

Early Years  
Foundation Stage  
Handbook  
September 2024



**Lapal**  
Primary School

## **Welcome**

*Parents and carers play a very important part in school life and we value our partnership with you. We all share responsibility for your child's education, and we look forward to working closely together. We encourage parents to become involved in all aspects of school life, so that, as partners, we can promote high standards of learning, behaviour and attitudes to enable every child to reach their full potential. Starting school should be a happy and exciting time for both you and your child.*

**Mrs J Turner**  
**Executive Headteacher**

*The Reception year is a wondrous stage of your child's learning journey, as they make great steps in their personal, social and academic development. We strive to nurture inquisitive minds, confidence through independence and most importantly, a love of learning. My team and I look forward to welcoming your family to Lapal and watching your child blossom this year.*

**Miss F Hopkins**  
**Early Years Phase Lead**  
**Reception class teacher**

## Classes and Groups

At Lapal, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) operates as a unit in an open plan classroom and outdoor area that all children have access to. The children are in one of two class groups and have an allocated class teacher. There are two class teachers and two teaching assistants. There may also be additional teaching assistants dependent upon the specialist needs of children. Throughout the day, children will work in small groups for activities with peers from both classes and with all staff members.

Classes and groups allow the children to quickly feel settled, safe and confident. Working in smaller classes and groups enables staff to develop a close bond with those particular children. In addition, they can identify individual needs both academically and emotionally, in a much more focused way. All pupils no matter what class or group the children are in, will have access to the same learning and resources

## Our Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum is made up of seven areas of learning and development that shape each child's learning in as they progress through this educational stage. Together, these areas make up the skills, knowledge and experiences appropriate for children as they grow and develop. All areas are connected and are equally important. The seven areas are further sub-divided into the following:

- Communication Language
  - Listening, Attention and Understanding
  - Speaking
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
  - Self-Regulation
  - Managing Self
  - Building Relationships
- Physical Development
  - Gross Motor Skills
  - Fine Motor Skills
- Mathematics
  - Number
  - Numerical Patterns
- Literacy
  - Comprehension
  - Word Reading
  - Writing
- Understanding of the World
  - Past and Present
  - People, Culture and Communities
  - The Natural World
- Expressive Arts and Design
  - Creating with Materials
  - Being Imaginative and Expressive

At Lapal, the areas of learning are embedded in our indoor and outdoor environment and the activities the children access through their daily teaching and learning activities. The learning environment and the resources we provide are always carefully planned as this leads to purposeful learning through play. Children are taught through themes that are familiar and interesting to them. These are based on both

topics set out by the school and driven by the children so that they capture their curiosity and enthusiasm.

### **An example of the school day**

8:40 – First bell. Doors open

12:50 – Registration

8:50 – Second bell. Doors close. Registration

1:00 – Mathematics teaching session

9:00 – Phonics, handwriting and reading related activities

1:20 – Topic teaching session

10:00 – Literacy teaching session

1:30 - Child initiated learning and teacher led activities

10:30 – Child initiated learning time and teacher led activities

2:45 – Story, song and circle time.

11:45 – Lunch Time

3:10 – Home time

### **Early Reading**

Children in Foundation Stage have a daily phonics session. Phonics introduces children to the world of letter sounds, rather than letter names. The methods used allow children to develop independent Literacy skills. Our Phonics sessions are taught through a systematic phonic approach following the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised scheme which captivates our children.



The five basic skills taught through phonics are:

1. Learning the letter sounds (phonemes).
2. Learning the shape of the letters (graphemes).
3. Blending sounds to read.
4. Identifying sounds in words in order to spell.
5. Spelling the tricky words (those you are unable to sound out).

Each week your child will share the sounds and words they have been learning in school with you via their home learning. We will also have a Phonics information evening and provide opportunities for you to observe phonics teaching sessions in the autumn term.

We use the Little Wandle Big Cat Phonics reading scheme within Foundation Stage as it progresses in line with the phonic sounds taught. Initially children will be able to have a Reading for Pleasure book, this is a 'free choice' library book, as well as weekly letter sounds that they have been taught. Once the children have developed blending skills, they also have a Little Wandle Big Cat Phonics reading scheme book. This will be changed weekly and communication between school and home will be shared through their planner.

## Wider Curriculum Experiences

### Snack Cafe and Cookery

Within the classroom we have a designated 'snack café' area. All children will be able to access fruit, milk and water throughout the day. We also prepare other healthy snacks, such as cheese and crackers, yoghurts etc. and taste food from around the world as a way of exploring other cultures. We also cook with the children on a regular basis. In order for these things to take place we ask for a small donation.

### Trips and Visitors

Throughout the year, children experience trips within our local area and to nearby destinations. We also invite a range of visitors into school, including members of the RNLI and paramedic, and members of our local community during cultural and religious festivals.

### Outdoor learning

Being outdoors has a positive impact on all children's development. It gives children first hand contact with weather, seasons and the natural world. We have both an indoor and outdoor classroom as the outdoor environment can offer children different learning opportunities than inside. Children will be offered outdoor experiences daily, in all weather conditions. We have a small selection of waterproof outfits within school. We do ask that you provide your child with a **pair of labelled wellies** for muddy conditions. During the winter season **extra socks, gloves, hats and scarves** would be useful to have within school and **sunhats** would be beneficial throughout the summer months. All extra items of clothing will be kept in your child's box, to be used as and when needed.

### Uniform

In Foundation Stage, all children will have access to exciting activities which may involve them getting messy! Although we always use painting aprons and protective clothing, accidents do happen and so we do ask you to be aware that unfortunately from time to time your child's clothing may get mucky.

**All** of your child's clothes must be clearly labelled, including coats, shoes and PE kits. Labelling clothes, shoes, bags, water bottles and lunch boxes is really helpful to staff and also encourages the children to be independent.

#### Summer Uniform

White logo polo shirt  
Grey shorts/trousers/skirt/pinafore  
Gingham dress  
School logo sweatshirt/cardigan  
Sensible black shoes with grey or white socks. (No trainers or open toed shoes or sandals)

#### Winter Uniform

White shirt/blouse  
Grey trousers/skirt/pinafore  
School tie (optional in EYFS)  
School logo sweatshirt/cardigan  
Sensible black shoes with grey or black socks. (No trainers or open toed shoes or sandals)

### P.E. Kit

Red logo t-shirt

Black shorts

Red logo fleece

Pumps / Trainer

### Additional Items for EYFS

Wellington boots

Summer accessories - sunhat

Winter accessories – hat, scarf, gloves

### **How can I help?**

We aim to encourage the children's independence, to support this it would be helpful if by the time your child starts school they could...

- Put on their shoes and socks (easy fastening such as Velcro)
- Put on their coat
- Get dressed and undressed
- Wash and dry their hands
- Use a knife and fork
- Use the toilet by themselves (including wiping)
- Respond to simple instructions
- Begin to attempt new things
- Listen quietly to a story
- Know how to share
- Tell you how they feel
- Speak using simple sentences
- Take turns in conversation
- Recognise own name

Parents are children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together, the results have positive impact on children's development and learning. Our parent partnership is very important. We have an open-door policy with staff and are always willing to answer questions either before or after the school day. We send observations and memos through Tapestry, updating you on experiences and opportunities. Tapestry is very useful tool for you to check correspondences and updates. We also invite family members in regularly to celebrate children's learning experiences and attend curriculum workshops. We do ask that you take the time to look through your child's book bag and planner. Your biggest role is to support our work within school, any reading books or phonic sounds sent home should be regularly practised, as the best learning experiences for children at this age is little and often. Share your child's online learning journal with them each week and make entries together. Our school planners are mainly used to log progress with reading both in school and at home. They also contain many useful strategies and targets used within school, so act as a useful reference whilst you are working with your child at home.