

2025/2026

Early Years Foundation Stage Parent Booklet

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Sidcot
Live Adventurously



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Introduction

Thank you for choosing Sidcot School to start your child's learning journey. This booklet is designed to go alongside the Junior School Handbook and contains information about the daily running of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) department.

Whether you are new or returning to the Sidcot Early Years Department, we are very much looking forward to giving you a warm welcome when you join us. Sidcot Junior School is a very special place to be and the Early Years Department is where the children first learn the Quaker principles and are encouraged to 'Live Adventurously'.

Our high staff ratios and child centred approach allows us to get to know each and every child as an individual, supporting them to challenge themselves. We believe play is the essential ingredient for children to learn and for that reason we let the children take the lead in their learning; our well qualified team then 'play' with the children and use this play as a vessel in which to move their learning forward.

We believe the Early Years is the foundation for lifelong learning. Our team are in the privileged position to make children feel positive and passionate about learning, a feeling which they can carry with them for their whole lives.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at lucy.beardsley@sidcot.org.uk

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The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Team

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EYFS rooms

Sidcot Pre-School (Butterfly Class)

Children from age 3 until they are
of Reception age.

Reception (Ladybird Class)

Reception-aged children who will usually
turn 5 during that academic year.

We have a 1:8 staff to children ratio across Pre-School and Reception.

Key workers

All children are allocated a Key Worker who is normally their class teacher or lead professional in that room. A Key Worker is responsible for fostering a close working relationship with home and school in order to achieve the optimum learning experience

for the child. Key Workers are also responsible for maintaining records on their children. A list of Key Workers and the children in their care can be found in the classroom.

Acclimatisation day and First day of term

The day before term begins in September (Friday 29 August) is Acclimatisation Day. This is an important part of our nurturing transition into Early Years. Children in Pre-School (who are starting Pre-School in September) and all Reception pupils are invited to a Stay and Play in our Early Years area. This helps to ensure these children continue the familiarisation process prior to term starting.

Children should arrive at the Early Years garden at 10:15 am with a hat/coat depending on the weather and a water bottle. Please collect your child(ren) at 11:15am where you will have a chance to meet the Early Years teachers whilst enjoying some refreshments.

Wrap-around care

Please see the Junior School Handbook for more details about booking Wrap-around Care. EYFS children are welcome to attend Breakfast Club, After School Care, Holiday Club and various After School Clubs (for Reception aged children).

Breakfast Club runs daily from 7:45am – 8:30am. This is held in the Junior School After School Care Area and children are walked to their classrooms for the start of the school day. Parents are requested to bring their children in as close to 7:45am as possible to ensure adequate time for eating breakfast. After School Care runs from 3:30pm until 6:00pm as required.

Holiday Club runs throughout the school holiday periods and is open to all children aged 3 upwards.

Registration details for the services above as well as details of the charges can be found in the Junior School Foyer or by contacting:

outofschoolcare@sidcot.org.uk

Children need to be booked into After School Care using the online system a minimum of 24 hours in advance. Passwords will be required for collection of children.

Daily routine including drop off and collection

In Pre-School, children are registered at 9:00am and in Reception at 8:40am, allowing time to drop off older siblings. We will then support them to find their name and place it on the self-registration board, place their book bag in their individual drawers or reading box and help them place any other coats or bags on their pegs outside the classroom.

All mornings follow a similar structure, except Thursday when the children participate in Forest School during

the morning. Depending on the age of the children and time of year, the morning session includes finger gym, phonics, stories, rhymes, maths, reading and lots of continuous provision time where the children can choose what they would like to do. During the continuous provision time, staff 'play' with the children and use their knowledge of the individuals and the curriculum to move the children's learning forward.

Afternoons follow a timetable as detailed below:

	Pre-School	Reception
Monday	Swimming	Swimming
Tuesday	Nature School	PE / Library
Wednesday	Cooking / Gardening / Continuous Provision / Library	Cooking / Gardening / Woodwork / Continuous Provision
Thursday	Continuous Provision	Music / Continuous Provision
Friday	Yoga / Computing / Continuous Provision	Computing / Drama Storytelling

This is however flexible and subject to change.

If your child is in Pre-School and you are collecting or dropping your child before lunch, please do so at 11:30am from the Pre-School classroom. If they are being collected or dropped off at 12:45pm please do so from the Junior School main gate where a member of staff will be there to meet you.

Staff will open their classroom door at 3:30pm to welcome you to collect your children. Children going to After School Care will be delivered to the

team with a handover of relevant information. It is extremely important to us that your child is safe, and we will only allow another adult to collect your child if parents have given staff permission to do so and the person collecting knows your code word which you need to provide us with at the beginning of the year. Therefore to avoid unnecessary inconvenience, please notify your child's teacher in advance of anyone other than you collecting and provide that person with your code word.



Food

Snack

All children in the EYFS will be offered a healthy snack and milk to drink during their morning of Continuous Provision. If your child has specific dietary requirements please discuss this with the Head of Early Years prior to their official start date and after completing the annual consent form to advise of all medical issues. Water is freely available throughout the day.

Lunch

Children who attend all day will be offered a choice of hot meals and dessert in the School's Refectory. Staff sit with the children during lunch to encourage them

to eat a sufficient amount, try new foods, develop good table manners and make healthy choices which will stay with them for life. Water is freely available at this time. If your child is still hungry at the end of their meal, additional fruit is available.

Afternoons

During the afternoon, Pre-School children are offered a drink and snack. If they attend the After School Care service, they will also be provided with sandwiches and a drink around 4:00pm. Children staying until 6:00pm will also attend tea in the refectory. This consists of a further hot meal and dessert.

Trips and excursions

We do have some occasional trips and transport the children via school minibus. In the event of such a planned trip we will send a letter home with details

of the trip seeking your consent. All outings are risk assessed and accompanied by appropriate ratios of staff.

The curriculum

Within Pre-School and Reception the staff work together to implement the Early Years' Foundation Stage Curriculum, through the prime and specific areas of learning and development. These are:

Prime

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding of the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Each of these areas has a number of objectives for the children to work towards and achieve by the end of the EYFS (children from birth to the end of Reception year). The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure progression and continuity of skills in the

seven areas of learning. The EYFS children also have specialist teaching throughout the week in PE, Forest School, swimming and French (Reception only). We also utilise the extensive grounds and the Senior School facilities such as the gardens, Library and Equestrian Centre.

Children are supported to develop their 'Characteristics of Effective Learning'. These characteristics describe how a child learns and by developing these we help the children to be ready for the lifetime of learning ahead. These skills include how they play and explore the world around them, how they are active in their learning and how they create and think critically. When we plan the children's learning, we consider how different children learn and reflect this in our provision.

In addition to this we use a range of stories and circle times to teach the children the Quaker Values of our Sidcot Learning Wheel including empathy, curiosity, thoughtfulness, resilience, proactivity, integrity and open mindedness.

The Learning Wheel





Specialist provision

Swimming lessons

Children in Pre-School and Reception have weekly swimming lessons taught by our school specialist staff, at no extra cost. Our focus is on water confidence, developing leg and arm movements and water safety. Parents are invited to our swimming showcase in the Spring term.

Forest School

A highlight of our provision is our weekly Forest School on Thursday mornings. The session is mainly child-led with some seasonal provocations to spark curiosity. Our Pre-School children also benefit from Nature School on Tuesday mornings, led by our Forest School experts.

Equestrian

We utilise our Equestrian centre by providing our youngest children the opportunity to experience life in a working stable. Our children observe the farrier visits, as well as taking part in grooming our miniature ponies, Mango and Poppet.



PE

Our provision allows the children in Early Years to progress their physical development in both fine and gross motor skills. We offer our Pre-School and Reception children dedicated PE lessons where our PE staff focus on fundamental movement, ball skills and gymnastics.

French

Our Reception class begin their languages journey by learning French, taught by one of our EY team members. They focus on communicating feelings, fruit and animals through singing, stories and games.

Learning journals

Children's experiences and learning are recorded in an online journal called Tapestry. Your consent will be sought to include your child on this. Photographs, videos and notes on the learning which has taken place are regularly uploaded, so that you will have a very clear picture of your child's experiences.

Once your child starts at Sidcot, you will receive an email giving you access to your child's Tapestry account. If your child has an experience out of school which you would like to share with us, you can do so on Tapestry and a member of staff will add this to their journal.

Home school links

Wows

We like to celebrate your child's successes outside school as well as what we observe in school. Families are invited to share with us any noteworthy achievements with us using Tapestry.

Focus Weeks

Each week we focus on one or two children, where we spend lots of time recording their interests, moving their learning forward, and creating personalised next steps.

Maths games (Pre-School)

We have a range of maths games within our classrooms to encourage the numeracy skills of our youngest children. Please speak with a member of staff if you would like some recommendations on which ones we use.

Sound Books

Reception children will bring home a 'sound book' on a weekly basis. These give the children activities which focus on particular sounds taught in class that week. Practising these will help your child to develop the important phonics skills which are the basis for learning to read and write.

Parent training

Throughout the year, we will provide parent training/ informal group meetings which cover a range of EYFS specific subjects. These may take place after school at around 3:45pm or at the beginning of the school day, if it is something which is better seen in action in the classroom.

We will endeavour to give you as much notice as we can of these, the dates of these sessions will be published in the parent planner. In addition to parent training events we also invite parents in to stay and play in celebration of Mother's Day and Father's Day.

Communication

There are many opportunities to talk to your child's teacher about your child's development and progress throughout the school year. A full report on all seven areas of the EYFS curriculum and the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' will be issued at the end of the academic year if they have been here for more than one term.

If your child attends more than one setting we will consult with you to gain your permission to share information with the other setting, to ensure appropriate next steps are put into place. Information sharing is vital to your child's development, therefore if your child is seen by any external agencies such as speech and language therapists, reports need to be shared with school as part of the admissions process and on an ongoing basis.

We operate an open door policy and if you have any concerns at any time please feel free to pop in and see us. If it is not convenient at that particular moment we will arrange a mutually suitable alternative. Class teachers are also contactable by email using the firstname.surname@sidcot.org.uk formula.

Effective communication is essential in ensuring the best experience for your child. Most of our communications are electronic, it is therefore essential that we have a current email address for you. All newsletters are sent out on a Friday via email and include a weekly parent planner, highlighting key upcoming dates and information.

Medical issues

When your child starts at Sidcot you are asked to sign a paper copy of the 'Annual Consent' – which includes a consent to the administration of medication, and consent to emergency treatment. The School asks for full and frank disclosure of medical issues and any learning needs, and for you to keep the School apprised of all medical issues or developments. This is then repeated annually online.

There are a wide range of policies relating to medical issues available on the Parent Portal, which can be found using the following link:

<https://intranet.sidcot.org.uk>

Your login details will be your registered email address and the password which was sent to you

when you registered. If you have forgotten your password there is a reset option. From here you will also find a link to Firefly which you may need for accessing the online booking system and for any information specific to your child, including a request for prescription medicine administration

There is also a list of communicable diseases on the Parent Portal which all parents should make themselves familiar with – in order that they understand when a child must be kept away from school. The Parent Portal also has a lot of useful information in the Health Centre section on Firefly which is where you will find the online Annual Consent Form.

You will be informed in writing or in person of any injuries that your child has sustained on the same day, and of any first aid treatment given.

Complaints

The School has an open door policy, we are always ready to listen to any concerns or complaints and act accordingly. We advise you to speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance before contacting the Head of the Junior School. Sidcot School's complaints policy and procedure can be found on our website.

Behaviour

In the Early Years we base most of our behaviour management strategies on positive reinforcement of behaviours we like to see and want to encourage. For more information on this, please refer to the Behaviour and Discipline EYFS Policy.



Toddlers

We run baby and toddler sessions every week. These include Muddy Hands, gardening group, Forest School, Toddler Equestrian, Stay and Play and parent and toddler swim sessions. These groups are run by a member of the Junior School Staff. More details can be found at: www.sidcot.org.uk/toddlers

Children can attend at any age, but once they are attending sessions in our Pre-School it is advisable that they no longer attend the Toddler group, this can cause confusion for the children when the parent leaves them for the Pre-School session.

Admissions process

Children wishing to join our Pre-School or Reception classes must join us for two taster sessions (one including lunch) as part of the admissions process. Once an offer of a place has been made, a confirmation letter of session choices and start date will be issued. Siblings are given priority when choosing sessions.

Children should be toilet trained on entry to Pre-School, but in the case of children with disabilities, an assessment will be made on a case by case basis

in line with the School's duty to make reasonable adjustments. The School has limited facilities available for those with continence issues.

Admission to Pre-School does not guarantee the offer of a place in the Junior School, if the Head is of the view that the offer of a place is not in the best interests of the School or child. If we have any concerns regarding your child progressing into the Reception Class, this will be discussed with you in sufficient time.



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Fees and funding

Fees for Pre-School and Reception can be found on the School's website: www.sidcot.org.uk/fees

We are unable to accept Pre-School children who do not intend to progress into Reception. Deposits will not be refunded if a child leaves Sidcot School before the end of their Reception year.

Sidcot currently accepts Local Authority Early Years' Funding. This offers 15 hours of subsidised Pre-School education per week and is available from the term after the child's third birthday until the term following their fifth birthday.

Final note

We are all here to support your child and make the process of starting school as smooth as possible for everyone concerned. If at any time you have any questions, queries or concerns, please feel free to talk to any member of the Early Years team or contact us by email.

For your convenience, our email addresses are as follows:

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