



Conkers Reception, Year 1 and Year 2



Information for Parents

Welcome to Conkers'

Leavening Community Primary School

Thank you for showing an interest in our Reception Class at Leavening Community Primary School. We know that choosing the right school for your child can be a daunting task. For some children, this will be their first experience of being away from home and from parents. We aim to make the transition as smooth and positive as possible, by providing high quality care and education in a safe, supportive environment with experienced and qualified staff.

We hope that you find this booklet useful. It is designed to answer some of the questions you may have about our school and the Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 (Conkers') class and it explains a little bit about what happens here. Our staff are always available to answer any of your queries. Please feel free to contact us for more information and to visit our provision, to see for yourself what Leavening Community Primary School has to offer you and your child.

Contact Details

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Staff

Headteacher: Mrs Sian Mitchell
EYFS/ KS1 Leader: Mrs J Milson

Our school purpose is: **'TOGETHER WE CAN...'**

This is underpinned by our 4 core values:

- 1. Look and learn beyond the classroom.**
- 2. Aim high so everyone can shine.**
- 3. Care, share and belong.**
- 4. Lead, teach and learn with passion.**

Admissions

We welcome visits to our school and would be happy to show you around our lovely setting.

To apply for your child's place in Reception class, visit the NYCC website

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/apply-place-primary-or-secondary-school>

A Reception place at Leavening School is NOT guaranteed – even if your child attends our nursery. We are not involved in the admissions process. This is done centrally.

Admissions are governed by the Local Authority and parents have the option to appeal against their decisions.

For further information please refer to our admissions policy.

Our Indoor Classroom

At Leavening Community Primary School we offer a creative curriculum where learning takes place both indoors and outdoors. The learning environment in our Conkers classroom and outdoor learning area allows children to learn through play throughout Reception and Key Stage 1.

We believe play underpins all development and learning for young children. We plan experiences that build on children's interests and their spontaneous play as much as possible. They are encouraged to join in all the activities, to be independent and to make choices. We offer a rich and varied curriculum in a safe but inviting environment. Children learn best when they are happy, safe and secure. We understand that children develop at their own pace, but with encouragement and opportunity will reach their full potential. We use our observations of the children to help understand the child's current stage of development and ensure that activities are well matched to the children's needs and address the next steps in learning, through planned, purposeful play, with both child-initiated and adult-led activities.

Our environment is planned to give children the opportunity to extend and develop their thinking and learning across all areas of the curriculum. Each area offers a different variety of learning experiences for our children.

These areas are:

- Creative Area
- Construction Area
- Maths Area
- Reading Area
- Role Play Area
- Writing Area

We offer opportunities for children to:

- Make friendships, show kindness to others, learn to share and take turns
- Develop their communication, listening and language skills
- Build their mathematical understanding
- Use imagination in their play
- Discover the world around them
- Enjoy tactile and sensory experiences
- Engage in creative activities
- Develop physical and mark making skills
- Operate technological equipment

Our Outdoor Classroom

We value outdoor play experiences and therefore use our outdoor area in all weathers. Please can you ensure your child is dressed appropriately for all weathers. During winter please provide named wellies (if coming in wellies please also bring shoes to change into), gloves, hat and a suitable coat. We have some spare wellies. In summer please provide your children with appropriate clothing and a sun hat. As your child will be climbing and running, open-toed sandals are not allowed. We ask parents to apply sun screen to all exposed areas of children's skin before school. Please ensure all items are named!

Children might get muddy. Perhaps use an old coat, so that it doesn't matter too much if they come home dirty. It probably means they've had a great time!

Our outdoor environment offers:

- Large construction area with crates, planks and tyres.
- Water and sand play areas
- Mud kitchen
- Scooters
- Opportunities for planting
- Den making
- A large area for games
- Opportunities for quiet reading
- Mark making opportunities



Learning to deal with risk

Our environment offers children physical challenges and we support children in making judgements about staying safe. Children are given real scissors and sometimes tools. All our activities are "risk assessed" but accidents may happen. If your child has a minor accident, we will inform you with an accident form at the end of the session. If your child becomes ill or has a more serious injury, they will be looked after by someone qualified in first aid and we will contact you immediately. Please make sure we have up-to-date contact details.

Curriculum

The **Early Years Foundation Stage framework** informs our planning and daily practice.

- **A Unique Child:** Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.
- **Positive Relationships:** Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships where there is a strong partnership between practitioners and parents and carers.
- **Enabling Environments:** Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, which encourage independence.

Learning and development is based on the **Characteristics of Effective Learning:**

Playing and Exploring:

Finding out and exploring; Playing with what they know; Being willing and 'having a go'

Active Learning:

Being involved and concentrating; Keeping trying; Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically:

Having their own ideas; Making links; Choosing ways to do things

The curriculum is divided into 7 areas of learning and development:

3 Prime areas:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

We promote this aspect of the curriculum by supporting the transition between home and Nursery, promoting an inclusive ethos, and providing opportunities for each child to become a valued member of the group so that strong self- image and high self-esteem are achieved. We aim to enthuse children so that they have a positive attitude towards learning and see themselves as successful learners. We also provide opportunities to enable them to learn how to co-operate and work harmoniously alongside others.

Communication and Language

We provide opportunities for children to talk and communicate in a wide range of situations. They learn to respond to adults and to each other, to practise and extend their range of vocabulary and communication skills, including being able to listen carefully. Children are taught Phase 2 phonics skills through a series of fun games and activities. These include games to support the development of listening skills, to help children distinguish between different sounds, to discriminate between sounds and identify speech sounds and words.



Physical Development

Children develop and practise their gross and fine body movements through a variety of activities. Our work in Conkers class also helps children to increase their understanding of how their bodies work and what they need to do to be healthy and safe. Children are given a variety of experiences to develop their fine motor skills through malleable play.

PE and Forest Schools

In the first half of each term, children participate in physical exercise sessions twice a week, which involve a range of activities including: netball, football, gymnastics, athletics and ball skills. During the second half of each term, children join in one Forest School session and one PE session.

Forest Schools involves children:

- Exploring our Forest School area
- Observing the nature around us
- Using various tools to practise skills such as witting wood
- Planting trees and flowers
- Learning to tie a range of knots
- Creating fires safely

4 Specific areas:



Literacy

In Reception, we help children develop a love of books and to explore and enjoy reading. Children read with adults and are told traditional stories and sing rhymes and songs. Children are encouraged to mark-make as part of their play. Adults model the writing process and support children to give meaning to their marks. Children will also access daily phonics sessions where they will learn the sounds that individual letters make (phonemes) and these sounds will in turn help them to blend and read words.

Mathematics

There are opportunities for children to develop their understanding of number, measurement, pattern, shape and space. This is achieved by providing a stimulating environment in which they can enjoy, explore, learn, practise and talk about these concepts.



Understanding of the World

Opportunities are created for children to explore and to find out about their environment, including the people and places that are important to them. This involves the children in solving problems, making decisions, experimenting, predicting, planning and questioning in a variety of situations.



Expressive Arts and Design

Children explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities which include art, design and technology, music, movement, dance and imaginative and role play.

Meeting Individual Needs

Our curriculum is planned to meet the range of different needs and interests of children. We make provision for groups or individuals who need extra support or additional challenge to enable them to fulfil their potential. The learning is achieved through a mix of play-based opportunities, adult support and adult led activities. During short daily sessions we also provide adult directed opportunities. These might involve:

- Speaking and listening activities
- Circle time
- Early mark making activities leading to writing
- Phonics time
- Music and movement
- Number activities
- Songs and rhymes
- Story time

Settling In

Settling into school is an important time for young children and their families. At Leavening Community Primary School, we aim to make this process as smooth as possible.



You and your child will be invited to attend a Zoom 'settling in meeting' before they start in Conkers Reception. This provides the opportunity to meet the staff, talk about your child and discuss any needs or concerns.



We hope to make this experience a positive and enjoyable one for everyone. We hope that by working with parents/carers we can provide the best possible start for your child's entry into school, laying firm foundations for the future.

We regularly have opportunities for parents to join in with children's activities, such as 'Stay and Play' sessions and special events. Each term there will be an opportunity to meet staff and discuss children's learning.

Start and finish of the day (COVID safe arrangements – these may change in line with Government guidance)

Please line up with your child on the footpath outside the main school gate. You may want to talk to the member of staff if you need to pass on information, but please make sure you wear a mask. Children usually settle better with a quick goodbye, so be cheerful and try not to prolong it. If there is a problem with your child, we will let you know but usually they are okay once parents have left and they get busy learning.

At the end of the day, we ask parents and carers to wait on the footpath outside the main school gate. Conkers' children wait at the green gate just outside Conkers' classroom. A member of staff will open the gate and will call out individual child's names when parents/ carers arrive. In this way we can ensure children's safety. If you are unavoidably delayed please let us know, so that we can reassure your child.

It is vital we know who is collecting your child from school. Please let us know if someone different is coming and preferably introduce them to us, as we never let a child go with an unknown person. Reception and KS1 children must be brought into and collected from school by a responsible adult. Please complete the Permission to Collect from school form to let us know who may be collecting your child.

At the toilet

The majority of children are fully toilet trained by the time they start school. However, we understand accidents can happen and we will assist your child to change clothing if required. It is useful for each child to have some spare named clothes in their bag as our supplies are limited.

Staff who provide intimate care to children have a high awareness of child protection issues. This can be when cleaning up a child after they have soiled themselves or helping them to change clothes when wet. Leavening Community Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of children will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. The team recognises that there is a need to treat all children with respect when intimate care is given and no child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain.

Clothing/ Uniform

Our school uniform consists of grey trousers, shorts, skirt or pinafore dress with a white shirt or blouse, a royal blue school sweatshirt or cardigan and black shoes. Blue and white dresses may be worn in warmer weather. Reversible school fleeces are also available.

Our P.E. kit consists of blue or black shorts with a white P.E. T-shirt and soft black pumps for indoor P.E. and trainers for outdoor P.E., an old tracksuit for outdoor P.E. in winter would also be useful.

We also do regular Forest School sessions throughout the year. For this, children will need old/warm clothes, warm coat, waterproofs, hat, gloves and wellies.

Please make sure all uniform, P.E. kit and Forest School clothing is clearly labelled with your child's name and is brought in a separate named bag.

School uniform can be ordered from www.myclothing.com

Messy Play

Water, paint, glue and gloop (such as cornflower mixed with water) are used regularly and some children like to investigate with their hands. We have aprons for children to wear, but sometimes clothes will get wet or messy. **Please do not expect your child to keep clean at school!** Children who are worried about getting dirty may not learn. Reassure your child that you do not mind it they look a bit untidy when you pick them up. **We play outside daily, so a warm waterproof coat and footwear are essential every day.**

Snacks

Please send your child to school with a named bottle filled with water daily. Fresh water will be available for refilling their bottle and milk is provided as part of the Free Milk scheme for under 5's. Fresh fruit is available daily and children are encouraged to try it. You are welcome to send your child with their own fruit or vegetable snack if you'd prefer.

Lunch

Children have a choice of meals, including:

- Hot school lunch
- Vegetarian school lunch
- Packed lunch from home (in line with the school's Healthy Eating policy)

School lunches are paid through the ParentPay scheme – a **school lunch costs £2.50 per day**. Parents may be eligible for Free School Meals. If you think you may be eligible, please speak to the office as soon as possible.

If your child has any specific dietary requirements or allergies, please let staff know.

ParentPay

Leavening is a cashless school; school dinners, additional childcare, trips etc. are paid for via an online payment service – ParentPay. You will be given a ParentPay activation letter and full instructions on how to use ParentPay when your child starts at school. Please set up your account as soon as you receive your ParentPay activation details. For more information please visit www.parentpay.com/parents or ask in the school office.

Absence and Illness

If your child is ill – please contact the school immediately. **Medical appointments** – if your child has a dental, clinic or any other medical appointment, please inform school. Please try to ensure that these are booked outside of school time wherever possible. **Family holidays** – these should not be taken in term time and absence cannot be authorised except for limited exceptional circumstances.

Please inform us of the reason your child is absent from school and of any infectious illness.

Illness	Appropriate action
Sickness/ Diarrhoea	Please do not bring your child to school until 48 hrs after the last bout of illness
Conjunctivitis	Please do not bring your child to school if their eyes are 'gunky'. Wait until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
Chicken pox	Please do not bring your child to school until the last spot has scabbed.

Notwithstanding the above, it is expected that parents/carers use their discretion and if children remain unfit for school beyond the above guidelines, they stay at home.

Should your child become ill, we will try to contact you as soon as possible so that they can be collected. Please help us by keeping your contact numbers up-to-date.

Medication

Any medication needs a prescribed medicine form to be completed at the office, in line with school policy. Please inform staff of the requirements. There is always at least one member of Paediatric First Aid qualified staff on the premises.

Reading and Homework

We will send your child home with a reading record and a reading book specific to the phonics phase that they are currently learning. Please listen to your child reading daily if possible, but at least 3 times a week. Once your child's reading record has been signed at home, at least 3 times, they will be able to choose a new book. On a Monday, your child will be given some phonics activities to do, please encourage them to complete these at home ready to be marked the following week. We will also send tricky words home in your child's book bag, please practise reading these regularly with your child.

Look out for head lice!

We'd rather not think about it but as your child starts school it is a good time to start the regular habit of checking for head lice. When you have washed your child's hair, use ordinary conditioner and comb through the hair with a fine-toothed comb. This should remove any eggs before they hatch. Make this part of your regular hygiene routine like cleaning teeth and the problem won't get out of hand.

Toys

Occasionally children like to bring a toy from home. Please discourage this as much as possible. Toys and other items can easily be lost, misplaced or even damaged which can be very upsetting for the children.

Mobile phones

Mobile phones must not be used whilst in school. **Phones should be turned off prior to entering** – no calls should be made or received and photographs should not be taken.

Communication

We try to keep you informed about events in Conkers through Tapestry, Class Dojo, regular newsletters and emails. Communication is a two-way process, so if there is anything you would like to know, please ask.

Tapestry

We use a web-based interactive Learning Journey tool called Tapestry to record observations and assessments of children's learning and development. This begins with the information you share with us and builds during your child's time with us. Staff take photos, record videos and make notes on an iPad. By logging on with a secure username and password you will be able to view all of your children's observations, photographs and videos. You will even receive an email telling you when a new observation or piece of work is available for you to view. This will enable you to follow your child's individual progress closely and you can reflect upon their achievements with your child. You can add comments so that we as a staff find out about which activities your child really enjoyed and the learning they get up to at home.

Tapestry is a secure website, stored on a highly secure server which is monitored closely. You will be asked to provide an email address so that we can set up access to your child's Learning Journey electronically. Please note each parent only has access to their own child's Learning Journey. We will also give you detailed information on how to view/use your child's Learning Journey. If you do not have access to e-mail, please don't worry! Your child is still able to have an online Learning Journey and we will regularly print out observations and add them to the Learning Journey books so that you and your child can read through them together. We also collect children's drawings and examples of things they have done at school. Please see our Tapestry Policy for more details.

Please complete the parent's agreement form, to enable us to set up your child's Tapestry account.

We ask parents and carers to complete the 'All About Me' section of Tapestry and an 'essential information' form. It is important that we have information about medical conditions, allergies, contact details etc. It also helps us to know about children's family, their culture, likes, dislikes, pets etc.

Tips for Starting School

As the time for school approaches, there are ways in which you can help prepare your child and make their entry to school a happy time. Here are a few suggestions:

- Get to know other children that are starting at the same time
- Encourage them to dress and use the toilet as independently as possible
- Be positive about starting school (hide any of your own worries or fears)
- Play games together e.g. I Spy, snakes and ladders, snap
- Help your child to realise how numbers occur in everyday life
- Inform the school of any health, social or emotional problems
- When practising spelling your child's name, please encourage them to use lower case letters (except for the starting letter). Also, teach the letter sound as well as the letter name.

We hope you have found this booklet informative but do not hesitate to ask for any further information you may require. We are very much looking forward to meeting you and your child and getting to know them. We hope this will be an enjoyable and positive first experience of school.