



CROSFIELDS
SCHOOL



Reception Handbook

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WELCOME

to Academic Year 2026-27

Mrs Janey McDowell

Head of Pre-Prep

 janeymcdowell@crofields.com


Welcome to the Pre-Prep Department, a joyful place with a warm, friendly atmosphere in which everyone feels valued. Starting school is exciting and we aim to continue this feeling of excitement as the children journey through Pre-Prep, from Nursery to Year 2, exploring the world and enjoying learning.

We have small class sizes which allow teachers to build long-lasting, nurturing relationships with children and their families. Our flexible and friendly approach encourages children and parents to feel comfortable and able to talk to staff about anything at any time. Children are inspired to learn in bright, stimulating classrooms and, with our outstanding facilities and over 40 acres of land to explore, the children make the most of every opportunity.



Miss Hannah Saunders

Head of EYFS

 hannah2saunders@crofields.com

I am delighted to welcome you to our Early Years department. We provide a welcoming and nurturing environment for your child to start their exciting journey at Crofields. As a team, we provide a setting in which the children can blossom into confident, independent, and enthusiastic learners. By combining a play-based environment, with teacher led activities, we support the children to discover more about themselves and the world around them.

We work closely together to ensure that every child is seen and valued as an individual and ensure they build the firm foundations needed for them to thrive in the future. These important early years should be filled with excitement, fun and, most importantly, the chance for your child to build some wonderful memories.





Settling in and pastoral care

Our main priority is to settle your child into life at school as quickly as possible. Your child's class teacher is your first point of contact, and they will help your child settle quickly into their new routine.

Pastoral care is embedded in the aims, values and ethos of the school. We teach children to be supportive of each other, to work together, and to respect each other and themselves.

We value our strong relationship with parents and ensure that we work together to support children both academically and pastorally. The Head of Pre-Prep, Mrs Janey McDowell, is always available for a chat, either informally or at a planned meeting.



Arrival and Drop off

Children should be taken directly to the classroom door. Parents can park either on Acorns playground or in the South car park. Doors are opened at 08:15 and the children can be dropped off at any time between then and 08:30.



After School Care

Short Stay (15:15 - 16:15)

Children who have not been collected by 15:15, remain in Chestnuts and can be collected at any time up until 16:15.

Long Stay (15:15 - 17:50)

Long Stay is based in Chestnuts, where the children can choose from a range of play activities. They are given a light tea consisting of sandwiches, fruit, and a biscuit, but will still need an evening meal once they get home. The children should be collected by 17:50. Any child not collected by this time will be taken to the school office to await collection. Bookings for Late Stay should be made by end of Friday week before, if possible, via [SOCS](#). The cost per day is £11.



Timetable

08:15	Children arrive
08:30	Reception day begins - Registration and settling in
09:00	Lessons 1 - 3 and snack
10:30	Morning break
11:00	Lessons 5 and 6
11:50	Lunch
12:30	Lesson 8
12:50	Break
13:30	Lessons 10 - 12
15:00	Story
15:15	End of school day

Children should be collected from the classroom door. If your child is being collected by someone other than you, we must be notified via phone or email.





Food including Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club runs between 07:30 and 08:15 and is based in Little Acorns Nursery. Children are looked after by the Little Acorns Staff. Bookings can be made on [SOCS](#) for the term, or ad-hoc as required. If you would like your child to attend Breakfast Club, please book on [SOCS](#) or email your child's class teacher to book a place at least 24 hours in advance. Breakfast is charged at £5.15 per day and will be added to fee invoices at the end of the term. Breakfast Club will commence on the first day of term.

Snack

During the morning, children are given a drink of water or milk, and a portion of fresh fruit. An additional item, such as a rice cake or breadstick, is also offered in the morning. They have the option of milk to drink in the afternoon with a small snack. Water is available throughout the day, but children should also bring their own, named, filled, water bottle to school.

Lunch

Children are encouraged to eat the hot lunch provided which consists of a main meal, pudding or fruit. They are sensitively encouraged to try new foods. All children are encouraged to use a knife and fork, although help is given with cutting food. Children have water to drink. Lunch is included in the school fees, and we can accommodate most dietary requirements including a daily halal option.



Homework

Once children have become confident saying sounds and blending words, we will send home a reading book for your child to share with you. Books are changed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday but we would like you to read with your child every night.

We also share with you, via Tapestry, a maths homework menu each half term which lists activities you can complete to support your child's learning in class. These activities are optional.



House System

The House system in Pre-Prep is used for team events and for rewards in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Children remain in their Pre-Prep house until the end of Year 2. There are four Pre-Prep houses: **Maple**, **Ash**, **Willow** and **Beech**. Our inter-house competitions, such as Cross Country and Sports Day, provide the opportunity for you to come and cheer on your child as they take part in these exciting events.





Tapestry

Tapestry is an online learning platform that allows us to share photographs and videos of some of what your child has been doing at school. It also allows you to make comments and add your own photos to show what your child has been doing at home to support their learning. The children all have their own Tapestry profile, and your child will be given their secure login on their first settling in session.

Once you have your child's log in details, you will be able to access their account. You will need to:

- Download the Tapestry app (Available for iOS and Android) or visit the Tapestry website. Enter your username and password provided by the Nursery
- Once logged in, you'll be able to view photos, videos, observations of your child's learning, as well as add your own comments and upload pictures from home to share with the Nursery team. If you have any questions, or cannot access your child's account, please contact your child's key worker or Hannah Saunders, Head of Early Years for assistance.



Uniform

Our school uniform is supplied by Stevenson's. You can find the specific uniform you need using their new search feature. You can also set up an account by creating a profile and adding your child's information.

We also have a school shop on site, which is open each week during term time. The shop coordinator can be contacted by telephoning the main school office. The on site school shop stocks second-hand items and is open each Wednesday during term time between 15:30 and 16:30. However, if you are looking for a specific item and cannot attend during this time, please email shop@crossfields.com and one of the dedicated team will have a look for you.

For all items purchased through the school shop, the proceeds go directly to the bursary fund and we ask for donations for any selected items.

In order to maximise teaching time on specific days, pupils arrive and/or leave school in Crossfields' PE/Games kit. Please click [here](#) for more details.

The items with an asterisk are branded and must be purchased from our nominated partner, Stevenson's or the school shop. Other items may be purchased unbranded.

New parents should buy the items as listed below. Current parents do not need to buy new items, but as your child grows out of clothes and you replace them, please replace with new garments as detailed below.



Uniform Expectations

At the start of the academic year in September, girls may wear either the summer or winter uniform, depending on the weather. From the October half term onwards, all girls are required to wear the winter uniform, consisting of the pinafore dress with black tights or long black socks.

In the summer term, girls must wear the summer dress with short, ankle-length white socks. Some girls choose to wear cycling shorts under their dresses. These must be white. Boys usually wear shorts throughout the year with long grey socks but from October half term until the end of the Easter term, boys may wear long charcoal trousers if the weather is particularly cold. Before October half term, and during the summer term, boys are expected to wear charcoal shorts with the long, grey, Crosfields socks.

For safety and practicality, children should wear shoes that fasten securely with laces, buckles, straps or Velcro. Slip-on shoes are not suitable, and shoes should be polishable.

Hair and appearance:

Hair should be neat, tidy and off the face, with natural colours only. Extremely short or fashionable styles, such as Mohican styles, undercuts or shaved lines are not permitted. Shoulder length hair must be tied back. Hair accessories should be simple and in school colours. Bandana-style headbands, flowers or bows are not appropriate for school.

Jewellery:

For safety reasons, watches are not allowed in Pre-Prep and decorative jewellery is not permitted. Earrings should not be worn to school and must be removed during the school week. Ear piercing should take place during the long summer holiday.

Religious items:

The school supports pupils in meeting religious requirements, and distinct religious symbols may be worn. Where necessary for health and safety, items may need to be covered or removed during certain activities.

For further information about uniform, please refer to our uniform policy.

Summer and Winter Uniform



*V neck jumper



*Coat



Plain black school shoes, closed toe

Summer Uniform



*Summer dress



Bermuda charcoal shorts



Short sleeved shirt



Turn over socks (must be white)



*Long socks



*Legionnaire hat (Nursery and Reception)

Winter Uniform



*Tunic dress



Short or long sleeved white blouse french collar



Black knee high socks or plain black tights



*Knitted hat



Short sleeved shirt



Charcoal straight leg trousers



Charcoal ankle socks



Knitted scarf or plain black snood

Swimming Kit



Plain white swimming cap (boys and girls)



Any towel



Plain black girls swimming costume or Crosfields branded swimming costume



Plain black boys jammers or Crosfields branded jammers



Swimming goggles (optional but recommended)

PE and Games Kit



*Midlayer



*PE t-shirt



Black joggers



Pre-Prep Rucksack



*PE shorts



White sport socks



Predominantly white velcro trainers with non-marking sole

Forest School



Wellington boots, any colour permitted
(Please note these are kept at school during term time)



Black, PU Elka rain set, must be purchased from muddyfaces.co.uk



*Blue nylon painting apron



Plain black or navy wristees



Plain black or navy necker



Children in Reception continue to follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. The day gradually becomes more structured, although much of the learning is still practical, taking the form of activities and games. Children have daily phonics sessions, are taught to blend and form letters correctly, early mathematical skills are developed, and the children enjoy investigating the world around them. They work creatively with different media and materials in art lessons and are given time to explore their own interests. We continue to emphasise the development of social skills, independence and manners.

You will receive further information about the curriculum at the Parent Information meeting in September.

Forest School

Forest School activities complement and extend the academic curriculum, helping to further develop independence, confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning in an outdoor setting. Forest School sessions, with our specialist teachers, take place weekly all year, regardless of the weather.

Music

Reception children receive two music lessons each week, taught by a specialist music teacher. They will perform a Christmas play in the Autumn Term and a concert in the Summer Term.

Dance

All children also have a weekly dance session as part of their timetable.

Swimming

Children throughout Pre-Prep benefit from weekly swimming lessons with specialist teachers in our state-of-the-art pool. Children should come to school dressed in their PE kit on their swimming day, Monday.

PE

The children have a Music and Movement session, and a games session each week, taught by the specialist PE staff. The focus is on movement development, co-ordination, and fundamental skills. The children should come to school dressed in their PE kit on their PE day, Friday.

French

The Reception children have a weekly French lesson with a specialist language teacher. They continue to focus on learning everyday vocabulary through singing, stories, games and role-play.





What to bring to school

Black Crosfields book bag

This should be brought to school every day including your child's reading wallet, once it has been issued. Please ensure that your child's reading book and reading record book are inside the reading wallet and not loose in the book bag. You can put a small keyring on the bookbag handle.

Water bottles

Children should bring a filled, named water bottle to school each day. The bottles are sent home at the end of each day.

PE bags (Crosfields rucksack)

PE bags should remain in school. Please ensure you have put a spare set of clothes (black joggers and white top non-branded) and spare socks and pants in the front pocket of your child's PE bag. Children often wear their tracksuit bottoms and trainers at playtime, so it is important that they are in school every day.

Swimming bags

Swimming kit can be placed in any child-friendly backpack (no drawstring bags). Swimming bags should only be brought in on swimming days and taken home to be washed that afternoon. Children will swim on the Monday of their first full week in school.

Art Apron

This will remain in school and will be sent home at the end of the year.

Forest School clothes

These should remain in school. If they get particularly wet or dirty, following an outdoor session, we will send them home. Please return them to school as soon as possible.

Toys and special possessions

Toys and special possessions may be brought to school only when it is your child's turn to bring home the 'treasure box.' Please help your child to select one thing that is appropriate to share and talk about with the other children.





Skills for starting Reception

Starting school is an exciting time and we are often asked by parents how they can help their child prepare for the Reception year. Below is a selection of skills that we hope children will be starting to develop by the time they join us in September.

Independence

- I am happy to be away from my mummy, daddy or main carer
- I am happy to tidy my belongings and look after my things

Social Skills

- I can share toys and take turns
- I can interact with other children
- I know when to say please and thank you

Speaking and Listening

- I can talk about myself, my needs and feelings
- I can sit still and listen for a short time
- I can follow simple instructions

Literacy

- I am interested in reading stories and looking at picture books
- I enjoy singing nursery rhymes
- I can recognise my name when it's written down

Writing Skills

- I can mould playdough and build with small bricks
- I am practising holding a pencil and can write my name

Counting

- I like reciting number rhymes, and playing counting games
- I can recognise small quantities of items without counting them
- I can make simple patterns

Interest in the World

- I am interested in new activities
- I like asking questions
- I enjoy playing and exploring outdoors



Self-care

- I can go to the loo on my own, wipe myself properly and flush the loo
- I can wash and dry my hands without help
- I can blow and wipe my nose

Dressing

- I can button and unbutton my clothes
- I can put on my own shoes and socks
- I can put on my coat and use a zip
- I can dry myself with a towel

Eating

- I can use a knife and fork to feed myself
- I can drink from an open cup
- I eat a range of foods including lots of fruit and vegetables
- I like to try new foods

Routines

- I have practised putting on my uniform and getting ready to leave on time
- I have a good bedtime routine that includes a bedtime story



0118 987 1810



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www.crosfields.com



office@crosfields.com

