



**EARLY YEARS'
WELCOME BOOKLET
2021-2022**

**INFORMATION
FOR NEW PARENTS/CARERS
TO OUR EARLY YEARS
FOUNDATION STAGE**

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Welcome to George Tomlinson Primary School

George Tomlinson Primary is a two and three form entry community school set in the heart of Leytonstone, a stone's throw away from the tube and with easy access into the heart of London on the central line. Our recently extended school site is modern, clean and bright with an outstanding EYFS facility including large outdoor space and resources.

At George Tomlinson we believe that all children deserve outstanding quality first teaching that is supported by excellent curricular opportunities and extended services that nurture and engage children. We want to inspire brilliance in a stable and safe environment through creative practice. We want our pupils to feel that when it comes to aspirations the sky is the limit and to prepare them fully for life at secondary school and beyond. We believe in achieving *Excellence through Enjoyment*.

The last few years have been an extremely exciting time for the school, as there has been a period of rapid improvement with the Headteacher now into her fourth year along with the Senior Leadership Team, supported by an experienced Governing Body and staff who are passionate about the development of the school. We have developed an engaging and challenging curriculum that will drive the progress of every single child through *Read, Write, Inc Phonics* for teaching reading, an outstanding Guided Reading programme called *Destination Reader*, Singapore inspired Maths programme called *Inspire Maths* and *Philosophy 4 Children* and Project based Learning. We highly prize the creative arts, with instrumental music tuition of guitar, recorder, violin and ukulele taught in KS2 as well as a music teacher working across the school. We value modern foreign languages with French taught in school. We are high achievers when it comes to Sport and our boys and girls football teams always do well. Children are given many opportunities to succeed in a range of sports and dance delivered by two sports coaches who passionately believe in all children accessing and enjoying an active day at George Tomlinson. We are passionate about becoming a Healthy School and one where pupil voice is prominent so that children have a say in their own education. Pupil led assemblies, school council and community work groups will all enable the empowerment of our pupils and higher engagement in their learning.

We are lucky enough to have our own edible garden on site with a mini beast motel, a pond, free-roaming ducks and beds for growing our own vegetables! We have sole use of a field a three-minute walk from our school site. We are looking to develop outdoor learning as a special feature of George Tomlinson school life.

We love our multi-cultural community, where all religions and nationalities are represented and celebrated, and we would love to meet you!

Best wishes,

Verity Carter
Headteacher

Welcome to George Tomlinson Foundation Stage

This year, 2021 George Tomlinson Foundation stage will consist of three Reception classes of up to 30 children per class and a Nursery running two sessions a day with up to sixty children across the two sessions. There is provision for some full time places, offering up to 30 hours free per week for eligible working parents or paid for extras sessions if not. We also have up to four eligible two-year-old places each morning and afternoon.

Along with the school, our foundation stage aims to provide a safe and happy environment in which young children are encouraged to engage with and explore their environment, work and play with enthusiasm, enjoyment and confidence, while developing personal, social and moral values which enable the best start on their educational journey.

Parents/Carers

We believe that a good working partnership with parents brings about the greatest success for children. We will be welcoming parents in to school and seeking your participation and contribution in the life of the Foundation stage and the school as a whole.

A Committed Team

Our committed, caring teaching team enjoy being in an environment where they are fully supported and encouraged to be innovative.

We have a strong team of highly qualified and experienced teachers and Early Years Practitioners, the majority of whom come from the local community. They possess high level of skills and a deep understanding of how young children develop. They make a significant contribution to the children's learning and overall progress.

Communication

We strive to provide and maintain open and clear channels of communication.

We have a weekly Foundation Stage newsletter that can be found on the website and emailed directly to you on a Friday, if you so wish.

If you would like to make an appointment to myself the Assistant Head and Early Years Lead or the Head Teacher please do.

You can do this via the school office and we are both usually available before or after school.

Tel: 020 8539 3577

We look forward to working with you.

Keeping Children Safe

- Our top priority is to provide as safe an environment as possible for your child. You can help with this in a number of ways:
- Provide us with emergency contact numbers and let the school office know straight away if they change.
- Let us know if there are any changes in the person who usually picks up your child. If it is an emergency or you only find out at short notice, then telephone the school office.
- All children must be brought to and collected from school by an adult. Please remain with your child until the beginning of the school day.
- Let us know of any medical conditions affecting your child or any other factor affecting their wellbeing.

- If you visit the school during the day, please report to the school office. It is essential that we know who is in the school at all times.

Timetables for Nursery and Reception Children

Nursery for Part Time Mornings

Arrive by entrance/Nursery Gate	8.45am onwards
Nursery Gate opens	8.45 am
End of morning session	11:40 am Nursery Gate opens at 11.35 for early pick up

Nursery for Part Time afternoons

Afternoon Nursery begins	12:30pm
End of afternoon session	3.30 pm Pick up from 3.15

Reception

Arrive at reception entrance Vernon road	8.40am onwards
Beginning of day	8.45 in class and ready for learning
Registration	8.45 am
Reception Lunch	11.30 pm – 12.30 pm
End of school day	3.15 pm

Beginning of the School Day for Reception, Full Time Nursery and Morning Session Nursery Children

Reception children enter the school through the Reception gate located on Vernon Road. Nursery children will go to the Nursery Gate a little further down Vernon Road.

Reception children, during settling in time, can go straight to their classes at 8.45am, this would be the time to briefly communicate any important information to your child's teacher regarding their day. However, Reception parents/carers must leave the school premises before Registration at 8.55am; teachers and support staff will inform parents and carers when it is time to leave.

End of the Morning Session for Nursery Children and Start of Afternoon Session for Nursery Children

Parents come to the Nursery gate as before, if you more than 10 minutes late you will need to pick your child from the Reception on Harrington Road. Please inform the School so they can let the Nursery staff know if you are running late. Drop off for the afternoon session is also at the Nursery gates on Vernon Road. If you are more than ten minutes late the gates will be closed and you will need to enter the school via the main Reception on Vernon road. A member of the offices staff will notify the nursery and a member of the team will come and collect your child. Again if you are running late please let the school know.

End of the school day for Reception Children

The school day for Reception children ends at 3.15 pm. Children need to be collected from the classroom door to the playground. If parents/carers are late in collecting them, children will be taken to the School Welfare at 3.30 pm for pick up. Parents are contacted at this point.

End of Afternoon Session for Nursery Children

The Afternoon session finishes at 3.30pm, however you will be able to pick your child up slightly earlier if you have other siblings in the school. Children should be collected from the Nursery entrance on Vernon Road. If parents/carers are late in collecting them, children will be taken to the School Welfare at 3.40p.m. for pick up. Parents are contacted at this point.

Punctuality and Attendance

It is very important that all children arrive at school on time. Children who arrive late disrupt the learning of their classmates and miss the important teaching sessions and their routines scheduled at the beginning of the day.

Please also make sure that your child is collected promptly from school at 3.15 pm. and from Nursery Afternoon Sessions at 3.30p.m. or slightly earlier from 3.20p.m. We will take any remaining children to the Welfare at 3.30p.m. (3.40 Nursery), where they will be signed into the 'Late Book' and you will be contacted to arrange collection.

If your child is ill and unable to attend school, you must telephone the school office on the first morning of their absence.

Absences outside school holiday periods are strongly discouraged. Requests for absence must be made in advance by completing a 'Request for Absence' form from the school office, but such absences can only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances. All GP and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours.

Pupils who are frequently late or absent are referred to the Educational Welfare Service.

Settling Your Child at School

Settling a child into a new environment may take time, particularly if they have not been separated from you before or have attended a smaller nursery or day-care setting previously. We believe that it is better to settle children over a number of days/weeks and gradually build up their time spent independently in school. For Reception children:

Days 1 and 2	All children stay for a morning session only. 8.45 – 11.30
Days 3 and 4	Children stay for the morning session and lunch play 8.45 – 12.45
Day 4 and onwards	All Pupils will attend for a full day 8.45 – 3.15
Part-time Nursery children (morning and afternoon) will spend two hours in school for their first day. The second day will be a complete session. However, if a child needs a more individual approach to settling into the Nursery, an individual programme can be arranged between the Key Person and Parents/Carers.	

How you can help:

- Encourage your child to look forward to school and feel excited about their new experience.
- Please be positive, as this will help your child to feel positive too.
- Say goodbye and explain clearly to your child that you will be coming back to get them later.
- Reassure them if they become upset, but still say goodbye and leave.
- When you pick up your child, ask them about their day and what they have been doing.
- Praise and reward your child for settling well.

If your child cries when you leave remember that the staff team and Key Person will be there to support you and reassure your child. We find that children generally calm down and become involved in what is going on in the setting within 5 – 10 minutes. Please avoid returning to comfort your child or waiting in the classroom or corridor, as this tends to prolong the process. We appreciate that this can be upsetting, but do not worry, as we will work together to support your child through this period of transition.

Home Visits

Before starting school, all children new to the school will have a home visit from their child's teacher and either the Early Years Practitioner or Nursery officer. This visit is normally completed right at the start of term or at the very end of the summer term, and lasts about 15 to 20 minutes. Home visits have a number of advantages and benefits:

- Parents/Carers can ask questions about school in a more relaxed and personal situation.
- Parents/Carers can explain their child's specific needs and interests.
- Children have an opportunity to become familiar with the staff, and begin to make a relationship with them.
- School staff can gather helpful information about your child, for example, how best to comfort them if they become upset, or any medical information the school will need to know.

Illness and Medication

If your child suffers from asthma or needs to carry an EpiPen for anaphylaxis (or takes any other required medication) then it is very important that you let us know as soon as they begin attending school.

- Inform both the class teacher and the school office of their condition.
- Complete a consent form for the school to administer this medication (available at the school office).
- This medication needs to be supplied to school in its original packaging (clearly labelled with your child's name), accompanied by the original instruction leaflet and dosage label.
- Please ensure that the medication is well within its expiration time and that the date of expiration for the medication is noted.
- Make sure that your up-to-date contact details are available at the school office.

Unfortunately, we are unable to administer any other sort of medication to your child, e.g. Piriton and Calpol. (Unless Piriton is requested by your doctor). If your child is ill, it is better to keep them at home. Likewise, if they become ill during the school day then we may telephone you to ask you to collect them from school.

Lunch

George Tomlinson has its own kitchen providing excellent food cooked each day on-site. Our school meals are very popular and every day there is a vegetarian and non-vegetarian option, salad, vegetables, dessert and fresh fruit. Remember to let us know if your child has any special dietary needs.

All Infant pupils (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) are now entitled to a free school meal. Please see the school office for the current cost of school meals and details of entitlement to free school meals, if you are interested for the juniors. Nursery children are encouraged to bring a packed lunch if they are staying a full day.

Your reception child may also prefer to bring a packed lunch to school each day. Please do not include any sweets or chocolate bars as part of your child's packed lunch. DUE TO NUT ALLERGIES DO NOT SEND NUT PRODUCTS INTO SCHOOL- WE ARE A NUT-FREE SCHOOL. Drinking water will be provided for all the children in the dining hall.

Snack Time

We have provided what is called a 'rolling snack'. Once the children are settled into free flow, the snack table is available. Here children can choose from a variety of healthy snacks which they are encouraged to access and clean up independently. For example, butter their own toast or peel fruit and wash up their plates. There is always an adult to monitor and support children at the snack table. It is an important part

of the children's development, promoting a range of learning opportunities from social interaction to fine motor skills. We work with parents to make this safe for children with Allergies.

School Fund

Each term, teachers will be reminding parents about our £10 contribution to daily resources. In the Nursery and Reception classes we make fresh play dough every few days, we offer snacks and also have cooking activities available. This would not be possible without your help. I would like to thank you in advance for your help.

Uniform and Clothing

Foundation stage children where the George Tomlinson EYFS Uniform:

- Grey trousers or shorts, skirts or dresses (for Nursery Black tracksuit bottoms)
- White polo shirt
- Green sweat shirt, or jumper, fleece or green cardigan.
- Black trainers, black shoes with ankle support e.g. no flip-flops or backless shoes)

New school uniform is available from Speed Stitch, if you would like the school emblem. You can either buy online or visit their shop.

However, for spares you may prefer to get your clothing from a cheaper outlet, without the logo.

All clothing must be clearly labelled with your child's first name and last name.

For PE lessons, children should have shorts and T-shirt plus trainers or plimsolls, and where possible a pair of Wellington boots for the field.

Children in Nursery and Reception engage in lots of fun and creative activities using materials such as sand, water, paint and glue (most products are water soluble.) We encourage the children to wear aprons but do not enforce this as some children find them uncomfortable and accidents do sometimes happen! So please make sure they have a set of spare clothing in school at all times including underwear and socks.

Please encourage your child to dress and undress themselves independently e.g. putting on their own coat, pulling their clothing down when going to the toilet. Avoid buckles, buttons, belts, and laces until you are confident that your child is able to do, and undo, them on their own.

Children should not wear jewellery to school, except for stud or sleeper earrings and a watch.

Code of Conduct

The school's Behaviour policy is based around 'Stay on Green' and following Code of Conduct, under pinned by our Rights and Respecting School's Charter:

*We care for ourselves for each other and our environment
We treat each other as equals
We try our best and take pride in what we do
We keep ourselves safe, healthy and happy
We have good manners*

Children in Reception all start each day on Green like the rest of the school, but their chart or Rocket is a simplified version to the behaviour systems higher up the school. Children feel very proud to stay on green and respond very quickly if they have been moved down. They will be rewarded with stickers, stars, and certificates for their efforts.

Nursery children have their own behaviour management, focusing on positive behaviour strategies. Their efforts are consistently praised and a daily, 'Star of the Day' celebration reinforces their good behaviour during each session. Three children from the session are awarded a Star of the Day Sticker, praised for their particular efforts in front of the group, and then take home a star with a record of their achievement on it to share with their parents or carers.

We also have a number of safety routines. These include:

- No play-fighting in school or in the playground
- “gentle hands and kind words”
- No talking or running in the corridors
- “Inside voices” and “walking feet” at all times inside.
- No **jewellery, sweets, fizzy, bottled or canned drinks, toys or unnecessary money in school**
- Always move safely around the school and walk sensibly and quietly inside the building

The Curriculum

Children in Nursery, Reception follow the ‘Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Framework.’ This curriculum offers children the opportunity to learn through a wide range of practical experiences, in both indoor and outdoor learning environments. The year 1 curriculum is also under pinned by the Early Years principles, and offers the same continuous provision.

The six areas of learning are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Mathematics
- Understanding of the World
- Literacy
- Expressive arts and Design

‘Development Matters’ and the ‘Statutory Framework’ (EYFS) have many aspects to them. Below are the four key principles that underpin our EYFS approach at George Tomlinson:

A Unique Child	Every child is a unique child who is consistently learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured. <i>Quality and consistency across the EYFS so no child gets left behind and all reach their full potential.</i>
Positive Relationships	Children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships. <i>Partnerships working between all staff, children and their parents and or/carer’s.</i>
Enabling Environments	The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children’s development and learning. <i>To deliver a rich, accessible and stimulating environment, relevant to our children’s needs which will endeavour to extend their learning.</i>
Learning and Development	Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates. The aim is to cover the education and care of all children in early years’ provision, including children with special educational needs and disabilities. <i>A secure foundation through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.</i>

Our mission is to encourage the children within our care to become independent, resilient and enquiring learners, in preparation for their journey though George Tomlinson and beyond. The way we work ensures children have access to display and develop the Characteristics of Effective Learning (COEL); Playing and Exploring, Active Learning, and Creating and Thinking Critically.

We don't just focus on what the children are learning, but also how they learn. We use the Characteristics of Effective Learning to help us identify this. Last year we introduced forest creatures to the children to identify with, each of which displays a certain characteristic.

For this to happen, our classrooms are set up to allow children to initiate their own activities, to choose what they want to access. There will be whole class teacher input at the start and end of sessions, then adults will support, observe and teach during children's self chosen explorations. We also deliver daily phonics sessions, Pie Corbett story telling and acting out children's own stories. Any adult led activity is brief, purposeful and engaging. Our short sessions are designed to support your child during their free explorative play, which still forms the major part of our EYFS provision and curriculum.

Helping your child at home – Early Years

We strive to work with parents/carers to support your child's transition into school. There are a few things that you can encourage your child to do outside of school that will help them to settle in and feel comfortable.

- Clearly label all items of clothing, lunch boxes, book bags and PE bags. Check from time to time that the labels are still in place and clear.
- Allow your child to practice dressing and undressing, including using fasteners that they find difficult. Encourage your child to be as independent as possible. We are happy to support your child with dressing and undressing when necessary, but do encourage them to have a go. **Please ensure they wear shoes which they can do up themselves, Velcro works well for this!**
- Please include a spare set of clothes in case of accidents, and wash and return your spare school clothes promptly if your child comes home wearing any.
- Play with your child indoors and outdoors. Encourage the development of gross motor skills by supporting your child with physical play including climbing and clambering. This will support the development of fine motor skills that follows.
- Undertake creative and messy activities with your child such as cutting and sticking, finger painting, working with dough or clay.
- Take your child to a variety of places to enrich their experiences which can be drawn upon in school.
- Encourage good table manners.
- Encourage your child to be responsible for putting away their own things. They will be encouraged in school to put book bags, lunch and snacks and coats and jumpers in their correct places from the beginning of the school year. They will also be encouraged to work as a team to put away all equipment at the end of the day.
- Reinforce independent toileting and also hand washing and drying.
- Children in Nursery are encouraged to be toilet trained by the time they start attending but if not we will make a plan and we will support you and train them together.
- Encourage a sense of responsibility by requiring your child to clear away their toys with help and independently.

Planning in the moment

In the Early Years at George Tomlinson children spend large parts of the day following their own interests and projects. The class rooms are set up in a way that is conducive to their learning. Children are encouraged and taught through their play and self-chosen activities. It is at the point when children are most engaged in activities that teachers can skilfully plan their next steps and move learning on 'in the moment'.

Mathematics

Everyday life provides many opportunities to develop mathematical skills and concepts. Children enjoy practical opportunities such as sorting objects, talking about and comparing items by shape, size, weight or number. They like to identify numbers around them and to join in with counting games and rhymes. There will be workshops throughout the year and please don't hesitate to ask your teacher if you have any questions or require further information.

Reading and Phonics

Children learn to read at very different stages. Some may already recognise names and some words in their environment by sight; others may recognise and say the sounds of some letters. Print is all around

us on labels, signs, food packets and in the media. Encourage your child to make connections to these, hunt for letters and say the sounds, re-read repetitive stories and rhymes to them, and talk about the illustrations, events and characters they encounter. Once your child has been allocated their space we will be sending out lots of information about reading at home with your child and also provide workshops and information online.

We teach phonics daily in reception from the beginning and start introducing the sounds in Nursery. Once your children start with us in September we will also be sharing lots of information about how you can help your child at home. In the meantime, the Ruth Miskin website has lots of useful videos for parents.

More importantly; ‘...a child that knows eight nursery rhymes by the age of four will be higher than the expected level by year 3’.

Writing

Praise **all** efforts that your child makes to communicate by making marks. This may include using pencils, paints, in the sands, or using ICT. Involve your child when you are writing cards, lists, letters and messages. This will develop their understanding that print has meaning. Encourage your child to form letters clearly if they are ready to record, and encourage lower case, not capital letters in their writing, apart from the beginning of names. At school there are plenty of opportunities for your children to write about things they are interested in.

Reading and Book Bags

We would like all children in our school to take books home regularly. This may be a book they have chosen independently from the school library and also a levelled reading book chosen by their class teacher.

General tips for supporting your child’s reading:

- Read together every day, as part of their regular routine
- Encourage your child to talk about the pictures
- Ask questions: *Why did that happen? What will happen next?*
- Encourage your child to retell you the story, in their own words
- Ask them to turn over the pages and point to the text
- Once they know some letter sounds, encourage them to sound out short words

George Tomlinson book bags are available from www.speedstitch.co.uk/

Make sure that you keep the books safely in the bag and return all books to school each week.

Enrichment Activities

We offer a range of activities to enrich your child’s learning experience as they move through the school, including:

- School trips and educational visits
- Visits from musicians and performers
- Subject-specialist teaching in sports and music
- Projects in the local community eg Creative Partnerships

Clubs

We will also hope to be running a number of extra-curricular clubs, including sports, music, arts and crafts. We will keep you updated of what these will be.

As part of our Extended Schools' provision we run a Breakfast Club and after-school provision. If you would like further details, please contact the school office.
Breakfast Club (7.45am – 8.45am.), After school Club (3.15pm until 6.00pm with an option to pay for a shorter club finishing at 4.30pm.)

Other Activities to Support Your Child at Home

- Singing songs, nursery rhymes and playing simple games
- Encouraging your child to know and recognise their own name
- Looking out for written words eg shop names, road signs
- Counting objects when you are shopping, cooking or doing jobs at home
- Pointing out numbers, colours and shapes
- Encouraging your child to talk about events and ask/answer questions
- Join your local library: it is free to borrow books and they regularly hold storytelling or activity sessions for young children

Later in the year, parents and carers are invited to our special sharing assemblies, where classes share their work higher up the school and Star of the Week (if your child is nominated) and Family Thursday for Reception. sessions once or twice a term. Here parents are asked to come in and take part in their child's learning for a morning session. Sometimes they may be asked to run a small group activity of their choosing.

Getting Involved

There are a number of ways in which parents can become involved and support the work of the school. These include:

- Becoming a parent governor
- Attending PTFA meetings or joining the committee
- Volunteering at a PTFA event e.g. running a stall at the Summer Fair and Winter Fair
- Family Learning workshops
- Community events
- Being a parent volunteer on school trips
- Reading in Reception – Morning Reading Mingle will take place twice a week for the first half term after that children will be read in groups. Training will be available for this. We aim to have group morning reading 2- 3 times a week from January, if not before. Any contribution you can make is invaluable as it is not possible to do without your support.
- Volunteering in Nursery – ask in your class for details

We publish details of these opportunities in our weekly community newsletter. You can also contact the school PTFA via the office.

Working or volunteering with children requires a **Disclosure and Barring Service** check. This involves completing a form, (obtained from reception) and bringing in some identification. The check can take several weeks to return from the Bureau, so we recommend that any parents who are interested in volunteering have a DBS check when their children start school.

At the end of Reception Year

At the end of your child's Reception Year, we regroup and mix the classes for Year 1. This decision is based upon a number of factors including friendship groups, age, gender, maturity, ability and home language. We try to get the Year 1 classes as equally mixed as possible. The children are then mixed again, every one to two years.

Useful Websites

- School uniform website: www.speedstitch.co.uk/

- Waltham forest hub - <https://thehub.walthamforest.gov.uk/>
- Read write inc. for parents www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/
- Phonics play - www.phonicsplay.co.uk/
- BBC parenting site: www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents
- Cbeebies for schools - www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/time-for-school