

## EYFS at Simonside Primary School

At Simonside Primary School our Nursery and Reception classes are fully integrated into our school and all children access our purposeful and empowering Early Years Curriculum which fully prepares them for the next steps in their school career and opens the doors to the wider world.

We welcome enquiries at any time for places in our Nursery or Reception classes. We believe that it is important for you to be able to visit our school and to gain an insight into school life. We proudly invite you to meet our dedicated team, to visit our excellent facilities, to experience our high-quality learning environment and to see how our school operates beyond Early Years. We hold open evenings in Autumn term to allow parents to view our school. These will be advertised on our school website. We can also arrange private tours of the school upon request. Please contact the school office for further information or to arrange a visit by ringing 0191 2860776.

### Nursery

#### What do we offer?

Children can start in our Nursery in the term after they have turned 3 years of age. All children are entitled to 15 hours of free childcare. At Simonside we provide spaces as follows.

Mon, Tues all day (9am – 3pm) and Wednesday morning (9am – 12noon)

OR

Wednesday afternoon (12 noon – 3pm, Thursday and Friday all day (9am – 3pm)

Full time (5 full days per week 9am – 3pm) places are available for those families who are entitled to 30 hours. See [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) -30 hours free child care for eligibility. If you qualify for 30-hours of funding for working parents, we request that you continue to register for this scheme so that the school can claim this funding.



## **What will my child learn?**

We have a wonderful Nursery environment where we offer an abundance of fun and exciting learning opportunities which are planned to motivate and inspire young learners through their own interests and enjoyments. Children are encouraged and supported to become active learners who enjoy playing and exploring.

We believe children learn quickly and animatedly when they are able to follow their own joys and passions. We encourage our children to be independent learners and to believe in themselves and each other.

Children's communication and language skills underpin everything that they go on to achieve in their life, so we place a high value in encouraging our children to develop a love of books early on. We do this through fun and engaging story trays, role-play activities, costumes and repeat reading! Once children know a story well, they will often select the story to re-tell to themselves and their friends.

We also recognise just how important talking is to young children so we regularly set up activities to encourage children to engage with their peers and adults, developing relationships and their vocabulary.

Children in Nursery are taught Foundations for phonics through our whole school phonics programme Little Wandle Letter and Sounds. The children will develop listening and communication skills through a range of fun and lively phonics activities. Adults use rhyme time sessions, tuning into initial sounds and a range of reading texts to develop children's literacy skills and prepare children for their reading journey through school beginning in their Reception year.

Early mathematics skills are also taught through a range of exciting songs and games, both adult and child initiated. These encourage counting, number recognition and an awareness of shape and measure. Children have lots of opportunities to explore mathematics through play-based activities, nursery rhymes and counting games.

We believe in following the interests of children so that they engage fully in their learning and we explore a range of themes and topics based on children's interests.

To find out more about the exciting curriculum we provide for our Nursery children, please see below our curriculum overview for Nursery and our half termly knowledge organisers.

Lunch in Nursery - Children are welcome to bring a packed lunch or can stay for one of our delicious school lunches. School lunches are charged at £3.00 daily. Please check to see if your child is entitled to free school lunches.



What does your child need?

A waterproof coat - we like to be outside in all weathers!

A water bottle

Children in Nursery wear the same uniform as the rest of school. Please check our uniform pages for more information. Please name all of your child's belongings.

Please see below our parent's information booklet which is full of helpful information you will need before your child starts in our school Nursery.



## Reception

### What do we offer?

We offer full time Reception places at Simonside which follow the usual school year starting at the beginning of September until the end of July. Children attend school from 8.45am until 3.10pm. Parents can also access our breakfast club and after school club wrap around care for Reception age children. There are additional costs for these facilities.

### What will my child learn?

Reception is a busy year with lots to do and lots to learn! During this year the children will learn through a carefully planned, ambitious curriculum with a balance of adult led activities alongside many opportunities to explore, play, create and investigate. At this age the children start to develop the understanding of key communication skills as well as developing more social relationships with their peers and adults in the environment. Reception children enjoy an exciting and supportive provision. The engaging environment and carefully planned activities ensure that the children make good progress throughout the year.

Our Reception curriculum is rich in wonderful books and exciting learning opportunities which create memorable experiences for all children. Children learn about their immediate and local environment as well as about the wider world. Our aim in Reception is to teach our children our key school values – Listen and Learn, Be Kind and Show Respect. Alongside these children are taught a huge range of basic skills to make them confident, competent and happy learners.

Children will learn early reading and writing skills through daily lessons based on our phonics programme - **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds**. This is a systematic synthetic phonics program focusing on fast-paced, daily teaching of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs). Starting in Autumn, it quickly moves from single letter sounds to blending, decoding, and reading fully decodable books, ensuring high success rates through rigorous repetition, "keep-up" support, and consistent, structured, 15-20 minute daily lessons.

### **Key Aspects of Reception Phonics Program**

**Structure:** Daily, 15-20 minute lessons designed to build confidence through familiarity and routine.

**Progression:** Begins with Phase 2 (single letter sounds) in Autumn 1, moving through Phase 3 (digraphs/trigraphs) and into Phase 4 (consonant clusters) by the end of Reception.

**Focus on GPCs & Tricky Words:** Children learn letter sounds (GPCs) and "tricky words" (non-decodable words) systematically.

**Blending & Reading:** Intensive focus on decoding words and reading directly from books that only contain sounds they have already learned.

**"Keep Up" Sessions:** Daily, immediate support for children falling behind to ensure they stay on track.

Reception children will also take part in daily class and group sessions in mathematics. We use The **National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics** (NCETM) Reception

maths programme which focuses on building a deep, "mastery" understanding of numbers 0–10 through practical, playful, and consistent daily activities. Children learn skills in :

**Cardinality and Counting:** Understanding "howmanyness," counting to 20, and linking cardinal values to numerals.

**Comparison:** Comparing sets up to 10 using language like "more than," "fewer than," and "equal to".

**Composition:** Understanding that a number can be composed of two or more smaller numbers (e.g., 3 and 2 make 5), including "part-whole" relationships.

**Pattern:** Looking for and finding patterns, including spatial (shapes) and temporal (rhythms) patterns.

**Shape and Space:** Exploring 2D and 3D shapes, and understanding how shapes move or combine.

**Measures:** Comparing attributes such as length, weight, and volume.

To find out more about the exciting curriculum we provide for our Reception children, please see below our curriculum overview for Reception and our half termly knowledge organisers.



## The EYFS Curriculum

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework is the statutory, national document for England setting standards for learning, development, and care of children from birth to age 5. Updated in September 2025, it dictates a mandatory seven-area curriculum focusing on prime and specific skills, focusing on school readiness.

There are seven areas of learning and development that set out what schools must teach in Early Years. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The three prime areas are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas.

These are the prime areas:

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

We also support children in four specific areas, which help strengthen and develop the three prime areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm.

The specific areas are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

Our EYFS curriculum at Simonside Primary school is designed to meet the needs of all learners. We pride ourselves on being an inclusive school where all children are supported and encouraged to flourish.

Lunch in Reception - Children can choose daily from a range of healthy and nutritious food choices available for lunches and an ideal time to explore and try new foods as well as to practice their skills in using a knife and folk. Children are also welcome to bring a packed lunch if you wish. School lunches are free for all children up until the end of Year 2.

### What does your child need?

A waterproof coat - we like to be outside in all weathers!

A water bottle

Children in Reception wear the same uniform as the rest of school. Please check our uniform pages for more information. Please name all of your child's belongings.

Please see below our parent's information booklet which is full of helpful information you will need before your child starts in our school Reception.