

Reception

Pupils entering Reception continue to build on the knowledge, skills, and understanding acquired during Nursery. The school day is carefully structured to provide a balance between adult-led activities and opportunities for independent learning. Children are encouraged to learn through purposeful play, exploration, and practical experiences, fostering curiosity, resilience, and independence.

Homework

Within Reception (EYFS), children are systematically introduced to a broad range of phonics knowledge and skills. To reinforce and consolidate this learning, regular practice at home is strongly encouraged. As pupils develop increasing confidence and fluency, they are provided with materials to extend their learning beyond the classroom. Each week, children will receive:

- **A phonics e-book** – to be read daily by the child under the guidance and supervision of an adult.
- **A reading-for-pleasure book** – to be read aloud to the child by an adult, supporting vocabulary development, comprehension, and a lifelong enjoyment of reading.

This structured approach ensures that pupils not only make steady progress in early reading but also cultivate positive reading habits and a genuine love for literature.

Curriculum

Our Reception curriculum is built on the EYFS Statutory Framework and guided by Birth to 5 Matters. It provides a broad and balanced programme of learning, designed to nurture every child's curiosity, creativity, and confidence, helping them to reach their full potential.

We place strong emphasis on the Characteristics of Effective Learning – such as playing and exploring, active learning, and thinking critically – which shape how children engage with the world around them. Alongside this, the curriculum carefully develops both the prime areas of learning (communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development) and the specific areas (literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive arts and design).

This balanced approach ensures that children build secure foundations across all areas of learning, preparing them not only for academic achievement but also for their future success, wellbeing, and lifelong love of learning.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Alongside the areas of learning, we place great importance on the *Characteristics of Effective Learning*. These underpin how children engage with the curriculum and lay the foundations for lifelong learning:

- **Playing and Exploring** – Children investigate and experience things, showing curiosity and a willingness to 'have a go.'
- **Active Learning** – Children remain motivated, persevere when challenges arise, and take pride in their achievements.

- **Creating and Thinking Critically** – Children develop their own ideas, make connections between concepts, and apply what they know in new situations.

By embedding these characteristics within daily practice, we support children not only in acquiring knowledge and skills, but also in becoming confident, independent, and reflective learners.

The curriculum encompasses the following seven key areas of learning and development:

Prime Areas

1. **Communication and Language**

Children are supported in developing their speaking, listening, and understanding skills through rich interactions, high-quality discussions, and a language-rich environment.

2. **Physical Development**

Pupils are encouraged to develop fine and gross motor skills, coordination, and control through a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors. Healthy choices and self-care are also emphasised.

3. **Personal, Social, and Emotional Development**

Children are nurtured to build positive relationships, develop self-confidence, and manage their emotions effectively. They learn the values of respect, cooperation, and resilience.

Specific Areas

4. **Literacy**

Through systematic phonics teaching, pupils develop early reading and writing skills. They engage with a range of texts, fostering both technical proficiency and a passion for literature.

5. **Mathematics**

Pupils are introduced to fundamental mathematical concepts, including number, shape, space, and measures. Practical problem-solving opportunities help deepen understanding and confidence.

6. **Understanding the World**

Children explore their community and the wider world through experiences that encourage curiosity about people, places, cultures, technology, and the natural environment.

7. **Expressive Arts and Design**

Creativity is fostered through art, music, movement, role play, and imaginative exploration. Pupils are encouraged to express themselves and develop original ideas.

Prime Areas	Reception	
<p>Communication and language</p> <p>The communication and language objectives will be taught through daily English, reading, and phonics lessons, and will also be reinforced naturally through everyday interactions between adults and children during independent play and cross curricular activities.</p>	Listening and attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen and pay attention in different ways – sometimes while moving or fiddling, other times while sitting still. • Focus on more than one thing at a time for short periods, such as listening while doing an activity.
	Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand more complex language, including plurals, tenses, and negatives. • Enjoy and make sense of humour, such as silly rhymes and jokes. • Follow and understand stories even without pictures or props. • Listen carefully in conversations, responding to others' ideas and answering questions like <i>who</i>, <i>why</i>, <i>when</i>, <i>where</i>, and <i>how</i>.
	Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build their vocabulary by exploring new words, sounds, and meanings. • Use language creatively in play to act out roles and experiences. • Stay focused on a main idea when talking, linking their thoughts together clearly. • Use talk to organise their thinking and even create simple storylines in play.
<p>Physical development</p> <p>Children will develop their physical skills through weekly sports lessons and planned activities that build both fine and gross</p>	Moving and Handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moving with confidence – Children will practise moving in different ways (running, jumping, crawling, hopping, skipping) and learn to control their balance, speed, and direction in games and play. • Exploring movement safely – They will test out new ways of moving, use climbing and balancing equipment, and learn how to land safely and avoid obstacles. • Developing ball skills – Children will improve their ability to throw, catch, kick, push, and control objects with growing accuracy. • Building fine motor skills – They will use tools and materials safely, show preference for a dominant hand, and develop pencil control to form recognisable letters and begin writing independently.

<p>motor skills. In science, they will also learn what it means to be healthy and explore how physical activity affects the body.</p>	<p>Health and self-care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy choices – Children will learn about eating a variety of foods, noticing different tastes and textures, and understanding how good food, water, sleep, hygiene, and exercise keep them healthy. • Understanding their bodies – They will begin to talk about physical changes in their bodies, such as when they are tired, unwell, or experiencing different emotions. • Independence and routines – Children will develop consistent daily routines for eating, toileting, and sleeping, and understand why these are important for their well-being. • Safety and risk awareness – They will learn how to use and store equipment safely, consider risks when playing or trying new challenges, and practise keeping themselves and others safe.
<p>Personal, social and emotional development</p> <p>Through weekly PSHE sessions, children will be taught these objectives directly. Alongside this, adults will support each child's personal, social, and emotional development through positive daily interactions.</p>	<p>Making relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning through relationships – Children copy and practise what they see in adult relationships, using play and friendships to build social understanding. • Friendships and cooperation – They form closer friendships, becoming more flexible, cooperative, and aware of others' needs and feelings. • Managing conflict – Children start to solve disagreements themselves, sometimes with support, learning to compromise and negotiate. • Seeking support – They return to trusted adults for reassurance and help, while also becoming more confident in expressing their own needs.
	<p>Sense of self</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonging and identity – Children recognise they are part of different communities (home, school, groups) and talk about them with confidence. • Awareness of others – They become more sensitive to fairness, prejudice, and how people are treated in different groups. • Confidence and self-expression – Children learn to share their needs, ideas, and opinions, while also recognising what they are good at and where they are improving. • Independence and perseverance – They make clear choices in play, select their own resources, and stick with activities they've chosen.
	<p>Understanding emotions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding feelings – Children learn to recognise their own and others' emotions, showing empathy, comfort, and awareness of how behaviour affects people. • Managing emotions – They practise coping when things don't go their way, finding strategies to manage big feelings. • Building and repairing relationships – Children begin to make amends when they cause upset, and look for ways to solve disagreements through sharing, negotiation, and compromise. • Fairness and support – They develop a sense of justice and fairness, while also knowing when to seek help and reassurance from trusted adults.

Specific Areas	Reception	
<p>Literacy Literacy will be taught daily and will appear on our timetable as English, Reading, and Phonics.</p>	Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy and explore books – Develop a love of both storybooks and information books, including digital texts, and begin to talk in detail about characters, settings, and events. • Use reading in play – Act out and reinvent stories they have heard, and start using everyday print (labels, signs, instructions) in their play. • Build early phonics skills – Hear and say sounds in words, recognise rhymes and alliteration, link letters and digraphs (e.g. <i>sh</i>, <i>th</i>, <i>ee</i>) to sounds, and begin to blend sounds to read simple words. • Grow reading confidence – Start to recognise familiar names and some high-frequency words and use their phonics knowledge to read simple sentences with understanding. • Make sense of what they read – Recall and discuss stories or information, and use pictures, word sounds, and their own knowledge to help interpret texts.
	Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create for a purpose – Make cards, lists, invitations, and even their own books and stories using drawings, marks, and sometimes words. • Give meaning to marks – Understand that their drawings, scribbles, and typed marks can represent ideas, words, or messages. • Develop early phonics in writing – Hear sounds in words, begin to link them to letters, and use these to write their name and other recognisable words. • Start writing sentences – Use phonics to write labels, captions, and simple sentences as their confidence grows.
<p>Mathematics Maths lessons are taught everyday using the maths mastery curriculum.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare and count – Recognise and use number names and symbols, compare groups of objects, estimate quantities, and order numbers from 0–10. • Understand “how many” – Count objects up to 10, match them to the correct numeral, and quickly recognise small numbers of items without counting (subitising). • Explore how numbers are made – Discover that numbers can be broken into parts (e.g., 6 is 3 and 3) and begin simple adding and subtracting with numbers to 10. • Solve problems – Use their own ideas, strategies, and sometimes mathematical symbols (+, –) to work out practical problems. • Build spatial awareness – Use language for position and direction, solve problems by rotating and fitting shapes, and even create simple maps. • Explore shapes – Describe shapes in everyday ways, combine and break them apart to see how they fit together, and use them to build imaginative models. • Recognise and create patterns – Notice patterns around them, understand how they repeat, and make their own repeating patterns using objects. • Compare and measure – Talk about length, weight, capacity, and time in everyday situations, use simple measuring tools, and begin to order events with words like <i>first</i>, <i>next</i>, and <i>later</i>.

Understanding of the world	People and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in family life – Enjoy joining in with familiar customs, routines, and celebrations. • Talk about life events – Share past and present experiences from their own lives and those of their family. • Understand differences – Recognise that others may like different things and be sensitive to this. • Appreciate diversity – Learn about similarities and differences between themselves and others, including families, cultures, and traditions.
	The World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in family life – Enjoy joining in with familiar customs, routines, and celebrations. • Talk about life events – Share past and present experiences from their own lives and those of their family. • Understand differences – Recognise that others may like different things and be sensitive to this. • Appreciate diversity – Learn about similarities and differences between themselves and others, including families, cultures, and traditions.
	Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore nature – Notice similarities, differences, patterns, and changes in the natural world. • Compare places and materials – Talk about how places, objects, living things, and materials can be the same or different. • Understand environments – Describe their own surroundings and learn how environments can vary from one another. • Observe and explain – Watch animals and plants closely, explain why things happen, and talk about how they change.
Expressive art and design	Creating with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy music and movement – Build a collection of songs and dances, play with sounds, and keep a beat. • Experiment with materials – Explore different tools and materials (like paint, light, watercolours, or loose parts) to express their ideas. • Develop creativity – Use art, music, drama, and movement to share feelings, ideas, and discoveries. • Think and explore – Use creative activities to develop their understanding of the world and express their thinking in different ways.
	Being imaginative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Express ideas creatively – Represent real and imaginary people, places, and events through art, movement, and play. • Experiment with choices – Use different movements, sounds, colours, and materials for their own imaginative purposes. • Combine art forms – Mix music, drama, drawing, building, and storytelling to explore and share ideas. • Play imaginatively with others – Create and act out storylines and imaginative worlds as part of a group.

Learning Support

Haileybury Malta is a non-selective school, and we welcome children who may require some additional support. We believe that the strengths of every child should be celebrated, and it is understood that some may require specific tools or learning interventions at different stages of their journey through the school to achieve their best. Please contact the SENDCo should you have any queries regarding learning support.

Communication

Please note that teaching staff rarely have the opportunity to read or reply to email during the course of the school day as they are busy teaching and caring for your children, so do please allow a reasonable amount of time before expecting a reply. Any urgent messages should be conveyed through the school office.

We are always happy to see you regarding any worries or concerns. We prefer to feel that we are all working together and if queries are dealt with at an early stage, then any issues can be kept to a minimum and both you and your children can look forward to a happy and productive year.