CURRICULUM NOTES – 2016 / 2017

RECEPTION

This curriculum pack is to inform you about the learning that takes place in Reception and to explain how you as parents can help your children build their foundations to learning in their first year of school. We believe that the most effective learning comes as a result of a three-way partnership between parent, child and teacher. We are here to support the needs of every child and are very much looking forward to a successful year ahead.

On our website you can also find supplementary information on:

- activities for supporting Communication and Language
- a pamphlet for helping children learn to read called 'Are you sitting comfortably?'
- a list of High Frequency Words (HFW)
- activities for supporting Maths
- activities for supporting fine motor development and letter formation for handwriting
- activities for supporting all other areas of the curriculum
- a booklet of letter sounds and the order in which we teach them
- a blank WOW card format
- our planning overviews for each term (which are subject to change depending on the interests of the children).

This can all be accessed at www.hallgrove.co.uk in the Academics link at the top of the home page. Timetables are always displayed in The Barn each week.

The Curriculum

Reception is the final year of The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The EYFS is based around four important principles:

A Unique Child

- Every child is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships

- Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships.

Enabling Environments

- The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

Learning and Development

- Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The curriculum of the Early Years Foundation Stage underpins all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing seven areas of learning.

All of the learning areas are equally important and depend on each other. They are delivered in a cross-curricular way through a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities in both the indoor and outdoor classroom. In each area there are Early Learning Goals (ELGs) that define the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the EYFS. The children's learning is planned for individually. Support within the EYFS and extension beyond this curriculum is given to children where it is needed.

There are three *prime* areas that are particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning alongside their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

- *Communication and Language*
  This area gives children opportunities to experience a rich language environment, speaking and listening in a variety of situations and developing their confidence and skills in expressing themselves

- *Physical Development*
  This is developed through the provision of opportunities for the children to be active and interactive and to develop their skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. Alongside this, activities are carried out to promote an understanding of the importance of physical activity and making healthy choices in relation to food encouraging a positive feeling of well-being.

- *Personal, Social and Emotional Development*
  Children are helped to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to learn how to manage their feelings and to have confidence in their own abilities. This is crucial for all aspects of life and will give the children the best opportunity for success in all other areas of learning.

The above prime areas are then strengthened and applied through four *specific* areas…

- *Literacy*

Children are encouraged to link sounds and letters to begin to read and write. A wide range of reading and writing materials are planned for to help capture their interest.

- *Maths*

A broad range of activities are provided in which the children can explore, enjoy, learn, practise and talk about their developing understanding of Maths. They practise and extend their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, simple calculating, describing shapes, spaces and measures. They will use key mathematical skills and logical thinking. The children will explore practically with opportunity for discussion and simple forms of recording.

- *Understanding of the World*

Helping them to make sense of their physical world is achieved through exploring and observing to find out about people, places, technology and the environment. They will undertake practical 'experiments' and work with a range of materials and tools safely. Foundations are developed for Science, History, Geography, RS and ICT.

- *Expressive Arts and Design*

Exploration and play with a wide range of media and materials is fundamental to successful learning and enables children to make connections and extend their thoughts, feelings and understanding. They are encouraged to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role-play activities and design and technology; it also draws on the aesthetic and creative aspects of all subjects.

Three 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' support the development in how the children are learning. These characteristics are represented through characters in the classroom to enable the children to self-reflect upon how they are learning - do come and meet them! They are used on a daily basis and are displayed in each classroom.

Playing and exploring – engagement (Go for it Gus)

Finding out and exploring, playing with what they know, being willing to 'have a go'.

Active learning – motivation (Active Andy)

Being involved and concentrating, keeping trying, enjoying achieving what they set out to do.

Creating and thinking critically – thinking (Creative Katie)

Having their own ideas, making links, choosing ways to do things.

Planning overviews for the term are on the school website and displayed inside The Barn. We work towards establishing a combined plan, incorporating the children's ideas as well as those of the teachers. Weekly plans are inside The Barn. Do have a look at these plans so that you are aware of the structure to your child's day and their routines. They also give detail of the activities the children will be taking part in each day.

Specialist lessons in PE, Games, French, Dance and Singing take place each week. A Reception teacher or assistant always accompanies the children to these.

The Outdoor Classroom is an integral part of your child's learning in Reception. We place great emphasis on the importance of working outdoors. In addition to outdoor areas immediately near the classrooms, the children will have weekly walks to spend a session in the outdoor classroom. These sessions are child-led, their learning will evolve from making their own decisions, taking risks,

becoming leaders through initiating their own ideas and being in a natural environment. We also have focused weeks in the outdoors each term, bringing our learning around the theme for that week to life.

'Picture pockets' will be talked about by the children on a regular basis. This is a system we established a few years ago to give the children some independence over their learning. There are 4 activities tailored for each child which have a different coloured card placed by them. Once the children have completed the activity they put the coloured card in their 'picture pocket'. This way, when the children are not working with an adult or choosing for themselves, we know there are a range of activities set up throughout the classrooms that they can work towards. The children also have the opportunity to self-monitor what they are doing. The children become very diligent at completing these tasks and we work to reassure those who get worried at all in the week if they don't get them all done.

Reading in the first term is through individual sessions several times each week. This is in addition to daily group exploration of stories and books and shared phonics sessions. Later in the year additional group guided reading sessions will take place weekly. Children select their own independent reading books from a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, which are appropriately graded according to their reading ability. Your child will bring home a reading record comment book with their reading books each day. We will comment regularly each week when we hear your child read in school and will inform you of their progress in these comments. Please use this book to tell us about times you have shared a book with your child at home or when they have read to you.
Taking home a weekly class library book also gives them the opportunity to select and share a 'real' fiction or non-fiction book at home. These will be books for you to read and talk about with them.
Daily phonics sessions enable the children to get a grasp for the sounds that individual and groups of letters make. These are then used to establish early word segmentation and blending for reading and spelling. As the year progresses we prepare the children for Year 1 with words to spell and check for themselves.
Do refer to the 'Are you sitting comfortably?' booklet on the website to help with supporting reading development at home.

Big Talk /Big Write is a strategy used from Pre-School to Year 5 to help motivate writers and increase the quality of their work. Every week we have a Big Talk session in Reception, which becomes Big Write by the end of the year. Speaking and listening skills will in turn aid their writing skills so a focused session to model language, expand on vocabulary and develop sentence structure is really important. The children will become familiar with 'WOW words' (adjectives) and experiment with using new vocabulary. 'Super sentences' are developed through using connecting words and eventually, when writing, through the use of capital letters, full stops and other punctuation in the form of 'Splats'. All Big Talk sessions are based around a theme and the week before we will send this theme home for you to talk about at home. More details will be sent out about 'Talk homework' as the term progresses.

Cursive writing is the handwriting style taught at Hall Grove. In Reception the children learn about the different shapes and sizes of the letters using the Hemispheres Think Write Program. It allows for every child to progress through the hierarchical steps at their own rate, ready to form their letters in a joined style by Year 2.

Assessments of the children are made on a daily basis to enable us to plan for their next steps in learning. Each child has a 'Learning Journey' created through the program 'Tapestry' to track the progress they are making alongside the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). This is monitored throughout the year and details of how each child progresses are maintained. The EYFSP assessments for your child are available for you to see should you choose to.

Digital photography is an integral part of capturing attainments in your child's learning. These records of your child's learning are accessible to you at any point you wish to see them. During the year we will email you updates.

We also ask for your input with significant achievements the children make at home. Simply use the attached 'WOW cards', or download them from the school website, to write a sentence to explain what they have done (www.hallgrove.co.uk in the Academics link at the top of the home page and then Early Years Resources). They could reflect any areas of their learning from personal and social to creative or knowledge and understanding. Here are a few examples of what you could include…

- has counted to 50
- helped prepare the dinner, setting the table and chopping the vegetables
- was very thoughtful when …
- has been reading over the weekend and used fantastic expression
- designed and made a vehicle to transport teddies safely
- explored what happens when…

The children continually self-assess their own performance through verbal communication when working on an adult-led task and through colouring a self-assessment grid on independent tasks. This ensures they are aware of what each activity is helping them to learn and encourages them to reflect on whether they feel they completed it with a good understanding or need more practice.

On entry to Reception the children will work alongside their teacher to complete an initial assessment of their learning using NFER Baseline. This is then extended and carried out again at the end of Year 2 and then in subsequent years at Hall Grove.

If you have any assessments or reports from your child's nursery then please do pass these on to the class teacher.

Reports
Once each term we will give you written feedback about the development your child is making, with a full academic report at the end of the year. This report will outline their progress against the EYFS profile. We will also be asking for termly feedback from you and the children about how you feel their learning is progressing.

School routines and supervision

Time of day/ activity	**Adults supervising**
Early Arrival from 0815	Class teacher
Playtime 1030	Teacher assistants
Lunch Playtime 1230	Rota of Pre-Prep class teachers and assistants
End of day dismissal 1510	Class teacher
After school activities 1530	Children will be kept in the classrooms until 1530 when it is time to go to TASC or club. TASC – 360 sports education Clubs - class teachers and teacher assistants

School Arrival Time and the Class Register
At the beginning of the year it always takes a bit of time for everyone to settle into the normal drop off /collection routine. The Pre-Prep doors open at 0815. The Reception children are expected to arrive by 0855. Arriving by 0845 will give your child the chance to feel settled before sitting on the carpet. Please note that for Health and Safety reasons children cannot be left unsupervised before 0815. We encourage all children to greet adults as they enter the school with a 'Good Morning' and making eye contact.

The children self-register as they come into school. The Class Register is then completed at 0900. If you arrive at school after 0900, please go to the school office to inform the school secretary of your arrival, so that she can register your child.

Home time
Please arrive by 1510 to collect your child from their teacher at the top of The Barn gravelled area. You may park on the tennis courts or come around the drive way and pull in, we can then put your child straight into your car. If you arrive early please park up on the tennis courts. You may open the gates if they are closed and there are no classes taking place on the courts. Children must be closely supervised at all times, and they are your responsibility once they have left their teachers. Extreme care is to be taken crossing the drive to parked cars, small children held firmly by the hand. If somebody different is collecting them, please inform their class teacher or the school office to explain who will be picking them up that day. Children who have not been collected by 1520 and have no details of a late collection will remain with the teachers in their classroom.

TASC Run by 360 sports education
This takes place in the portacabin at the bottom of the drive near the barrier. A teacher or a teaching assistant takes the children booked into TASC. If you wish your child to attend TASC please book them in online through 360 sports education.

Other after school clubs
A timetable for after-school clubs is published each term through an electronic booking system.

Playtime /Snack / Lunch
Morning and afternoon breaks are tailored to suit Reception daily routines. Reception children go to lunch at 1200. There is a 30 minute playtime immediately after lunch. During the morning children are given a drink of milk or water and a piece of fruit to see them through to lunchtime. Fresh water is always available throughout the day. All children have school lunch, where a wide variety of food is available, including a daily vegetarian option and a salad bar. A copy of the menu for each week will be posted on the school website. Kitchen staff, teachers and teaching assistants are all on hand throughout the lunch period to supervise and help the children. If your child has special dietary requirements, please make sure that you have indicated these on their medical form so our School Nurses are aware.

Protective Clothing for playtime
Please ensure your child has the correct uniform and that all items are clearly named. Children will need a black school coat, black water proof trousers and named wellington boots. We would appreciate it if you could provide your child with the appropriate clothing as soon as possible, thank you to those who have already done so.

PE
Games and PE lessons take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Please ensure your child comes to school in the relevant kit and brings their uniform to change into at school on those days. There will be no swimming until the Summer term.

Assemblies
There are two Pre-Prep assemblies each week: Wednesday and Friday. Friday assembly is a 'Celebration Assembly' where all the children in Reception get the opportunity over the year to share examples of good work or behaviour and receive a certificate to celebrate. These are then displayed on the 'Pre-Prep' celebration board in the main school corridor. There is also an Early assembly on a Thursday for Pre-School and Reception.
Reception performs their Class Assembly in the Summer term. More precise details of this will be sent out to you nearer the time.

Behaviour
The self-register 'apples on a tree' also double up as our behaviour record. Praise and encouragement is given at all times and clear rules and routines are established from day one of school. On the occasions where a child displays unacceptable behaviour they are given a warning. If they then need to be spoken to again their apple tumbles to the base of the tree. They are given opportunities to get the apple back on the tree. All children with an apple on the tree at the end of the day receive a sticker. The children work as a class to collect yellow 'honey' pebbles in the pot each day. They can be awarded a pebble by any teacher or assistant for good work or behaviour. Once all pebbles have been collected in the honey pot the class select their own celebration, for example having an extra 5 minutes at play, a special computer room time, a dance to their favourite music.
As part of the weekly celebration assembly, the class teacher will select one child a week to be awarded a Bees of Behaviour Certificate and a small wooden bee. This links in with the school values which are displayed as poster in the classroom and can be found on the website.

Working in partnership with you

Parent Help in School
After the first half of Autumn term, once the children are thoroughly settled, we are very keen to invite parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles and child-minders into school to help in the classroom. Wednesday morning 'Stay and Play' sessions can be attended, there is no need to sign up.

If you have an area of expertise or a special interest that you would like to come and talk to the children about then please let us know.

Activities at home
A school week is action-packed for the children in Reception so we strongly feel any academic activities beyond reading should be fun and not compulsory. The school website has suggestions of activities to support children in all areas of their learning should you wish to. Word lists and phonics activities are sent home some Fridays to support what the children are learning in school and let you know what they have covered that week. These are designed to be fun for the children to complete in their own time at home and do not need to be returned to school.

Throughout the year the children will have the opportunity to take home class writing and number bears. These are accompanied with specific activities to share with the family.

A weekly 'talk' homework will begin once the children are settled. It is an opportunity for the children to discuss questions and themes with you at home before talking and writing about them in school. More details will follow.

Communication with us
Email is the main form of communication. All class teachers can be contacted by email each day for you to communicate any organisational information or other messages that you cannot pass on verbally. Our email addresses are written at the bottom of this document. A school newsletter will be

emailed to you each Friday. Any additional information about events/ routines that is not posted in the school calendar or newsletter will also be emailed.

Individual **Parent Interviews** will be held on Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th October, when we will be able to tell you how your child has settled into Reception and discuss general progress. Bookings will be sent to you in advance through an online appointment system. A second set of interviews will take place in the Spring term.

Please do not hesitate to make an appointment or come to see us after school hours if you wish to discuss any issues concerning your child, or if you would like to see their profile.

We will keep you informed of all events with letters and notices in the weekly school newsletter and on our Parent Notice Board outside The Barn.

Special events

On Friday 21st October it is the school's Grandparents' Afternoon and the school Country Fair. Look out for more details about this in the school newsletter.
A Pre-Prep workshop will take place at 1830 on Tuesday 15th November.
The Reception Nativity will be held at 1730 for RST parents and 1830 for RAE parents on Thursday 7th December.
There will be out of **school trips** for Reception in the Summer term. Details of these will be given nearer the time.

We would like to thank you for your help and co-operation in ensuring a happy start of term for the children and look forward to working with you all this year.

Philippa Gent *p.gent@hallgrove.co.uk*
Samantha Tomlinson *sl.tomlinson@hallgrove.co.uk*
Anne Easeman *a.easeman@hallgrove.co.uk*