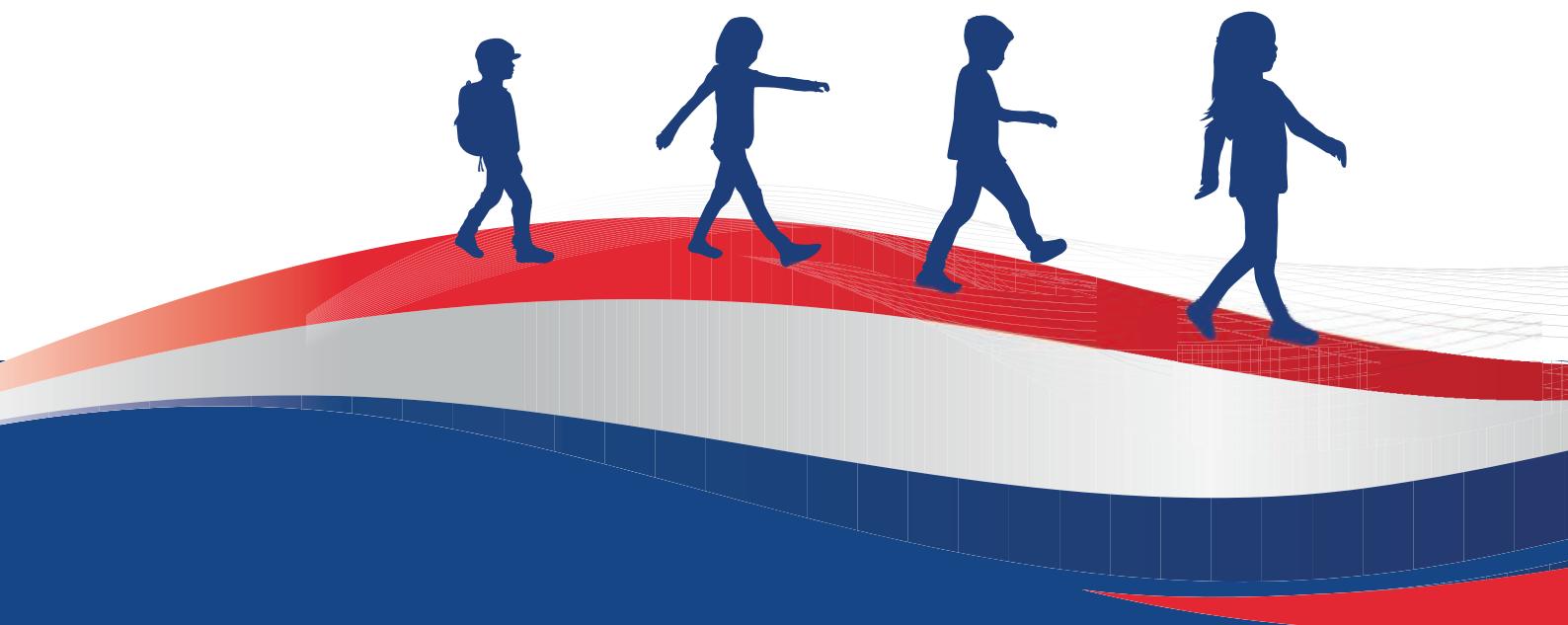


THE
BRITISH
SCHOOL
OF AMSTERDAM

EARLY YEARS
SCHOOL



Welcome to Reception.

Your guide to joining in September 2021.

Heads welcome



Dear Parents

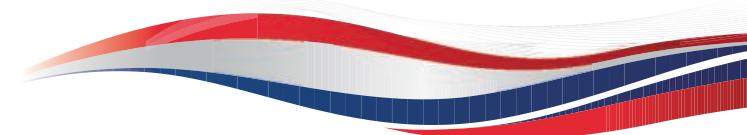
We are looking forward to your child joining Reception in September. We want you to know that your children will be nurtured and well cared for. Our dedicated staff strive to ensure that your children feel happy in their environment and feel part of the school community.

Some children will be transferring from our Nursery department, other children are joining the Early Years School for the first time. Regardless, we are sure that parents will want to find out more about our Reception department and will want to know how they can support their child's transition.

As parents are currently not able to visit the school and we are unable to run our usual transition programme, we have produced this information booklet. We have included as much information as possible but please be aware that some aspects of our programme are not able to run at the moment due to Covid-19, this may still be the case in September and therefore the programme is subject to change. Please take the time to read the information provided and, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me – c.newson@britams.nl

I look forward to meeting you in September.

Kind regards,
Claudia van de Laar
Head of Early Years



Organisation

Class allocation

Classes are created for the start of each year. Children are grouped according to the number of classes in the year group. There are currently 4 Reception classes with a maximum of 24 children in each class. There is a teacher and a full time support member of staff in each class.

We try to ensure the following:-

- An equal number of pupils in each class,
- An equal number of boys and girls in each class,
- An equal number of children for whom English is an additional language,
- An equal number of children requiring learning support in each class.

Many of the children in the Early Years are learning English as an additional language. Such children often start school speaking little or no English but very soon gain the confidence and skills to communicate quite freely in English; this being their second and in some cases their third language. All recent research indicates that a child will learn English more effectively if they continue to develop their first language at the same time. Children's knowledge and skills transfer across languages from their first language they have learned at home, to the school language. With such evidence in mind we do not separate children who speak the same language, rather we try to ensure that there is at least one other child in the class who shares the same language.

All the classes in the Early Years School are named after trees. In Reception we have Chestnut, Hazel, Maple and Oak Class.



Organisation

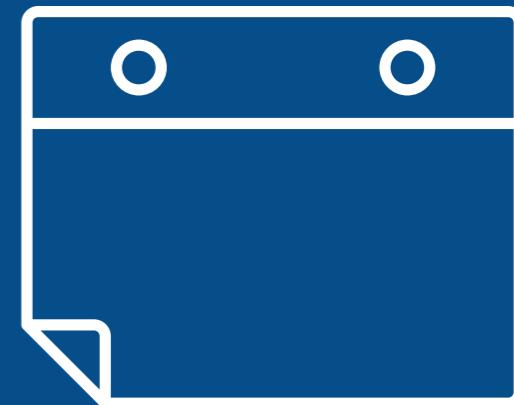
The First Week – What to Expect

In order to make the transition as smooth as possible, we stagger the days the children start school. All children starting Reception, even those who have attended our Nursery full time in the previous school year attend part time during the first week. Children starting Reception attend just two full days during the first week.

The class is divided into two; one half will attend on **Tuesday 7 and Thursday 9 September (08.50 – 15.10)** and the second half on **Wednesday 8 September and Friday 10 September, (08.50 – 15.10)**. This ensures that each child receives more individual attention and the staff can spend more time getting to know your child. You will be notified before the end of the term which days your child will be expected to attend.

Prior to starting school, we will arrange a zoom meeting so that staff can introduce themselves to children starting school for the first time.

From the start of the second week, all children are expected to attend full time. There is no option for children in Reception to attend part time.



Starting school

Getting prepared

Even children who have been in Nursery or a day care setting can find starting Reception a big step. For some children it will be their first experience of full time school. Some children may have never been to school or a similar setting before. Please help your child prepare for Reception by talking about coming to school.



You can also help by:



David
not
DAVID

- Teaching your child to dress and undress independently as children are required to change for PE. **Choose shoes with velcro rather than laces and clothes with easy fastenings.** Please make sure **EVERYTHING** is labelled, this is the only way to track lost property back to the rightful owner.
- Encouraging the children's independence in meeting their own needs. Children need to be able to go to the toilet independently and know to wash and dry their hands afterwards. Children must be able to feed themselves and know to tidy up after themselves.
- Involving your child in choosing items for school, e.g a lunch box and a water bottle so that they are familiar with them and that they have things that they like. **Please choose a box that can be easily opened.** Children must have a back pack for their snack box, lunch box and water bottle.
- Helping your child to recognize his/her name. Reminder – capital letter for the first letter of your child's name, lower case letters for the rest. **Please do not teach your child to write his/her name in capital letters.**
- Arriving at school in plenty of time for the start of the school day and in time for the end of the day. Please be punctual.



Under our current
Covid-19 protocol,
school starts at

08.50

(children can be dropped
off from 08.30)



School
ends

15.10

School items

What do I need to provide?

Children need a fruit or similar healthy snack for snack time every day. This is eaten in the classroom after playtime. Snacks should be packed in a named, plastic box.

Children need a water bottle so that they can drink water throughout the day. Children eat their lunch at school. Parents can either supply the lunch from home or can arrange for lunch to be provided by our school catering service Markies.

Children need a packed lunch that can be eaten cold. The children have their lunch in the classroom 12.00 – 12.30 or 12.30 – 13.00. They are supervised by their class teachers. Slow eaters are given time to eat again after the lunchtime playtime. Please pack a reasonable amount of lunch – teachers assume that parents expect their children to eat most of what they have provided.

Children need a spare set of clothes to change in to, this does not have to be school uniform but should include extra underwear.



Please note we are a 'nut free' school.

There are a number of children in the school with a severe nut allergy. No snack or lunch should contain nuts or foodstuffs with nuts or traces of nuts. This includes items such as pesto, nutella, hazelnut yoghurt, peanut butter etc.



Children are very welcome to celebrate their birthday in school and often bring a small 'treat' to share with their class at snack time, e.g. a small plain cake, a small box of raisins or some fruit. Please don't forget we are a nut free school. Party bags, small toys, sweets or lollipops may not be supplied.

School uniform



- Please be reminded that children are expected to wear school uniform at all times. Please support us by ensuring that your child adheres to the school uniform code. It is very frustrating for parents and children who always comply with the dress code to see other children wearing items of non-school uniform. Denim is NOT allowed therefore jeans must not be worn. The School has a range of branded uniform items in the school uniform shop. School uniform can also be bought from www.marksandspencer.co.uk, www.johnlewis.co.uk and other large UK department stores/supermarkets.



- Children need a white t-shirt and blue shorts for their PE kit. This is left in school in a school gym bag which will be provided. On days children have a gym session with the sports coach, children may come to school dressed in their PE kit, either blue shorts or blue jogging/tracksuit bottoms.



- Children need a pair of sport shoes/plimsolls for sport and a pair of wellington boots waterproof trousers. Children play outside in all weathers therefore it is important that they have the wet weather gear.

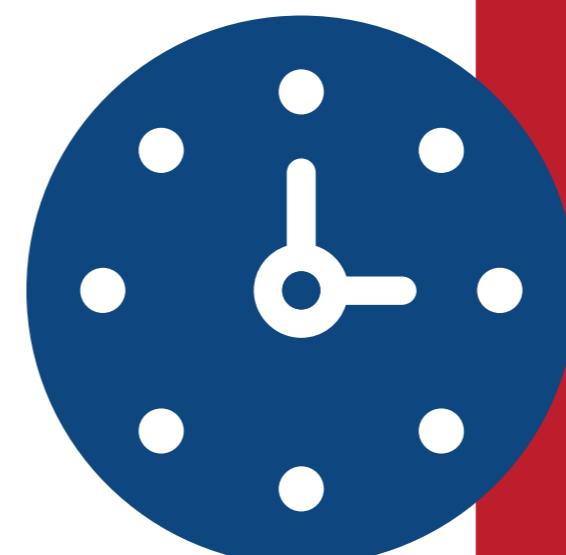
Details of the school uniform can be found on the school website and on firefly.



The school day

The Reception School day is structured as:

Welcome	08.30 – 08.45
Registration	08.50
Play time for Reception	10.00 or 10.30
Lunch time/Play time	12.00 – 13.15 or 12.30 – 13.45
End of School	15.10
Extra Curricular Programme	15.15 – 16.15



A few children may find it difficult to leave their parents, especially at the start of a new school year or term. We know that this is also difficult for you as parents but we would ask you to follow the advice of the class teacher which often is to leave quickly. The school will always telephone you if your child continues to be upset though in almost all cases children settle quickly once their parents have left.

Registration/Punctuality

We have an electronic registration system which records the children's attendance. The register is taken at 08.50am and at the start of the afternoon. Anyone arriving after the close of registration is recorded as 'late'. Lateness should be avoided at all times. Children who are late for school not only interfere with their own educational development but also with that of their peers. In the event a child does arrive at school late (i.e. after 08.50), he/she must report directly to the Reception to receive a late attendance mark in the register and to be escorted to their class.



Teaching and learning

Which curriculum do the children follow?

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) sets the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.



There are seven areas of learning and development that must shape educational programmes in Early Years settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three areas are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These three areas, the prime areas, are:

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

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

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



Dutch is taught as an additional language to children who are native English speakers or children who are proficient additional English language speakers. Native Dutch is taught to native Dutch children. Children must have at least one Dutch speaking parent and speak Dutch every day in the home.



English is taught as an additional language to additional language learners. EAL is taught in the classroom by the EAL teacher and children are withdrawn for sessions.

What do we expect?



For children joining Reception there are no special expectations – children do not need to be able to read and write or count to a certain number.

Sample timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
08.50 – 09.00			Registration		
09.00 – 09.20			Playtime		
09.20 – 9.45	Snack and Story/ Assembly	Snack and Story	Snack and Story	Snack and Story	9:30-10:00 Sport and Games
9:45 – 11:00	Maths (Phonics Groups)	Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL)	Knowledge and Understanding of the World (Phonics Groups)	Communication, Language and Literacy (CLL)	
11:00 – 11:30	7 Areas of Learning/1:1 Reading	7 Areas of Learning/1:1 Reading	7 Areas of Learning/1:1 Reading	7 Areas of Learning/1:1 Reading	10:20-11:30 Maths
11.40 – 12:10	Lunch				
12:10 – 12:30	Playtime				
12:30 – 12:45	Register/singing/story				
12:45 – 13.00	Phonics and Handwriting				
13.00 – 14.00	Library/ Write Dance	Maths	Maths Carpet Time 13:00 -13:30 (Ballet- 13:30-14:00) 7 Areas of Learning /CLL	Maths/Expressive Arts and Design	Knowledge and Understanding of the World
14:00-14:45		ICT /7 Areas of Learning	7 Areas of Learning /CLL	7 Areas of Learning	7 Areas of Learning/ICT
14:45 – 15:10	Story time / Home time				



During the first weeks of the term staff will carry out an on entry assessment to identify each child's needs. Children continue to work with the Foundation stage curriculum. They are all working through the developmental levels towards the goals in each of the areas which they should achieve during this school year. Records from Nursery are automatically passed on. Any records of their progress from previous schools or settings should be passed to your child's teacher. It is an individual approach to learning with children being taught individually, in small groups and sometimes as a class. There are different expectations for different children.

At the start of the year, children record very little of their work, the emphasis is on practical activities. Much of the teaching and learning is still achieved through play based activities.

There is a timetable which may appear very structured, this just ensures sufficient amount of time is spent on each subject.



Outdoors

Forest School

Forest School is the name for an approach to educating children in the outdoors environment on a regular basis. It has been very successful in the UK and originates from Denmark where Forest Schools have been an integral part of Early Years Education since the 1980s.

- Forest School activities will teach the children about caring for and understanding the natural environment. They explore and use natural materials. They will learn different skills, including using simple tools as well as how to keep safe, how to live in harmony with nature and how the seasons and nature change. The sessions will support the main curriculum and also have a strong emphasis on raising self-esteem and independence.
- Forest School sessions are led by a trained Forest School Leader.
- An integral part of the Forest School experience is that children will experience the outdoors in all weathers – rain, shine, snow or frost. With the exception of very high winds and thunder storms, please assume that your child will be outside when they take part in forest schools, even if it is for a shortened session. We will provide all children with a high visibility vest and waterproof trousers, but please feel free to provide your own.



Fitness and nutrition

FitNut

FitNut stands for Fitness & Nutrition. FitNut provides a stimulating learning experience to teach children about the importance of health, nutrition and fitness. It is hands-on and gives children a practical experience that can be taken home.

- It has a constant and consistent healthy message to inspire the children and their family.
- FitNut believes the key to bringing good nutrition into the home is through the children.
- Children will enjoy fun fitness sessions using real mini gym machines and exercise equipment followed by smoothie or juice making.



In addition to Forest School and FitNut children also have lessons with a visiting sports coach. We teach yoga and follow the massage in schools programme.

Educational visits

In Reception children enjoy ball-skills activities with a specialist teacher on alternate half terms as well as a weekly PE session with their class teacher. Children develop fundamental movement skills, become increasingly competent and confident in balance and coordination, individually and with others.

We go on educational visits throughout the year to museums and local attractions linked to what the children are learning. These are a wonderful opportunity for children to make exciting, real-life links with their learning.



After school care

Majest Global

The British School of Amsterdam works in partnership with after school care provider **Majest Global** to provide reliable, good quality after school care for children. Majest Global provides after school care exclusively to British School children between the ages 3 to 12 years.

The facility is open every day after school 3.00 – 6.30pm and during school holidays 8am to 6.30pm.



For all enquiries, please use the contact or meet us buttons on the school website: www.britishschool.amsterdam



Supporting your child At home

There are no specific expectations but if you would like to help your child at home in the holiday, on the following pages there are some suggested activities to help develop gross and fine motor skills (especially for pre-writing skills).

In addition, we teach phonics using Jolly Phonics. You may like to download the app for your child.



Activities

To develop large motor skills

- Balancing along a bench, wall or beam (encourage use of arms), start on a wider object and over time reduce to narrow
- Jumping both feet together
- Star jumps
- Hopping on one foot
- Standing on one foot, then the other (should be able to maintain for 10 seconds)
- Bouncing on a trampoline
- Musical bumps (stop still when the music stops)
- What's the time Mr.Wolf? game
- Hopscotch
- Skipping with a skipping rope (jumping from one side to the other of a rope on the floor is enough of a challenge to start with)
- Walking with fairy steps (feet toe-to-toe)
- Walking with giant steps
- Walking, hopping, running, skipping, jumping according to given directions (walk forward, skip to the side, jump back 5 times)
- Kicking a football
- Bowling
- Skittles
- Marbles

- Frog and rabbit jumps
- Jumping down the stairs one step at a time (under guidance!)
- Slithering like a snake
- Swimming
- Rotating wrists whilst keeping elbows still
- Walking on tiptoes forwards and backwards
- Walking on heels forwards and backwards
- Walking on insides of feet
- Recognizing fingers touched when obscured from view (hold a book over hand and touch one or two fingers, can s/he tell you which were touched)
- Finger sequencing (touch thumb with each finger). Left hand, then right, then both
- Touching end of nose with finger in an arc, eyes closed. Repeat this several times with alternate arms
- Playgrounds and parks (see saws, swings, climbing frames)
- Dressing up play, and getting self dressed and undressed

To develop fine motor skills

- Cutting pictures from magazine to make a collage
- Threading beads, pasta etc.
- Bread making (esp. kneading)
- Playdough
- Playing a musical instrument (eg. Piano, keyboard)
- Exposure to a variety of textures (sandpaper, cloth, vinyl, plastic, wood) and ability to describe what they feel without looking
- Hand exercises and games (mirroring your hand movements, clapping games, cats cradle)
- Finger rhymes and songs with actions
- Making large arm movements (to form letters, numbers etc)
- Large and free style painting and drawing on very big pieces of paper
- Drawing on a (mini) whiteboard
- Drawing on a chalk board
- Chalking on the pavement or in the garden
- Construction activities such as lego
- Sewing/threading through large binca
- Craft activities related to an area of special interest for the child
- Specific teaching of skills such as cutting (open, shut movement and finger placement) and sticking (don't glue up in the air; glue around the edges of the object, don't wind up a pritt stick too far)
- Help with positioning for fine motor tasks (not too near or far from a table, at comfortable height)
- Jigsaw puzzles
- Doll play or soft toy play where clothes can be changed (zips, buttons, laces)
- Experimenting with different textures through use of : shaving foam, clay, playdough etc.
- Opening and closing containers (being shown how to do so independently)
- Water play – involving pouring from one container to another
- Picking up beads or peas or other small objects from a bowl with a pair of tweezers and placing them in a different bowl
- Sorting buttons or coins or other similar objects
- Learning to tie laces



Extracurricular activities

What we offer

In 'normal' times, we run a limited extracurricular activities programme in Reception. Children are able to attend one extra curricular activity per week.



Home learning

Things to consider

We are living in very challenging and uncertain times. There is always the possibility that the Netherlands will go into lockdown again and the school will be forced to close. In such times we will switch to our on-line home learning programme. To make the switch easier, you may want to consider having some resources to hand. Some suggested items are listed below.

Children need to be seated at the table with the laptop or tablet directly in front of them.

Essential Items:

- Writing pencil
- Coloured pencils
- Glue stick
- Children's scissors
- Blank A4 workbook
- Coloured paper
- Phonics Card and Number Line (supplied by the school)
- Headphones
- Play dough

Other useful items:

- Set of water colours
- Markers
- Ruler
- Stickers
- Eraser
- Printer
- A4 paper

Here to help

Contact us

We are here to help you. If you ever have any questions or queries or just want to ask for some advice, please contact us.



Claudia van de Laar-Newson,
Head of Early Years:
c.newson@britams.nl

Linda Naghieh,
Head of Nursery:
l.naghieh@britams.nl

We hope your children are looking forward to joining Reception in September.



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