

Barham C of E Primary School



Welcome to Wren's Class

A Foundation Stage full of
care, fun and excitement
providing a wonderful learning
environment for children.

What is the Foundation Stage?

The Foundation Stage is the period of education from age three to five.

During the first year the children may be in a range of settings such as LEA nursery schools or classes, private day nurseries, playgroups or childminder provision.

The second year of the Foundation Stage is often called the reception year as the majority of children join a school reception class during this time.

Children at Barham School join the reception class in the September of the academic year when they become five.



Why is it important?

The Foundation Stage claims its name and importance from the fact it gives children secure foundations for later learning.

Early experiences affect children's attitude to learning so it is vitally important we get it right.

All children learn best from experiences that are suitable for their stage of development.

Play is key to the way young children learn. Through play children can develop, for example: the confidence needed for learning; the social skills needed for personal development and the skills needed for reading and writing.

We encourage independence from an early stage to aid problem solving skills.

Taking all this into account, the children will be given the opportunity to learn through a carefully planned, well-balanced, topic based curriculum, that follows the varied interests of Barham children.



What does it involve?

There are seven areas of learning in the Foundation Stage.

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The children are encouraged to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

During the Foundation Stage, these areas of learning will be introduced in ways that are suitable for young children i.e. existing skills and interests to aid their development.



How will the children be assessed?

Within the seven areas of learning are sets of Early Learning Goals. Children are assessed and monitored through their play and observations are recorded in their personal profile, which we will discuss with you at parents' evenings in the autumn and spring terms.

The results are used in our school system that tracks children's progress from the reception year through to year six.

The results of assessments are used to plan appropriate learning opportunities for the children.

Getting ready for school.

It is very important to us that the children feel comfortable about starting school.

Have a look through the next few pages to see how you can prepare your child for starting school.

Activities to share at home:

Helpful activities for you and your child to do together:

- Helping you around the house, e.g. setting the table, washing up, putting the shopping away.
- Getting dressed independently.
- Sitting together looking at books and listening to stories.
- Visiting places together like the park, supermarket, station, bank, library, post office etc...
- Singing rhymes and songs together
- Counting steps
- Looking for numbers in the environment
- Looking out for shapes and simple patterns
- Playing board games
- Playing I spy and guessing games

More things you may like to do and use:

- Ball games
- Play dough
- Lego
- Sand and water
- Child scissors
- Skipping

Remember, learning is fun and exciting, involving new experiences.

Always praise and encourage your child's efforts.

All of these activities provide lots of opportunities for talking and sharing ideas with each other.

Talking together

A child learns a lot from talking.

Talk about:

- What happened today.
- What you did today.
- A television programme.
- A book you have shared.
- Things you like/dislike.
- The games your child plays with other children.

Listening skills

It is important a child learns to listen.

You can help by:

- Reading stories
- Learning rhymes and songs
- Showing and explaining how things work.



Can your child..?

When your child starts school it would be helpful if he/she could do some of these things....

Dress and undress him/ herself

Put on and fasten his/her coat

Change shoes

Use the toilet properly and flush it

Wash and dry his/her hands and face

Use a knife and fork

Tidy/clear away his/her toys

Use a tissue



Learning to read

What do we do at school?

- When your child first comes to school, they will be encouraged to select a story book from our book corner. They can take this home and share with you.
- In school we use a phonic-based approach, encouraging children to 'segment' (break down) and 'blend' (re-build) the sounds in words, beginning with three-letter words, e.g. b-a-g- = bag.
- All through school, we emphasise the importance of 'pure' sounds, so we say 'mmmm' instead of 'muh' for instance.
- Your child will begin with a 'My Home Learning book'
This will comprise short, simple sentences of regular phonetic words. Later on, high frequency words will be included.
- As your child begins to read with greater confidence and skill, they will begin to read short published books which are phonetically based. The children will continue to segment and blend as they read.
- As they move through the school and become fluent skilled readers they will read a range of books from various reading schemes that have been picked because they are good texts, easy to listen to and read and remember, with predictable, easy language.



What can you do at home?

- At the start of term, your child will need a book bag. Please do not put water bottles in book bags.
- Find a cosy corner and a quiet five minutes.
- Always be positive.
- If you're both getting frustrated, put the book away!
- Encourage your child to segment and blend each word. Make sure your child points to each sound as they segment, and then run their finger under the whole word as they blend the sounds.
- 'I' (and some other common or high frequency words) is a word the children learn very early on - it isn't sounded out and so:
'I h-a-d had a p-o-t pot.'
- Read the book through again together.
- Read as many different types of books as you can.
- Join a local library.
- Be a good role model - let your child see male and female role models reading. This is very important.
- Make the children aware of written language around them e.g. on packets.
- Talk lots!

