are periods where the whole school closes on a Friday (either at lunchtime or after lessons finish), usually returning on a Monday morning. They are designed into the calendar of busy boarding schools, to give opportunities for breaks in the term for boarders and boarding staff. The dates are published in advance in the school calendar, and arrangements for afternoon care, if there are no lessons, are published in the Weeks Ahead mailing.

ATTENDANCE

Pre-planned absence requests should be made, in writing, to the Assistant Head Pre-Prep or directly to the Headmaster. Requests for absences within the term time for holidays etc will only be approved in exceptional circumstances. To help you plan, term dates are published well in advance on the calendar. Absences on the day, due to illness, should be notified to the Pre-Prep Secretary. If you think you may be late collecting your child, please contact the school so that supervision arrangements can be made and so that we can reassure your child, who will understandably be worried if you are not there on time.

A MAP OF KEY LOCATIONS ON SITE

PASTORAL CARE

Ensuring that our children are secure and happy each day is our primary concern. When children feel truly known — their interests, their worries, their family life and their friendships — they are more successful learners. Our pastoral care system is built on deep knowledge of each individual child, nurtured through strong, trusting relationships between children, staff and families. If your child is ever worried or unhappy about any aspect of school life, please liaise with the class teacher or Mrs Gedye so that we can offer reassurance, help and support.

Pre-Prep Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions

We have three rules in the Pre-Prep which we ask all our children to know and abide by. These are:

- **Be Safe** – I will look after myself and others, following appropriate instructions from adults.
- **Be Kind** – I will use kind words and kind hands to those around me, listen and talk politely to adults, respecting our school and other people's possessions.
- **Be Ready to Learn** – I will help myself and others by looking smart, being in the right place, with the right equipment and ready to listen and complete my work.

These rules help to create a safe and happy environment where exemplary behaviour enables all children to feel secure, respected and ready to learn effectively.

There are a number of ways that we recognise good behaviour and effort. In The Reception, these include:

- Stickers and verbal praise which is shared, in the moment with the child, and regularly with home
- 'The Super Skills' Cup – awarded to one child each week for displaying a particular Super Skill. The child gets to keep the cup for a week and a certificate and handwritten note goes home.
- 'Marbles in a jar' – children are awarded marbles for their collective jar, for working collaboratively at tasks such as tidying up and lining up, which leads to reward once it is full.

We always keep our focus on positive behaviours, recognising those who are doing the right thing as a way to model behaviour to others. Our approach to behaviour management is rooted in **restorative and relational practice**: when behaviour is not right, we prioritise repairing relationships and building understanding. At the right moment, we reflect calmly with the child about what happened and why, encouraging them to consider how their behaviour may have affected others and, where appropriate, to make a meaningful apology. All adults use consistent language and approaches across the team.

Underpinning our pastoral work are two dedicated wellbeing programmes. Through **Zones of Regulation**, children develop the vocabulary and self-awareness to identify and manage their emotions. **My Happy Mind** further supports children in understanding how their brain works, building habits of happiness, resilience and positive thinking from the very earliest stage of their school journey.

Strong partnerships with parents are at the heart of everything we do, ensuring consistency between home and school in supporting children's behaviour and emotional wellbeing. The Reception team will chat with you regularly and will always share anything you need to know — and please do tell us if something has happened at home, as this helps us offer the right support at the right time.

THE PRE-PREP ‘SUPER SKILLS’

Our Super Skills system is the mechanism by which we develop and encourage key learning and behaviour dispositions in our pupils. By relating each disposition to a character, they become more real and relatable for the children. The names and characteristics of our Super Skills Squad are very much part of our everyday praise vocabulary, used by staff and used by the children with their peers. The ‘Super Skills’ system in the Pre-Prep links and feeds into the Bilton Grange Learner Profile in the Prep.

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PARENTS AS PARTNERS

The trusted relationships that we build with families are just as important as those we build with the children. We like to think of us as a school, alongside you as parents, as the base of a triangle, together supporting your child at the top. The most effective care and education will come from a collaborative approach, where a shared ethos is understood and followed, with the best interests of your child at its heart. There are several ways in which we communicate with you as parents, from verbal handovers, parent meetings and reports to regular Tapestry observations and posts. Communication should be two-way, and so we would encourage you to let us know of successes and achievements at home and of family events and celebrations. Please tell us also, if something has happened in your child’s life at home, or if they are just having a difficult morning – in Reception, we call this ‘Handle with Care’ – as this will help us to provide appropriate support.

FRIENDS AT BILTON GRANGE (FAB) PARENTS ASSOCIATION

FAB is an informal and voluntary committee of parents from all year groups across the school. All parents can be part of FAB and we hope that everyone feels welcome to participate in any way – from helping out at book fairs, digging in the Organic Garden, creating flyers for events or just socialising at FAB events.

Fab Committee members act as a point of contact for the other parents in their year groups. In particular, they provide a warm welcome to parents who are new to the school. Committee members also liaise with staff, present and past pupils and local residents and businesses. They play an important role within the life of the school and within the local community. The FAB committee can be contacted on FAB@biltongrange.co.uk.

THE BG BUGLE

The Bugle is a weekly newsletter sent out by the school at the end of each week. It is a crucial read, as it not only celebrates successes and the life of the school, but also highlights upcoming events and news.

SECTIONS

All children from Year 1 upwards are organised into Sections: Oak (Green), Sycamore (Red), Cedar (Blue) and Poplar (Yellow). The children meet in their sections regularly and two Section Captains are appointed each year, from Year 3.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR CHILD FOR RECEPTION

Now that your child is entering Reception, there are a number of skills which would aid them in their day-to-day life at school. Your support with practising these elements over the summer holidays would be greatly appreciated.

- Use the toilet with increased independence, including wiping and hand washing
- Dress themselves with greater independence, practising zips and clasps.
- Practise putting on their own shoes (Velcro only please!), understanding how to put them on the right feet – we find putting half a sticker inside each can help.
- Encourage your child to eat at the table, beginning to use a knife and fork, drinking from cups, not sippy cups.
- To support your child's independence, please ensure all their clothing that can be hung up, has a loop for them to hang their clothes up. The more colourful the label, the easier it is for your child to identify their own kit.
- Gross motor activities will really support your child on the road to becoming a proficient writer; activities that strengthen core muscles include climbing (particularly trees!), balancing, ball games, yoga, painting on a large scale, gardening, chasing, catching bubbles, dancing, riding bikes etc. You can support the development of strong dexterous little fingers with playdough, doing up buttons and getting dressed, threading, cutting and manipulating toys and puzzles.

UNIFORM AND APPEARANCE

School uniform may be purchased from the suppliers' website: www.schoolblazer.com.

All items of school uniform, including footwear, should be clearly named. Separate hanging loops for waterproofs, coats and tracksuits are essential if they are to remain on the pegs.

In order to help the children look neat and tidy, polo shirts should be tucked in and socks pulled up. Long hair must be tied back as it looks smarter, is safer and helps to prevent the transmission of head lice. Short hair should be off the ears, eyes and collar. Hair bands and scrunchies should be red or navy.

Pencil cases are not required or encouraged in the Pre-Prep as all equipment is provided and they tend to take up lots of space!

All Reception children should have a bag of 'spares' in school including underwear, socks and spare shorts/skirt. The book bag, coat and water bottle should be in school every day.

Watches are only allowed once children get into Year 1, to encourage and support analogue time telling. Smart watches are not allowed in any year group at BG.

Jewellery

As a general rule, jewellery should not be worn in school. If your child has pierced ears, small studs should be worn. They may be asked to tape these over in sports lessons. Should your child wear a bracelet or necklace as a religious or cultural symbol, please let us know.

Pre-Loved Uniform Shop

FAB (Friends at Bilton Parents' Association) run a second-hand uniform shop from the Conservatory (near the Bursary building). It should be noted that it will take some time to build stock, due to our recent transition to a new uniform supplier.

Lost Property

Named items nearly always find their way back to their owners, but un-named items can be more difficult to return! Please name all items and check these regularly, because 'pen' or sticky labels can come off. Please speak to your child's Form Teacher or Pauline Timms regarding missing items.

RECEPTION UNIFORM LIST

Item	Description	Compulsory items?	Notes
School Coat	Navy Stormproof coat, crested	Y	Must be in school every day
Polo shirt	Sky cotton pique, short sleeved, crested	Y	
Shorts / Culottes / *Skirt	Mid grey	Y	No 'cargo style' pockets *Mid grey, box pleat, knee length skirts are recommended for all Reception girls
Socks	Grey socks with navy turnover (Boys) or *Navy socks (Girls)	Y	Navy socks may be ankle, knee length or tights
Jumper / Cardigan / Slipover	Navy, red trim with crest	Y	
*School Shoes	Black, smart	Y	Velcro and leather, 'school shoe' style, not trainers. No boots.
*PE Pumps	Black	Y	
*Waterproof All-in-One suit	Waterproof	Y	For Outdoor Learning
*Wellington Boots		Y	
Book Bag	Navy, crested	Y	
Scarf	Navy with red stripe		
Beanie Hat	Fleece, crested		
*Water Bottle		Y	Named, must be in school every day
Sweatshirt	Navy, crested	Y	
*Jogging Bottoms	Navy	Y	For playtimes and PE
*White polo shirt		Y	
Junior PE Shorts	Navy	Y	
*White ankle socks		Y	
Baseball cap	Navy with BG logo	Y	Compulsory for April to September
*Drawstring Linen Bag	Navy	N	For Games kit
*Trainers		Y	Children need a pair of trainers in school every day, for break times and PE lessons

*these items may be purchased from alternative suppliers

All PE kit stays at home (except joggers which are used daily). Children come into school on Tuesdays in their PE Kit.

Their PE bag (Reception children usually use the Swimming bag for this) needs to stay in school, with spare pants, socks, sweatshirt, polo shirt and shorts, in case of emergencies.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Accidents

Most of the staff in the Pre-Prep are first aid trained, with many having the full Paediatric First Aid qualification. Our on-site Nurses are on hand to advise on anything more serious. All accidents are recorded on a 'red form' and if possible, you will be asked to sign this at the end of the day. All parents will be told of the accident and any injury, either verbally or by email. Please ensure your contact details are always kept up to date.

Health

Parents are asked to keep their children at home if they are unwell and to inform the school as to the nature of the illness. Children should be kept away from school for 48 hours if they have suffered sickness or diarrhoea, and they are not able to be in school if they have a temperature (generally over 37.5).

Every parent will have completed a health form prior to their child starting school. Please let us know immediately if something changes with regards to your child's health needs.

Medicines in School

If your child needs to take medicine during the school day, you should take the medicine to the Pre-Prep Secretary. Please do not hand any medicines to the class teacher.

1. All medicines should be brought to school by the parent or person bringing the child to school (not the child).
2. All medicines must be in their original containers.
3. The person bringing in the medicine will be asked to complete and sign a form with the relevant information pertaining to that medicine.
4. No 'over-the-counter' medicines can be administered in school without consent from the Parents and in agreement with the School Nurse.
5. All medicines will be administered by the Pre-Prep Secretary.
6. Should paracetamol be required during the school day, parental permission will be sought.

Food

The children are given milk or water, and a snack at morning break time, a snack in the afternoon and a home-cooked lunch prepared on site by our chef. All children are required to bring a named water bottle to school, so that drinking water can be available at all times.

Special diets are catered for, if a request is made on the Health Form, or in writing at a later date. Children are encouraged to try a variety of foods and we encourage appropriate table manners, and the use of a knife and fork. Children are not allowed to bring packed lunches or any food into school.

We are a nut-free school. Please be aware that in order to protect children who may have severe allergies, we are unable to serve any cakes etc. that have not been made/purchased by the school catering team. You are welcome to provide birthday cakes/treats but these will be bagged up and sent home to be consumed. Ideally, these would be 'shop bought' and in their original packaging.

Menus are sent out to parents at the start of each term.

ACADEMIC MATTERS – THE RECEPTION CURRICULUM

The Early Years' Foundation Stage

The planning for Reception follows the Early Years Foundation Stage Guidance (EYFS). However, our curriculum goes significantly beyond the statutory framework. Rooted in a belief that children learn best when they are curious, engaged and inspired, we offer a broad, enquiry-based and language-rich curriculum that is responsive to children's own interests and shaped by high-quality teaching. Specialist provision in art and music enriches children's creative development, whilst our commitment to outdoor learning ensures that the natural environment is embraced as a powerful and regular context for discovery.

The 4 principles of the EYFS are:

- every child is a **unique child**, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- children learn to be strong and independent through **positive relationships**.
- children learn and develop well in **enabling environments with teaching and support from adults**, who respond to their individual interests and needs and help them to build their learning over time. Children benefit from a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and/or carers.
- importance of learning and development. Children develop and learn at different rates.

These 4 principles are set out to ensure effective practice in the care, development and learning of young children.

We recognise that children develop and learn at different rates, and we aim to guide each child so that they make progress at their own individual pace.

Children in Reception experience a broad curriculum which covers the seven areas of learning and development, with our key focus being on the three prime areas:

Three Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Four Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The children are supported by their Form Teachers to become active learners. They have opportunities to explore, make decisions and work together with their peers. These experiences are observed by the children's Form Teacher informing future plans for the individual child, as they continue their learning journey.

Our planning very much seeks to meet the individual needs, interests and stages of development of each child in our care. We use Tapestry as the vehicle for recording thorough teacher observations and we use this information to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for each child.

During each child's time in The Nest and in Reception, the activities they will be undertaking will contribute to their long term achievement of the Early Learning Goals. The statutory Early Learning Goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of their Reception year. Some children will have exceeded the goals and other children will be working towards some or all of the goals. The Early Learning Goals prepare the children for work on the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1.

More information on the EYFS can be found at https://foundationyears.org.uk/eyfs-statutory-framework/

We also suggest ways for you to help your child at home and to work together with us as partners towards your child's development.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Children's personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development. Underpinning their personal development are the important attachments that shape their social world. Strong, warm and supportive relationships with adults, enable children to learn how to understand their own feelings and those of others. Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self, set themselves simple goals, have confidence in their own abilities, to persist and wait for what they want and direct attention as necessary. Through adult modelling and guidance, they will learn how to look after their bodies, including healthy eating, and manage personal needs independently. Through supported interaction with other children, they learn how to make good friendships, co-operate and resolve conflicts peaceably. These attributes will provide a secure platform from which children can achieve at school and in later life.

How you can help:

- Setting a routine and discussing that, with your child can really help reduce anxiety in young children, helping them to understand the structure of their day and predicting what will come next;
- Role model and praise positive behaviours; this is usually much more effective than highlighting unwanted behaviours
- Help your child to recognise their feelings and to learn the words to label them e.g. 'I can see you are feeling sad because you can't find your toy, let's see if a cuddle will help and then we can look for it together.'
- Play activities where you take it in turns, starting with simple activities and then building to turn taking dice games.
- Encourage independence wherever possible; self-feeding with a fork and then knife and fork, taking a coat on and off, and getting dressed are all skills that children should be encouraged and supported to develop.

Communication and Language

This area is divided into two key learning goals;

1. Listening, Attention and Understanding, and
2. Speaking.

How you can help:

- Talk to you child, about a variety of topics and during your real-life experiences, ask them questions and encourage them to ask you questions too. Use varied vocabulary.
- Help your child to try to write lists and letters and to enjoy mark making in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons
- Let your child see that you enjoy writing – tell him/her what the words say. Look for print in the every day environment.
- Encourage your child to make up his/her own stories, and enjoy making up stories together
- Read lots of storybooks, to and with your child. Do not worry about re-reading favourite stories over and over again!
- Encourage your child to hold the books, turn the pages and pretend that they are reading the stories using pictures to remind them
- Enjoy songs, nursery rhymes and poems too!
- These activity cards have some lovely ideas: Talking Time activity cards

Physical Development

This area is concerned with fine motor co-ordination (such as pencil, brush and cutting skills) and gross motor development – using outdoor equipment and sufficiently challenging climbing and play equipment with confidence, control and a concern for safety.

How you can help:
The Department of Health recommends at least three hours a day of physical activity across the day for children in the Early Years, so any physical activity you choose will be good – every movement counts!

- Create lots of opportunities for outdoor play or indoor soft play: helping your child to balance, climb, run freely and play ball games with adults and other children. Climbing etc in a natural environment often provides more challenge!
- Enjoy lots of action rhymes – join in yourself to show the movements and for extra fun!
- Cook together and make models: these are good ways to explore and use different kinds of materials and equipment.
- Fine motor play such as threading, using pincers, pegs, tweezers and playing with play dough are all good.

Literacy, Phonics and Reading

Phonic skills and reading strategies are taught as part of the daily language programme. Each child also has regular one-to-one adult contact where reading skills are practised and developed.

We encourage our parents to share in this process. Indeed, experience shows that, when daily reading is part of home, as well as school life, children's progress in this area is accelerated. Each child will be given the opportunity to bring home a book each day (this begins with bringing home sound and blending cards in Reception). Parents are encouraged to share this book with their child and help him/her to read it. Strong home/school links are something we are very proud of at Bilton Grange and the teachers are always happy to discuss the reading programme with any parent who wishes.

Throughout the Pre-Prep we use Read, Write, Inc. as the foundation for our phonics teaching. It is a synthetic phonics programme – synthetic phonics being the ability to convert a letter or letter group into sounds that are then blended together in a word.

As soon as each set of letters is introduced, children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to blend and sound out words. For example, they will learn to blend the sounds s-a-t to make the word sat. They will also start learning to segment words. For example, they might be asked to find the letter sounds that make the word tap from a small selection of magnetic letters. Children will also be introduced to 'tricky words', which are not fully decodable.

They learn to write the letters and letter groups and progress to write words by saying the sounds that make up the word, in the correct order.

To help your child you need to make sure you use 'pure' sounds (ie 'c' 'a' 't' rather than 'cuh' 'a' tuh'). As the children progress through the phases, they learn an increasing number of phonemes (sounds) and their graphemes (the way they are written down). They will learn that there is often more than one grapheme for each sound such as igh, I, ie, i-e, y.

The rhymes that we teach the children support them in learning how to recognise and learn the different graphemes, which helps them in both their reading and in their writing.

Mathematics

Developing a strong grounding in number sense is essential so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically. We aim to build a mastery in the children's understanding, through practical, concrete activities, so that number operations and symbols are grounded in concrete experiences. There is an emphasis on Number and Numerical Patterns and evidence shows that mastery of understanding of numbers to 10, through subitising, is crucial before we move on. We aim to develop understanding that can be effectively applied to new and different situations, such as number problems or numbers beyond 10. In the Pre-Prep we follow the White Rose maths scheme, although we regularly utilise other resources to support the children's learning. If you have any questions regarding the teaching of mathematics in Reception, please speak to your child's Form Teacher.

How you can help:
Children learn about maths through play and their daily experiences. And the more meaningful to them and hands on it is, the better.

- Make sure that your child's play environment is full of things for children to explore, sort, compare, count, calculate and describe.
- Take your child shopping with you, count the objects, look at the colours, shapes and sizes of the packages.
- Play games such as snakes and ladders; encourage your child to recognise the spots on the dice without counting, and to 'notice', not always count amounts to 5.
- Cook together, discussing quantities, amounts and weights
- Lay the table and count items as you go. Ask simple questions such as 'one more', 'take one away'. Snack time is full of mathematical opportunities – halving the fruit, comparing sizes of the pieces, using capacity vocabulary when pouring drinks etc
- Sing counting songs such as 'Five Little Speckled Frogs'
- Use coins to role play 'Shops'. Your child could pay for items using pennies, or by starting to recognise the larger value coins.
- Sorting and matching opportunities, such as pairing socks and sorting buttons.
- Help your child to recognise when things make patterns or sequences.
- Use mathematical language to frame everyday concepts such as: more, less, same as, taller than, smaller, heavier, longer than, straight, curved, corners.

Understanding of the World

In this area of learning, children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them to make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in Science, Design and Technology, History, Geography, and Communication and Information Technology (C&IT).

How you can help:
- Talk about how people grow and change. Look at old family photographs together – including your child's own baby photographs.
- Grow seeds and bulbs in containers or in the garden.
- Develop your child's curiosity by looking closely at flowers, fruit, trees, and buildings to see patterns and details. Maybe you could use a magnifying glass.
- Encourage your child to use his/her senses – to look, listen, taste, smell and feel. This will really help them to notice the world around them.
- Noticing and discussing change can be interesting, for example melting ice, or boiling the kettle, or the change in nature around them as the seasons change.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creativity is fundamental to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. This area of learning includes creating with materials and being imaginative and expressive.

How you can help:

- Give your child the opportunity to use lots of different materials (scraps of fabric, cereal boxes etc.) to make models and pictures. Boost your child's confidence by displaying them.
- Listen to and make music and dancing along
- Enjoy dressing-up sessions and let's pretend / role play games.
- Read lots of stories together and talk about characters. You could use simple puppets to retell the story together
- Action songs.

Play Based Learning

Learning through play is one of the key principles of Early Years education, which is supported by a wealth of research.

Play engages children's bodies, minds and emotions. In playing, children can learn to interact with others and be part of a community, to experience and manage feelings, and to be in control and confident about themselves and their abilities. Play can help children to develop these positive dispositions for learning:

- finding an interest
- being willing to explore, experiment and try things out
- knowing how and where to seek help
- being inventive – creating problems, and finding solutions
- being flexible – testing and refining solutions being engaged and involved – concentrating, sustaining interest, persevering with a task, even when it is challenging
- making choices and decisions
- making plans and knowing how to carry them out
- playing and working collaboratively with peers and adults
- managing self, managing others
- developing 'can-do' orientations to learning
- being resilient – finding alternative strategies if things don't always go as planned
- understanding the perspectives and emotions of other people.

There are many forms of play that support the EYFS areas of learning and development.

Play is full of moments of curiosity, puzzlement, effort or interest and it is these 'teachable moments' that the skilful adult makes a difference. Often our adults will not be presenting formal learning, but will be 'in the moment' with the child in their play – the adult will be always alert to individual children (observation), always thinking about what it tells us about the child's thinking (assessment), and always ready to respond by using appropriate strategies at the right moment to support children's well-being and learning (planning for the next moment)."

Early Years Foundation Stage Profile

The Foundation Stage Profile is completed for each child in the final term of Reception. It should provide a rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels and their readiness for Year 1. This will be part of the reporting system for the children in Reception. The Profile will be completed no later than 30 June and each child's progress will be measured against the Early Learning Goals. There will be the opportunity for parents to discuss the profile with staff during Parents' meetings and a copy will be sent home at the end of the year. The Foundation Stage Profile will also be shared with Year 1 teachers to aid planning for the transition to Key Stage One.

Quality First Teaching

We base our teaching at Bilton Grange on a methodology known as Quality First Teaching. This is a high quality, inclusive practice for all pupils, including the following main elements:

1. A sharp focus on the learning objective – the teacher and pupils have a very clear understanding of what we want to achieve in that lesson.
2. Having high expectations of pupil engagement and involvement
3. Lessons which involve high levels of interaction for all pupils
4. Appropriate questioning, modelling and explaining
5. Learning through dialogue and opportunities to talk, individually and in groups
6. Encouraging pupils to accept responsibility for their own learning
7. Encouragement and use of authentic praise to motivate pupils

Through this model we hope to ensure that every pupil's needs are met and that they are supported and challenged to make the most of every learning opportunity.

Assemblies

The 'Gather' slot each day is used for assemblies. These are usually as follows:
Monday: Mrs Gedye/Form Teacher Led Assembly
Tuesday: Form Time in class
Wednesday: Hymn Practice with Mrs Gray
Thursday: Form Time in class
Friday: Super Skills Assembly led by Mrs Jones

Trips and Workshops

The taught curriculum within school is supported by a range of trips and experiences, often related to our topic or science curriculum. These can change from year to year and are published in advance in the termly calendar.

Prep (Homework)

At Bilton Grange, we work closely with parents through each year group to ensure that learning at school is appropriately supported and consolidated at home, with expectations growing progressively as children move through the Pre-Prep. In Reception, daily reading — both to and with an adult — is the single most important habit families can establish. Alongside this, phonics practice, maths activities and literacy and topic tasks will be provided across the year, all carefully chosen to reinforce what children are exploring in the classroom. We will always communicate clearly with parents about what is expected and why, and warmly welcome your engagement with your child's learning at every stage.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

Communication between children and parents is a key aspect to ensure an effective delivery of an Early Years education. Effective assessment provides information to improve teaching and learning. The use of data from assessment allows teachers to take account of the individual needs of the pupils in their planning. Pupils need detailed and constructive feedback in order to understand how they can improve their work. Parents are given regular reports on their child's progress so that teachers, pupils and parents are all working together to raise standards and ensure that each pupil achieves his or her potential. Ongoing observations and assessments are shared with parents via Tapestry and regular meetings to share progress are held. If a child's progress in any of the areas give cause for concern, the form teacher will discuss this with the parents to agree how best to support the child to ensure progress. Specialist support will be sought where appropriate and always with prior agreement with the child's parents. Liaison with external agencies is always supported where appropriate.

Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of assessment in the school are:

- to allow teachers to plan work that accurately reflects the needs of each pupil
- to enable pupils to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in their work
- to help pupils understand what they need to do next to improve their work
- to provide regular information for parents that enables them to support their child's learning

Teacher Tracking and Assessments

Regular formative and summative assessments and observations form the 'bigger picture' of a child's progress, which informs planning and ensures every child has a curriculum through which they can reach their potential. Teacher assessments form the most useful evidence of a child's progress. In the Nest and Reception, staff regularly share their observations as a team, and the children's progress is tracked according to age related expectations, against the seven strands of the EYFS. If a child's progress in any of the areas give cause for concern, the form teacher will discuss this with the parents to agree how best to support the child to ensure progress.

Standardised Testing

We have many tools at our disposal which provide 'snapshots' of information which, when used in the right context, can be helpful indicators of progress and attainment.

A Baseline standardised score is attained via an assessment at the beginning and end of the pre-school year (if your child is in the Nest) and again at the end of the Reception year. Throughout Reception we use a Read, Write Inc assessment to track progress with phonics and reading. After this, standardised testing occurs each year, from Year One in English and Maths. Standardised tests for reading and spelling begin in Year 2 and CAT tests (Cognitive Ability Tests) are added in Year 3. Data from these tests is recorded on the school's database. This data is monitored by the Head of Pre-Prep to track both individual progress and cohort data patterns and to monitor the effectiveness of our teaching and learning.

Parents will always be involved, where we feel there may be concerns, flagged by any of our assessment tools.

Reports and Parents Evenings

The reporting schedule for Reception is as follows:

	Advent	Lent	Summer
1st half	**Parents' Evening** Reception Teachers meet with parents prior to half term to discuss how the child has settled and their approach to learning within the Reception environment	**Parents' Evening** An opportunity for a midyear progress report	
2nd half	**Approach report** A Form Teacher report focussing on personal, social and emotional skills (settling in), engagement, focus, and how pupils are meeting the initial age-related expectations.		**Parents' Evening** Form Teachers will share attainment against the EYFS Early Learning Goals **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile Report** Written reports providing a detailed assessment against the Early Learning Goals

Learning Development Department (LDD)

Education at Bilton Grange is provided with regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice. The school has a named SENCo (Head of LDD, Mrs Julieann Hallissey) who supports our provision of learning support for all children within the Pre-Prep.

Our provision for all children, including those who require extra support and those who are very able, is managed through a wave system.

Wave 1: The majority of our children's needs are met through Quality First Teaching (a style of teaching that emphasises high quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils in a class)

Wave 2: This would encompass the interventions that are in place to support children, usually for handwriting, maths or a phonics group. It might also be a stretch and challenge group for our most able pupils. These are planned with the needs of the cohort and the individual pupils in mind and will change from term to term. Interventions are often short term. All children on Wave 2 are closely monitored by Form Teachers and by the Head of Learning Development.

Wave 3: Parents and the Head of Learning Development Department discuss more specific assessments, specialist support and longer-term interventions. The child would have an Individual Education Plan (IEP, called Pupil Portraits at BG) and be closely monitored by the Head of Learning Development.

Wave 4: Highly personalised specialised provision, usually involving support from external services and monitored via the provision of an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Specialist support will be sought where appropriate and always with prior agreement with the child's parents. Liaison with external agencies is always supported where appropriate.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

We welcome children from all backgrounds and cultures and appreciate the diversity and wealth of unique experiences that this brings to our community. We recognise that we may have children who are learning English as a second language and sufficient support is offered to ensure they learn and reach a good standard of English language. It may be that additional EAL lessons will be of benefit in which case our Head of EAL, Mrs Danielle Barnes (dlb@biltongrange.co.uk) will be in touch.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

The majority of after school activities begin in Year 2. Year 1 are able to select from a number of activities through the week which usually run from 3.15pm – 4.00pm.

In Reception, we offer the children an opportunity to swim, accompanied by a parent, in the Bilton Grange pool (currently on a Tuesday afternoon at 3.15pm). This session is supported by our swimming teachers and is a good opportunity to build skills and water confidence prior to curriculum swimming starting in Year 1.

THE FIRST STEP IN THE
ADVENTURE OF LIFE