

# Parents' Handbook 2024-2025

Basildon CE Primary  
School

**Respect, Resilience, Excellence.**

**Strong in spirit, full of wisdom *Luke 2:40***

# Welcome from the Leadership Team

We hope that this handbook gives you, as parents and carers, the key information that you need ahead of the new academic year. We have tried to include the important points; however, there is greater detail on our school website <https://www.basildonprimary.org.uk/>.

We expect all children to enjoy the time they are at school and excel both inside and outside the classroom. For this to happen, there needs to be a partnership between home and school. The aim of this handbook is to identify how we hope to work with you and your child so that this can be achieved, and your child can reach their full potential.

With diversity at the centre, our curriculum is ambitious and engaging for all our learners. As we move into our second year as part of The Downland Federation, we will continue to build upon the successes of this year to ensure that we offer a wide range of experiences beyond the curriculum, for example sports events and maths days.

Miss M Cliffe and Mrs E Parish

Director of Primaries and Head of School

# **School Improvement Plan 2024-2025**

The following is a summary of our School Improvement Plan. To write this document, we seek feedback from pupils, parents and staff. It focuses on key areas of improvement and ensures a strategy for continued improvement.

- 1. Achieve excellent teaching and learning, aimed at challenging all learners.**
- 2. Developing a 'reading for pleasure' strategy across the school.**
- 3. Identify barriers to learning for individuals, including those with SEND, and develop strategies to overcome these.**
- 4. Further develop the pupil leadership opportunities across the school.**
- 5. Increase pupils' awareness of British Values and Protective Characteristics.**

# General Information

## Parent Contact Details

We respectfully request that you advise the school of any changes in contact details further to submitting your completed initial registration form. There is the opportunity to do this annually via the revision of the data collection sheets. This includes telephone numbers, emails address, change in emergency contacts, etc. This is crucial in case we need to get hold of a parent in an emergency. Please email any change in contact details to [office@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:office@basildonprimary.org.uk).

We understand that many parents work some distance from school and so collection during the day, in case of pupil illness, can be difficult. As such, we encourage you to leave additional contacts for such an emergency.

## Medical Information

We ask that you advise the school of any medical condition or needs that might affect your child's school life either within the initial registration form, or via the office if this changes during the school year. This includes any/all food allergies/intolerances and regular medications your child may require to manage their health, e.g. an inhaler.

Where prescribed medication needs to be given at school, we require parental consent using the consent form available from the office or on the [school website](#). It is the responsibility of parents to monitor the expiry dates on medicines and replace as necessary.

# Communication

## Day to Day Communication

To ensure prompt action is taken and a response shared as needed, we have defined a communications protocol. Following this will ensure that your message reaches the right person.

Please use the following email addresses if you need to update the school about an absence or change in end of day arrangement:

Absent: [absent@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:absent@basildonprimary.org.uk)  
Home time: [hometime@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:hometime@basildonprimary.org.uk)

If your child is unwell and will be absent from school, please email by 9.00am on the day of absence. It is difficult for teachers to check emails during the school day, so where possible we ask for changes to home time arrangements to be shared by lunchtime to ensure they are read and acted upon.

At times you may need or wish to contact our Head of School, Mrs Parish. For a prompt personal response, please use the email: [headofschool@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:headofschool@basildonprimary.org.uk). If you need to contact Miss Cliffe then she can be reached using [MCliffe@tds.school](mailto:MCliffe@tds.school).

## **ClassDojo**

ClassDojo is a piece of software which enables our teaching staff to share information, photos, messages etc with the parents/carers of their class to enable communication about your child's day at school. This is the best way to contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or messages.

Access to this will be issued by the class teacher in September or when your child joins our school, if this is during the academic year.

## **SchoolComms**

For our regular news bulletins and information, e.g. trip letters, we use SchoolComms messenger service. You will receive this information via your nominated contact email addresses.

## **School Gateway**

We use School Gateway for payments for school trips, additional activities etc, as well as for booking and paying for Basildon Extra. This can be accessed as a website or an app. You will receive information on how to set up and use this via your nominated contact email addresses.

## **Tapestry**

In EYFS (Bears and Tigers) we encourage parents to provide us with as much feedback as possible about your child's learning and progress. Each child will have a Learning Journal story which tells a story of their learning. We use Tapestry online, which you will be able to access by invitation or continue from Basildon Bears Learning Journal. We also actively encourage parents to contribute to the Tapestry Learning Journals. This enables school and home to work together to provide a full and rounded picture of your child and their progress.

## **Confidentiality**

In accordance with our school value *Respect*, and best practice, we will treat information you share with the school in confidence; only those who need to know will be made aware of any concerns or information you bring to the school's attention.

At Basildon, we strive for equity over equality, so this may mean that at times, additional support or measures will be put in place for your or another child or family. As a school, we will not share the rationale for such measures with other parents/carers; we ask that you support and respect such actions.

## **Safeguarding**

Safeguarding means protecting the health, wellbeing and human rights of all at risk, enabling them to live safely, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and reduce both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect.

At Basildon, all staff are regularly trained to ensure children in their care are kept safe. In the event of a disclosure by a child, member of staff or member of our school community, the matter will be investigated with respect and expedience. If such an investigation demonstrates a significant concern, it is the school's responsibility to refer the matter to Children and Adult Social Services for their review and any necessary follow-up. The wellbeing of the child is paramount.

## **GDPR**

This impacts all areas of our lives, including what we can and cannot do with your child and your data, generic permissions and media. Annually, in addition to when your child starts with us, we shall ask you to opt-in to our communications and seek permission for the use and storage of your information, as well as the following:

- Data collection sheet updates.
- Permission for in-school and local activities, such as walking to the woods opposite School Lane to engage in forest learning.
- Permission for the school to use media displaying your child's image and verification about how that media may be used. Please note that an opt-in is required from you to be able to see your child in the ClassDojo or Tapestry streams.

## **Enrichment: Educational Activities and Visits**

### ***Contributions***

At Basildon, we enrich our curriculum with additional activities, such as cooking, arts week, class productions etc, and visits to allow your child to engage in a deeper appreciation of the topics they are learning. Such activities and visits typically come with a notional cost which we seek to cover through voluntary parental contributions. We value your support to enable these activities and visits to take place.

# The School Day

Arrival of Children	Morning Registration	Playtime	Lunchtime	Playtime	Home time
8.40 – 8.50 am	8.50 am	10.30 – 10.45 am	12 noon – 1 pm	Flexi break within classes	3.20 pm (Bears) 3.30 pm (Years Reception – 6)

The door (along the Tiger corridor) is supervised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team between 8.40 and 8.50 am. Parents are asked to leave their children to come into the building independently. Parents of children in Lemurs should leave them by the gate to their outside area, which will be supervised by a member of the team.

If your child ever feels ‘wobbly’ at the start of the day, we encourage you to give them lots of reassurance and be positive with them, before saying goodbye and leaving them with us. It can seem hard some days, but experience shows us that children settle much quicker this way.

Any parents wishing to speak with the class teacher should do so via Class Dojo. It is difficult for teachers to speak to parents at length before school as this delays the start of the day for the whole class.

At the end of the day, at 3.20 pm for Bears and at 3.30 pm for the rest of the school, children are dismissed onto the playground by a member of staff.

We ask that children do not play on the adventure playground, the forest school area or the field at either end of the day, as this is not supervised by staff.

## Car Parking

We ask that parents do not park within the school car park between 8.05 am and 5.00 pm, as this prevents staff from parking or leaving the school at the end of the day. It is possible to park on Aldworth Road or Emery Acres and walk the children into the school from there. Any parent who is unable to do so may contact the school office. However, priority will be given where there is a medical need.

Please be considerate of our neighbours when parking.

The Red Lion, St Stephen’s Church and the Village Hall car parks can also all be used as alternative places to park.

# Term Dates and Staff Training Dates

The term dates for students are:

## **Autumn Term 2024**

Wednesday 4th September 2024 – Thursday 24th October 2024

(Inset days Monday 2nd September 2024, Tuesday 3rd September 2024, Friday 4th October 2024)

Half term: Friday 25th October 2024 – Friday 1st November 2024

Term 2: Monday 4th November 2024 – Wednesday 18th December 2024 (1.30pm finish)

*Christmas Holidays: Thursday 19th December 2024 – Friday 3rd January 2025*

## **Spring Term 2025**

Term 3: Monday 6th January 2025 – Friday 14th February 2025

Half term: Monday 17th February 2025 – Friday 21st February 2025

Term 4: Monday 24th February 2025 – Friday 4th April 2025 (1.30pm finish)

*Easter Holidays: Monday 7th April 2025 – Monday 21st April 2025*

## **Summer Term 2025**

Term 5: Tuesday 22nd April 2025 – Friday 23rd May 2025

(Bank holiday Monday 5th May 2025)

Half term: Monday 26th May 2025 – Friday 30th May 2025

Term 6: Monday 2nd June 2025 – Wednesday 23rd July 2025 (1.30pm finish)

## **Attendance/Punctuality**

### **Daily attendance**

The door is open between 8.40 am and 8.50 am for children to come into school. If a child arrives after this, but before 9 am, they are recorded as a 'late' in the registers; if they arrive after 9 am, it is recorded as an unauthorised absence for the morning session. If children arrive late to school on a regular basis, this not only means that they lose learning time, but it also causes a disruption to the learning of the class because they need to be settled and have any tasks explained to them. We appreciate your support in ensuring pupils arrive promptly at school each day.

Parents must bring their children into school via the office if they arrive after 8.50 am. There is a sign in sheet for parents to sign their child into school if they arrive after this time. This will ensure they are registered as being on site. In addition, we hope this will help us to monitor lateness, and work with specific families where necessary.

Our curriculum is planned across the whole school day, and so we discourage the early collection of children as this is disruptive for the individuals as well as the whole class and can result in children missing out on valuable learning time.

Attendance is monitored weekly and where individuals are causing concern, additional support is provided by means of phone calls, target letters or meeting with the Head of School. In some cases, we will liaise with the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service. As a school, we reserve the right to not authorise absences and as such unauthorised absences will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. They may provide evidence for Fixed Penalty Fines in some instances.



**Illness and medical appointments**

We expect all pupils to aim for 100% attendance. However, we do appreciate that at times, particularly during primary years, children are susceptible to becoming ill. If your child is unwell, please email [absent@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:absent@basildonprimary.org.uk) by 9.00 am on the day of absence.

Medical appointments should ideally be made outside of school hours but if this is not possible you can also use this email address to let us know if your child will be absent from school for such an appointment.

It is important that you advise the school of the reason for your child's absence; this enables our monitoring of any potential illnesses that may impact others.

The school follows Public Health England advice of leaving 48 hours after the last episode of sickness and/or diarrhoea before returning to school.

**Absence for other reasons**

If you wish to make a request for leave of absence from school during term time for any other reason you will need to complete a form and return it to the school office at least one month before the requested absence. You can collect a paper copy of the form from the office or download it from the [school website](#).

Basildon CE Primary School follows government advice when deciding whether to authorise any absence during term time and may only grant it when there are exceptional circumstances. Any absence taken where a request has been refused by the Head of School will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. If there are ten or more sessions (five whole days) of unauthorised absence in a ten-week period, we have to pass this information onto West Berkshire Council and this may result in a Fixed Penalty Fine and legal action through a Magistrate's court. Further information is available on the [penalty notice leaflet](#) on the West Berkshire Council website or from the Education Welfare Service.

## Homework

When your child joins Tiger class they will be encouraged to find enjoyment in books. They will start to bring books home to share with you after a settling in time. Developing an enjoyment and love of books and reading is incredibly important for your child's development.

Children will often start by bringing wordless picture books to share. Encourage your child to make up their own story using the pictures to help. Talk about what is happening in the pictures and link to any experiences they have had. This is an important stage of their development and builds their imagination and storytelling skills.

Once the children have made a good start on their phonics learning they will begin bringing home books from our 'Monster Phonics' scheme. It is important for this learning to embed and progress through daily reading opportunities at home. To develop their understanding of the book and their ability to recognise words from sight (rather than sounding them out each time), it is important that children share these books with you several times before they are changed. We will change books once a week and this will be recorded in your child's yellow Reading Record book.

It is also important for you to read regularly to your child and model an enjoyment of books. Please make sure your child brings their book to school each day. All children are required to read every night at home, and we ask that parents sign the reading record to show their child has read, a minimum of five times each week. A little and often is more effective than reading for long periods of time less frequently. Our reading lists, which are available on the website, provide a starting point to ensure that children read widely.

Children in Key Stage One have access to NumBots and children in Key Stage Two have access to Times Table Rockstars. Pupils are encouraged to access this regularly (a minimum of three times a week) in order that they develop fluency in the recall of multiplication and division facts. Teachers will provide log-in details for these learning platforms once the new academic year begins.

Children will be given weekly words that they should learn how to spell at home, before being tested at the end of the week in school. The scores from the spelling test will be recorded in the Reading Record so that you can see how they performed.

More structured homework is set in Years 5 and 6 to prepare children for secondary school. Further details about this will be provided by teachers in September.

We value oracy skills, and so once a term there is a planned project which children are asked to work on at home. They are then given the opportunity to present their work to their class across a week. Further dates and details will be shared on a termly basis.

## Special Educational Needs

Mrs Ward is the school SENDCo. She ensures that we meet the needs of our children with SEND. Any parent wishing to speak with her can do so via [SENCO@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:SENCO@basildonprimary.org.uk).

# Healthy Eating

## Cool Milk

Children under five years of age are entitled to a daily carton of milk which is typically offered at morning break. Thereafter, you are welcome to purchase this directly with Cool Milk:

<https://www.coolmilk.com/>.

## School Lunches

Our school lunch contractor is Dolce who use the SchoolGrid system for online ordering. All account information and payment plans are made directly with Dolce further to your receiving an invitation email via our Admin Team. Parents are able to order lunches online in advance up to 8.30 am on the day and we encourage children to pre-order their meals at home, before arriving at school, as this prevents learning time being lost in the mornings and prevents situations where there are insufficient funds on an account.

All children in Reception and Key Stage One are entitled to a free school lunch. These are ordered in the same way described above.

## Free School Meals

Some families on low income may be entitled to free school meals for their children. If you think you may be in this category, please contact our Admin Team who can support you in exploring this. If your child is entitled to this, additional funding is also available to support their learning and enrichment opportunities. It is important therefore that, if eligible, the school record this.

## Snacks

Children in EYFS and Key Stage One are offered fruit at break time as a healthy snack option. You are welcome to send a snack in for your child, but we would ask that these are healthier choices rather than confectionery or crisps. Please provide any snacks in a clear, reusable container to prevent waste.

In the interests of all in our community who have allergies, we are a nut and sesame free school. We respectfully ask that you ensure any snacks or packed lunches are in line with this; this includes items that may contain nuts.

## Water Bottles

Please send your child in with a transparent, non-metallic water bottle every day. We actively encourage all children to drink water regularly throughout the day. Children should not have fruit juice or squash in their bottle.

## Behaviour

It is our policy to enhance a child's self-esteem and respect for others and their environment both within the school and the wider community. Through this shared belief, the school aims to promote meaningful and effective learning in a positive and friendly atmosphere. Our approach is aimed at improving educational outcomes for all pupils by promoting and supporting their engagement with education. We adopt an inclusive approach and adapt our behaviour management strategies to meet the needs of the child.

Our Behaviour Policy is underpinned by the principles of Therapeutic Thinking – ‘An approach to behaviour that prioritises the prosocial experiences and feelings of everyone within the group, class or school dynamic’ and a Therapeutic View – ‘Positive experiences create positive feelings’.

More information can be found in the Behaviour Policy available at <https://www.basildonprimary.org.uk/policies>.

## School Uniform

We expect all our pupils to wear the correct school uniform as it is an important part of our school identity. We would like to foster a feeling of community and belonging within our school. It helps our pupils feel part of a team and take a pride in their appearance too.

Details of our uniform can be found here: <https://www.basildonprimary.org.uk/uniform>.

Many items can be purchased readily at any store in accordance with the latest government guidance. Our preferred supplier for all branded items is Stevensons. Items can be purchased online at <https://www.stevensons.co.uk/> and in person at their store: 4 Chatham Place, Reading RG1 7AR.

It is important that all school uniform items are clearly labelled with your child's name. There is a ‘Lost Property’ container in the front office, but if the items are named, they will be returned straight back to your child.

Pupils should have their PE kit in school every day. In addition, EYFS children are required to have a puddle suit and wellington boots in school.

### **The following are NOT permitted:**

- Jewellery, except a watch and/or a single plain stud earring in either or both ears. If ears are pierced, pupils are responsible for these at all times and earrings are to be removed for PE (and swimming)
- No makeup or nail varnish
- No extremes of hairstyle will be accepted including extremely short cuts or any patterns cut into the hair and unnatural hair colours
- No temporary tattoos

Second hand uniform is available to purchase (as stock becomes available). This is managed by the Basildon School Association. If you would like to know more, please email [2handuniform@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:2handuniform@basildonprimary.org.uk).

## **Pencil Cases**

In EYFS and Key Stage One the children do not need individual pencil cases, instead we provide the materials the children need to access the curriculum, including pencils, colouring pencils, glue and art materials. We ask parents to donate to cover the cost of this each year.

In Key Stage Two the children may bring in their own pencil cases. We ask that these are clear pencil cases with the following items:

- Clear pencil case
- HB pencils (at least four)
- Pencil sharpener
- Pencil eraser
- Ruler
- Glue stick
- Scissors
- Colouring pencils
- Black handwriting pen, or similar (and at least one spare)
- Whiteboard pen (and at least one spare)
- Purple pen, for editing work (and at least one spare)

Please do not include any of the following:

- Biro, gel pens etc
- Smelly pens or erasers – these may cause an adverse reaction in other class members
- Felt tip pens, marker pens or highlighters

We will send pencil cases home periodically to be refilled.

## **Electronic Devices**

Children are not allowed any electronic devices such as mobile phones in their bags during the school day. Children in Year 6 may bring a mobile phone into school, if they walk to and from school on their own. In this case it should be turned off before they enter the building and handed to the teacher to be kept for the day. If this routine is not followed, then they will be stopped from bringing them into school in future. If the children have a smart watch, this should not be linked to messages on a phone.

All valuables are brought into school at your own risk.

## Key Dates for the Forthcoming Year

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check: w/c 9th June 2025  
Key Stage 2 SATS: w/c 12th May 2025

## Learning Outside the Classroom

In order to enhance our curriculum within the classroom, there are a number of visits that are planned outside of the classroom. To cover the costs of such events, we do ask for payment. The following are being planned for the forthcoming year (although may be subject to change):

### EYFS

- Rushall Farm

### Years 1/2

- Oxford Story Museum
- Milestones
- Dinton Pastures

### Years 3/4

- Stonehenge (Year 3)
- West Berks Museum (Year 4)
- Ufton Court Residential
- Sikh Gurdwara

### Years 5/6

- Shropshire Residential
- A place of worship
- Museum/gallery (Year 6)
- Victorian School Room (Year 5)

### Whole School

- STEAM week (Autumn Term)
- Watermill Theatre (before Christmas)
- PSED week (Spring Term)
- Arts fortnight (Summer Term)

## Sharing Learning

At various points during the year, we invite parents into school so that the children can share their learning with you. These will be advertised in the school newsletter, which is emailed out to parents each Friday.

In September, we will be holding parent workshops for each year group (Year 1-6). These are useful sessions designed to introduce you to your child's teacher and provide further information about teaching and learning in your child's class, so we encourage you to attend these if you are able. We will also be holding further parent workshops linked to key curriculum areas during the first half term. Please find details about these below:

Year 6 Parent Workshop: Friday 6th September, 9am.  
Year 1 Parent Workshop: Monday 9th September, 9am.  
Year 2 Parent Workshop: Tuesday 10th September, 9am.  
Year 3 Parent Workshop: Wednesday 11th September, 9am.

Year 4 Parent Workshop: Thursday 12th September, 9am.

Year 5 Parent Workshop: Friday 13th September, 9am.

Phonics Parent Workshop (Reception, Year 1 and 2): Tuesday 17th September, 9am.

Reading Parent Workshop (Reception, Year 1 and 2): Wednesday 25th September, 9am.

Maths Parent Workshop (Year 3-6): Monday 30th September, 9am.

Online Safety Workshop: Thursday 10th October, 9am.

## Basildon Extra (Before and After School Care)

We are incredibly lucky to have a wraparound care provision, located on our school site, and run by our staff. This means that there is consistency of approach beyond the school day for any child attending. Before any child attends the provision, we ask that parents complete a registration form, which includes a contract of use.

In order that we can ensure that we have the required staffing ratios, we ask that parents book the sessions they would like their child to attend via the School Gateway app. There will be a message from school notifying parents of the booking window and detailing the clubs available for the following term. Following this, during the first term, we will generate a payment request that includes all clubs. This can be paid in full or in instalments.

Your child may participate in activities in other rooms across the school, but please note that when dropping off for BE Breakfast and collecting from BE Teatime, please access the Hub via the steps at the back of the school, facing the playing field. Children leaving after BE Clubs at 4:30 pm will be brought out to the front of school by staff.

BE Stay & Play is available to Bears. When selecting this for after school care, you can choose from a dropdown menu: Collection by 4.30 pm, by 5 pm or by 6 pm. This is available Monday to Thursday. BE Film Friday is available as a fixed session with collection by 5pm on Friday.

BE Teatime Plus is available for Tigers through to Eagles. When selecting this for after school care, you can choose from a dropdown menu: Collection by 4:30 pm, 5 pm or by 6 pm. This is available Monday to Thursday. BE Film Friday is available as a fixed session with collection by 5 pm on Friday.

We are open every school day, from 7.45 am to 6 pm. On the very rare occasions this is not the case, we will give you as much notice as possible.

Our term dates are:

Term 1: Wednesday 4th September 2024 – Thursday 24th October 2024

Term 2: Monday 4th November 2024 – Wednesday 18th December 2024

Term 3: Monday 6th January 2025 – Friday 14th February 2025

Term 4: Monday 24th February 2025 – Friday 4th April 2025

Term 5: Tuesday 22nd April 2025 – Friday 23rd May 2025

Term 6: Monday 2nd June 2025 – Wednesday 23rd July 2025

Please note that BE Teatime will not be open on the following dates when the school day ends at 1.30 pm:

- Wednesday 18th December
- Friday 4th April
- Wednesday 23rd July

There is a Charging and Remittance Policy which we require all parents or carers to sign prior to starting with Basildon Extra.



## Welcome from the Basildon School Association

The Basildon School Association (BSA) is the parent-teacher association group at the school, and we aim to nurture the community spirit at Basildon and to raise funds. All parents and teachers at the school are part of the BSA and it is totally up to you how much you get involved – we are always grateful for any level of support! There are three formal roles, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, and a committee of interested parents who volunteer as and when they can throughout the year.

We coordinate a class rep system who liaise between the BSA and parents, usually through messages on the class WhatsApp groups. Class reps are also responsible for running a stall for each class at our Christmas and summer fairs. As well as these two events we run school discos each term, a wreath making night at the end of November, ice lolly sales after school in the warmer months and various other fundraising events throughout the year including a travelling book fair, quizzes and bingo evenings, clothing collections and many others.

For more information see <https://www.basildonprimary.org.uk/bsa>. You can also follow us on Instagram @basildonschoolassociation.

Please contact us at [bsa@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:bsa@basildonprimary.org.uk) if you have any questions or comments.

## The Parent Council

The Parent Council is a body of parents who are keen to support and develop the wider community voice. Led by the Head of School and the Chair of Governors, with representatives from each class in the school, it enables feedback from parents to the school and vice versa, enhancing communication between the school and parent body. The Parent Council work together collaboratively to solve problems and is focused on positive and constructive actions. Meetings are held once a term. More details including past minutes are at <https://www.basildonprimary.org.uk/parent-council>.

Please contact us at [parentcouncil@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:parentcouncil@basildonprimary.org.uk) if you have any questions or comments.