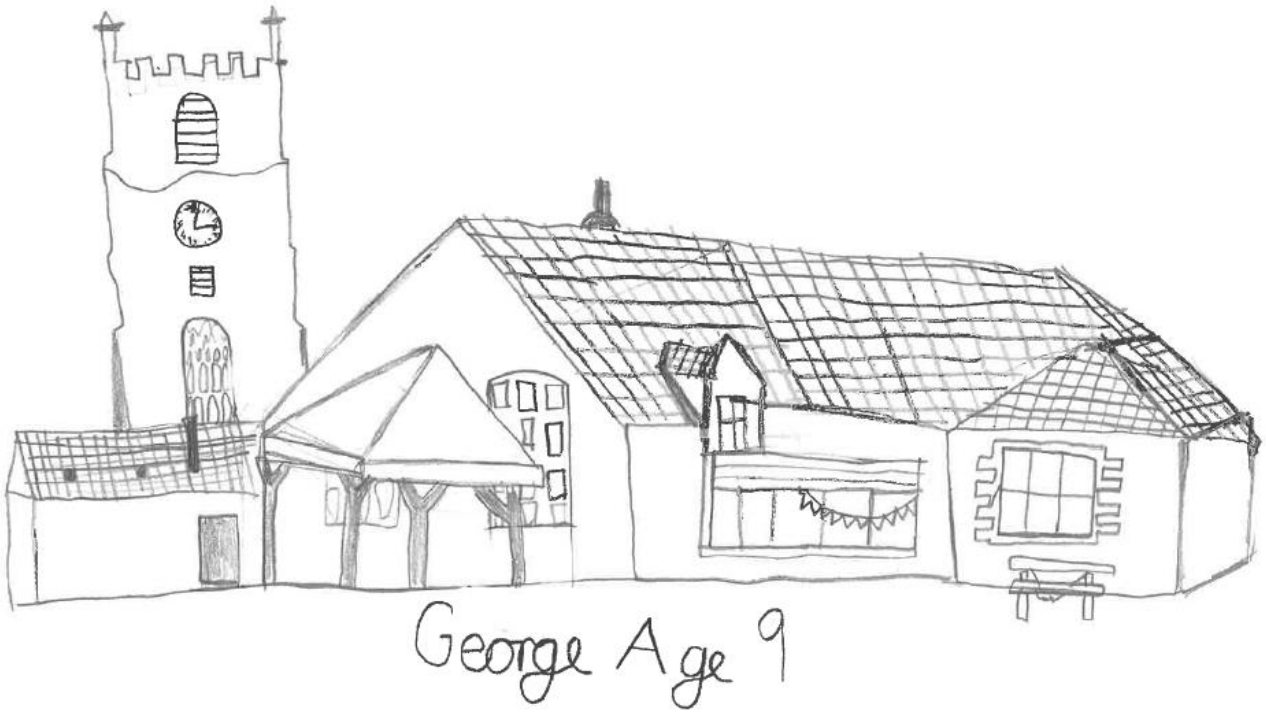
Blakeney CE VA Primary School



Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Prospectus 2024/2025

For Parents/Carers

Welcome to Blakeney CE VA Primary School which is part of the Pilgrim Federation of Church of England Primary Schools.

The Pilgrim Federation schools of Blakeney, Hindringham, Kelling and Walsingham work together for the benefit of the children in all four settings. We like to think our schools are branches of one big family tree and we warmly welcome you and your child to our school.

"As God's children, we all play our part in making learning irresistible within our Federation communities."

Getting Started

Before your child starts school there are a number of forms that need completing to ensure their transition is a smooth one. These will be provided by the school office in due course so please keep an eye out for them. Some of the things you might need to do are:

- Order your child's uniform
- Complete medication forms (as required)
- Complete permissions slips and give us your contact details.

The Transition Process

During the Summer Term, we are pleased to offer four transition sessions at the school. On the first and second day, your child will be invited for an afternoon session and you are welcome to stay with your child. Following on from this, we are pleased to offer a third session which includes you and your child staying for lunch. We will then offer a fourth session, where your child is invited to stay for the whole day. You are welcome to remain with your child for the four sessions or you can leave them to settle into the environment independently. The dates and specific timings will be sent to you via invitation. In addition to this, parents and carers are very welcome to contact the class teacher at any time about their child's transition to school.

Early Days

We know that starting school can be a worrying time for both children and parents, but don't worry, we are here to help you and your child have the smoothest transition. Usually the more confident the adults are, the easier the child finds it to relax and settle. Talking openly with your child about the joys and exciting changes that come with starting school can help them tackle and approach their first day with excitement. There are lots of books available on starting school which you could read with your child.

The school gate opens at 8:30am where you will be greeted by the staff member on duty. Staff members are always available to speak with at the start of day until the gate closes at 8:45am. The children enter the school independently through the school gate and make their way into the classroom via the green gate in the outdoor area. We ask that from the first day, wherever possible, children come in on their own from the playground along with the other children and the member of staff on duty in the morning. We recognise that this might be an anxious time for both you and your child, but in our experience children settle much quicker if they are introduced to the school routine from the off-set, enabling them to have the smoothest transition. Staff are always happy to give you a call once school has begun to let you know how your child has settled and that they are ok.

A member of staff will then meet you at the school gate at 3:15pm to see your child out at the end of the school day. If you have any queries or questions, you can speak with the duty staff member during this time too. Alternatively, you may prefer to meet a staff member after school, just ring the office and we can arrange this for you.

If there are any issues during the day we will always contact you and likewise you can call the office to make any enquiries.

Practical Matters
Your child will need to come to school wearing the uniform listed on the page overleaf. On PE days, your child will need to come to school wearing the Federation PE Kit. The contents of the kit are also listed on the page overleaf. There are set timetabled PE days which you will be informed of at the start of term.

Your child will be issued with a book bag and we ask that this is in school every day. Your child will also be issued with a reading home/school diary within the first week and we ask that you record reading that has taken place at home within this. We will also record reading that takes place within school within the diary. Please ensure that your child has their reading home/school diary in school every day. The book bag will be our link between home and school; letters and forms will be stored inside alongside the child's reading diary, reading book and any homework they receive. Please check your child's book bag regularly and ensure that they are kept neat and tidy so that your child can access them easily. We take pride in our school belongings at Blakeney School and ask that you support us with this too.

Please ensure that you send your child to school each day with a named water bottle so they have access to a drink throughout the day. We ask that your child's water bottle contains water only, in line with our school's healthy approach.

We ask that you send your child into school with a set of named spare clothes in case of accidents occurring. This ensures that your child can wear comfortable, familiar clothes from home. If for any reason your child does not have a set of spares in school, we can provide some spare clothes which have been donated, but we ask that these are washed and returned as soon as possible. It is vital that spare clothes are returned so that our supply does not become depleted.

Lunch
There are a range of lunch options available all of which are free for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 as the children are entitled to universal infant free school meals. The options available to the children each day are as follows:

- Hot dinner
- Vegetarian hot dinner
- School packed lunch
- Jacket potato with a topping

You may also bring in a home packed lunch if you wish, but please make sure that your child is provided with a healthy lunch. We ask that your child does not bring in chocolate bars or sweets. This is in line with our school's healthy approach and ensures that children do not consume any high-sugar, high-salt, high-fat foods.

The children will select their option every morning. The children quickly become confident with this and enjoy making an independent choice. A copy of the school lunch menu will be sent home at the beginning of the term, if there is something particular you would like your child to have off of the menu, please communicate this to them so they can choose appropriately.

If you receive one of the benefits listed on the Free School Meals form in your pack, please complete and return the form as it means the school can get additional funding and your child will continue to get free meals.

Break Time
We participate in the government's scheme to provide all children with a free piece of fruit every day for their snack. We ask that you support us with providing your child with a healthy option and therefore request that no chocolate bars or crisps are sent in for your child's mid-morning snack.

Communication
Notices and newsletters are uploaded to our school website regularly and other avenues of communication are via Class Dojo. Class Dojo is an app that you can download as a parent/carer to view the learning that has taken place in your child's class. We strongly advise for you to download this app, so that you are regularly up-to-date with school/class notices and announcements.

Dietary Needs
Most dietary needs can be catered for, so please let us know if your child has any particular requirements/food allergies or intolerances.

Health
Please make sure we are up to date with any medical issues relating to your child so we can ensure their needs are met in school.

Medication
If your child needs medication whilst at school please complete a medication form available from the office. We are unable to administer medicine without written authority from you on a completed form detailing the nature of the illness and the dose to be given.

Illness
If your child is ill please keep them at home. Illness quickly spreads among small children and staff! If your child has experienced sickness and/or diarrhoea, they must be kept off school for a full 48 hours, after the last symptoms.

Head Lice
It is quite common for children to experience head lice during their early school days and sometimes even beyond! Please be vigilant and check your child's hair regularly. If you find head lice, please inform us discreetly and we will notify other parents to stop the spread. Your local pharmacist will be able to advise on treatments, unfortunately we cannot recommend any specific brands or treatments to parents.

Dress Code and Equipment
School uniform, and additional items of PE kit, can be ordered from the school office. The first set of PE kit for your child is free of charge. For any additional uniform of PE kit, please visit the school office. We ask that everything is clearly labelled with your child's full name. There is a lost property basket in school, should any items become lost, but if items are initially named, this enables uniform to be returned to its rightful owner.

School Uniform
Children are expected to wear the school uniform. Wearing uniform develops a sense of belonging to, and taking pride in, Blakeney School, so we ask that it is adhered to at all times.

The uniform consists of:

- White polo shirt/blouse
- Grey or black trousers/skirt – no leggings or joggers
- If girls choose a skirt, they should wear either white socks or grey/black tights.
- Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan with or without the school logo.
- Flat black shoes or black boots in winter.
- Blue checked summer dress, if families choose.
- Grey short trousers in the summer, if families choose.
- Coats – any colour, waterproof and warm (no leather, denim).

School sells uniform with our logo but supermarkets can provide cheaper alternatives in the same colour and style.

Uniform for Physical Education, PE

- Federation purple polo shirt (first one provided by school)
- Black school shorts (first pair provided by school)
- Trainers for outside P.E.
- Plain sweatshirt (no hoodies please for safety reasons) & jogging bottoms in black for colder months, so that children get outside as much as possible in the winter (these items do not need to be new as they will be getting dirty).
- Earrings – Children should either be able to remove their own earrings as we are not able to tape over them. If children have earrings in on P.E. days, they will be unable to take part.

School Timings
Children may arrive on site after 8.30am and are able to choose their learning in class. Official registration and the start of the day is at 8.50am. Please ensure your child is in school and ready to learn by 8.50am, children can often become distressed or unsettled when arriving late to school.

School ends at 3.15pm and parents and carers collect children from the playground gate.
Buses and taxis are available for eligible children living further away; please speak to the transport department at Norfolk County Council for more information. An application for transport can be made when you register your child for school. Parents and carers may park on the main road outside of the school.

The School Day
On entering the classroom children should (within the first couple of weeks) say goodbye to parents/carers at the gate, hang up their coats, place their book bags on their pegs and make their lunch choice independently. Once complete they may have the opportunity to choose their own learning until registration. As the children settle and progress, they may be set small learning activities or tasks until worship begins at 9am.

Throughout the day, the children within EYFS will have regular opportunities to choose their own learning. This refers to children accessing the carefully selected 'play' activities and resources set up inside and outside the classroom to challenge, stimulate and take the children's natural learning process to the next level.

After registration, our 'normal' day routine begins with collective worship followed by phonics and maths. Between break and lunch, we do English and after lunch we focus on learning related to our topic and other areas of the curriculum such as understanding of the world or expressive art and design. We will also take part in 'alternative activities' which enable us to enhance our skills. These include outdoor learning activities in the plantation, cooking and other areas linking to key events and life skills. Through skilful

planning we create purposeful and irresistible learning opportunities for the children, blending the boundaries of 'subjects', whilst continuing to embed the foundations of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

At Blakeney we are lucky enough to have exclusive access to a Diocese plantation right next to the school, where we can be free to explore whilst building on our learning from inside the classroom setting. In the warmer months, we are lucky enough to use the plantation during the children's lunch breaks, allowing them to run freely through the trees and access the play equipment. We also enjoying lighting the bonfire and toasting marshmallows, often inviting parents/carers too so watch out for the notices!

We cover at least three topics a year on a rolling and information on these topics can be found on our school website. Additionally, information on the curriculum and our learning can be found on our fortnightly newsletter.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

In the EYFS the areas of learning consist of the following:

- Communication and language
- Literacy
- Mathematical development
- Expressive art and design
- Understanding the world
- Personal, social and emotional development

In our EYFS class, also known as the Hoglets Class, Nursery and Reception learn alongside each other in a large shared open space. This helps our older children to further develop their personal and social skills as they help and support the younger members of the class. It ensures the younger children are able to settle into their Nursery year more quickly as they have excellent role models to learn from. It also ensures a seamless transition from Nursery to Reception for our youngest children, as the children have access to an environment that is well-resourced and suited to a play-based curriculum.

Our day is structured so the children are able to receive a balance between discrete teaching of skills and independent learning opportunities where they can apply, challenge and question their new skills and knowledge. The children's learning can take place as a whole class, in small groups, individually with an adult where appropriate or independently. The adult working with the children will sometimes be the Class Teacher or the Higher Level Teaching Assistant. This is regularly swapped throughout the day so the teacher has worked with all children regularly and has a good overview of how everyone is getting on. The member of staff working with the children will take observational notes and photographs of what the children are learning through their play and this will be uploaded to Tapestry or placed within their learning books.

Outdoor Learning

Expect your child to spend long periods of time outside accessing learning opportunities. We go out in most weathers and although we do have waterproofs and some spare wellies, we do ask that your child has a warm coat that can be worn beneath the waterproof and bring in a pair of wellies (named) which we can keep at school. On Wednesday afternoons, your child may take part in an outdoor activity and they will therefore be required to wear full waterproofs. We have some in school, but you may provide your own if you wish.

Reading and Phonics

As a Federation, we follow the Little Wandle phonics scheme and we also complete Little Wandle reading sessions three times a week. Through the progression in phonics children learn the sounds and their corresponding letters to sound out words. This aids reading enormously and has been given greater significance in the curriculum in recent years. Children start to learn to read by simply enjoying books, sitting and looking and listening to a story shared with an adult. From there they learn to read the pictures and work out what might be happening from the illustrations. Many children will receive picture only books as they start in Reception to build these vital comprehension skills. Phonic knowledge then

begins to develop and children will begin to sound out very simple words. They will begin to bring home first word and short caption books at this time. Phonics leaflet books with simple word and caption build up practise accompany this.

Please try to read with your child at least five times a week to support their early reading. Experience tells us that children only progress through regular reading at home and at school. It is the experience of trying new skills with both the teacher in the focused environment and at home where the brain will assimilate what it has learnt throughout the day, which secures this learning. There is often great anxiety about what level book a child is on and how that compares to other children in the group. Reading is exceptionally important but it is also exceptionally variable and we know and respect that all children learn and develop at their own pace. We urge parents to relax and allow their child to develop at their own rate. Moving a child on to a harder level too soon can lead to significant damage in the child's confidence and their ability to develop their reading skills.

Preparing for School

There are no set things your child should be able to do by the time they enter formal schooling. However, it would benefit your child and help them get off to a good start if they already possess some basic skills.

- Dressing and undressing themselves, including shoes. Shoes which don't have laces are best!
- Managing themselves on the toilet.
- Managing their own food and drink; using a knife and fork.
- Managing their own personal hygiene, such as nose wiping and hand washing.
- Recognising and writing their own name.
- Counting to 5 or even 10.

If your child has not mastered these skills then not to worry, we will get straight onto it, but it would give them the best start if they can and saves a lot of learning time that we could use for curriculum delivery.

Tapestry

We use Tapestry to record your child's learning. Tapestry is an online platform that allows you to view your child's learning through observations that are uploaded throughout the school day. You can see the areas of learning that your child has been learning and also add your own comments. Additionally, you can use Tapestry at home, by uploading your own observations and photos of the things that you have been getting up to!

Emergency contacts

Please keep our records up to date with your current contact details and that of anyone you wish us to call in an emergency. We also respectfully request that if you intend your child to go home with someone else that you let us know in advance. We take the safeguarding of children in our school very seriously and no child will leave us with another adult unless we have direct permission and instruction from a parent. If you make an arrangement at the school gate in the morning for a tea time play date the same day, please ring the school and let us know.

And Finally…

Your child's class is called Hoglets.

We are here to answer any questions you may have regarding your child's transition. Please contact the office on 01263 740531 if you have any queries.

We share the aim – to make your child's time with us as happy and successful as possible! We look forward to working with you to help your child reach their full potential.

Blakeney School Staff

Miss Tessa Collison is the Teacher for Hoglets and Hedgehogs.

Miss Carlie Owers is the Higher Level Teaching Assistant for Hoglets and Hedgehogs.

Miss Lesley Wright is also a Nursery Practitioner/Teaching Assistant for Hoglets. Miss Wright also leads Little Nippers Stay & Play.

Mrs Claire Thoday is the Senior Teacher at Blakeney and she also teaches Samphire Class (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6). Mrs Thoday will often be seen on the gate during the morning or afternoon duty.

Mrs Hirst is our secretary who is in the office and at the end of the phone to answer any immediate questions or to book an appointment to speak with staff members. Contact her by phone or email office@blakeney.norfolk.sch.uk

Ms Frier is our Executive Deputy Head and SENCo. She taught in Blakeney for over 10 years before taking on this role. She visits the school throughout the week. You can contact her directly through deputy@blakeney.norfolk.sch.uk

Mr Snowdon is our Executive Head Teacher and visits all four schools in turn throughout each week. If you wish to speak or meet with him or Ms Frier, please contact the school secretary to arrange this or contact him through head@blakeney.norfolk.sch.uk

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