

Welcome to the Early Years



A handbook for Malmesbury families about starting nursery and reception





A little bit about us...

You probably already know a little bit about our school from either one of our school tours, friends/families/neighbours with children in our school or you may be an established family with other children already in our school. This handbook is designed to give you key information to help you and your child get off to a great start in our nursery or reception classes.

As our website says, we are a cosmopolitan school at the heart of our local community in Bow, Tower Hamlets. We are proudly multicultural and inclusive. Our little pocket of London brings together children from all backgrounds in one place.

We focus on creating a positive, caring atmosphere for our children and families. Our school motto is "Be the Best You Can Be." We have high expectations for ourselves and everyone connected to our school community. We ask ourselves 'what would it take?' - and then we do it! We are proud of how we work together and what we achieve.

We want our children to be happy, confident, ambitious and independent young people. We offer great teaching and learning with all the support and guidance our children need along the way to thrive. We are passionate about growing respectful and responsible community members who understand and contribute to the world around them.

We can't wait to welcome you to Malmesbury!

Claire Stewart (Headteacher) and the Malmesbury team

What is the nursery offer for my child and the session timings?

All children are entitled to 15 hours a week free nursery provision. You will be allocated a morning or an afternoon session depending on places available, your child's age and needs.

Morning sessions	8:50am to 11:50am
Afternoon sessions	12:15pm to 3:15pm

Is my child entitled to a full-time place?

Some children of working parent households are entitled to 30 hours of free childcare. If you think this is you, we will ask you to check you are entitled to a 30-hour code. Your child will then be entitled to a full-time place.

Full time places	8:50am to 3:15pm (Lunch at 11:45am)
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If my child isn't entitled to a full-time nursery place can I still have one?

You may be able to pay to 'top up' your child's nursery offer to a full time place.

A top-up place costs £22.20 per ½ day, a full week would cost £111. The number of days need to be booked online in advance every half term. Please ask our school office for information on our 'nursery top up offer.'

What are the reception timings?

8:50am to 3:15pm (We open our EYFS gates at 8:40am to allow children time to settle in before learning begins at 8:50am)

What is available for my child before and after-school?

As and when children are ready, we have a range of opportunities to support childcare and to offer enrichment experiences for children.



Our **Malmesbury Mornings breakfast club** runs between 7:30am and 8:30am daily. It is FREE for all children. No need to pre-book.

Malmesbury Maximum after-school childcare runs from 3:15pm to 5:45pm daily. It is a cost of £15 per night – this includes a healthy snack, for example, bagels and salad. Book your place through our office.



We have a range of **after-school clubs** for our reception children to enrich our children's curriculum offer, for example cooking club and sports club. These clubs run from 3:15pm to 4:30pm in blocks each term time £15 per term. Parents sign through a termly google form and are allocated places, where available.



How will the school help my child settle in?

We plan a range of sessions to help new parents/carers and children settle into our school:

Your child will be invited to a **'stay and play' session** along with a number of other new families.

This will be an opportunity for your child to spend some time exploring and playing in our playground/classrooms. Our staff team will introduce themselves and chat to you and your child.

You will also be invited to a **Welcome Workshop** where key information will be shared with you about how nursery or reception works.

Where children may have additional needs or need toileting support, you will be invited to meet with one of our staff team so we can create a plan to help your child be successful. This may also include inviting you to an additional workshop about strategies you can use at home before children join our nursery/reception.

Following these sessions and workshops your child will be given a start date and be allocated a nursery or reception class. For children who are likely to need more time to settle, we will discuss a phased start into our nursery or reception classes to help them settle in smoothly. It is important that children are helped to be successful and feel successful when they join us.

How does Malmesbury's Early Years Curriculum help children learn and thrive?

At Malmesbury, we believe that all children deserve an education rich in wonder and memorable experiences. This allows children's natural creativity and curiosity to flourish alongside building a core set of skills and knowledge. We believe that an education that fulfils this, enables children to reach their personal goals and thrive in order to be the best they can be.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and the Development Matters document set out end of year expectations for children. We recognise the crucial role that Early Years education plays in providing firm foundations upon which the rest of a child's education is successfully based.

We provide an engaging and progressive curriculum that maximises opportunities for meaningful cross-curricular links and learning experiences. Our curriculum promotes the unique child by offering extended periods of play and sustained thinking.

We create a learning environment where children can work cooperatively with adults and peers in a climate of mutual respect to develop:

- Confidence in their ability to learn and achieve their personal goals.
- The social skills necessary to learn.
- The emotional capabilities to enable them to understand their feelings, to solve problems and maintain high levels of wellbeing.
- The ability to be an effective communicator.
- An understanding of what makes them special as a unique young person.

In the early years there are seven areas of learning. We plan an exciting, motivating and challenging indoor and outdoor curriculum offer to support progress in these areas. This is based on each child's needs, interests, and stages of development across the seven areas of learning to enable the children to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception year.



The seven areas of learning are:

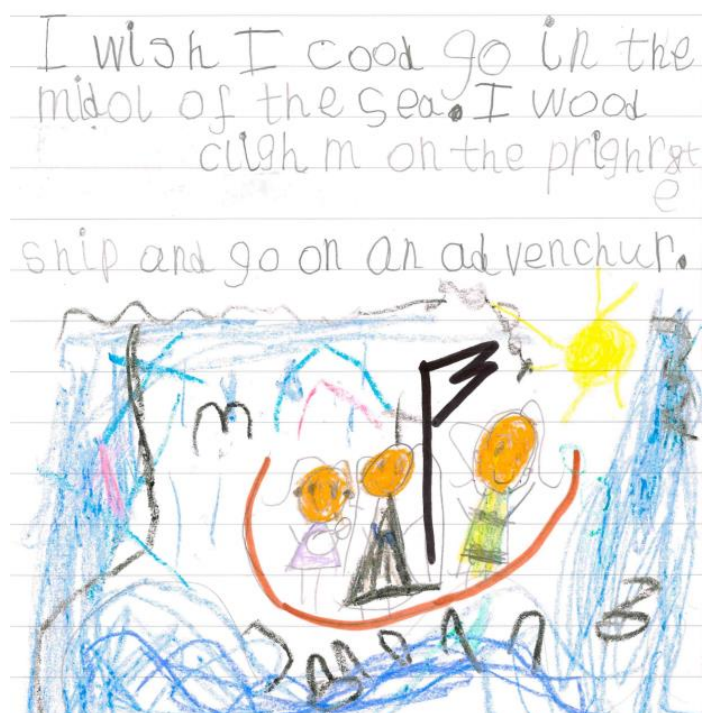
1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development
2. Physical Development
3. Communication and Language
4. Literacy
5. Maths
6. Understanding the World
7. Expressive Arts and Design

Your child will also have the opportunity to develop the 'Characteristics of Effective Learning' which are:

Playing and Exploring	Active Learning	Creating and Critical Thinking
Finding out and exploring	Being involved and concentrating	Having their own ideas
Playing with what they know	Enjoying achieving what they set out to do	Making links
Being willing to have a go	Keeping trying	Choosing ways to do things

This guide offers further support on what to expect from your child's learning and how you can support: [What to expect in the Early Years Foundation Stage:](#)

We will keep families updated about each week's learning. In reception, as children begin to formally read and write, we will invite families to phonics workshops where you can learn more about how to support early reading/writing practice at home.



What does a day in Early Years Look Like?

Children will arrive between 8:40am and 8:50am. This ensures they are able to be welcomed at the door by a member of the Early Years team every day and helped to settle smoothly into school.

A combination of adult led sessions and child-initiated activities are planned for during the week across the seven areas of learning to support learning and development. Short carpet sessions – when the children gather together with the adults – happen every day to support communication and language, literacy and maths skills.



Children also take part in storytelling, acting and rhyme times. They also have physical education (PE) and singing led by both class teachers and specialist teachers.

Children will also take part in assemblies and special events where they come together in our EYFS hall to celebrate learning.

There is also lots of time for children to choose activities which stem from their own interests and fascinations.

Lunchtime at Malmesbury

We encourage our full-time nursery and reception children to enjoy a supervised hot school lunch together with classmates. Our lunches meet strict dietary requirements to be a healthy, tasty and balanced meal. Children are also far more likely to try a new food if their classmates are eating it.

Nursery full-timers lunch: Lunch is served in class in a family-dining style, adults sit with them whilst they eat. Lunch is £3.00 per day, payable through our school-ping app.

Reception lunch: Our reception children have lunch in our dining hall at 11:45am. Lunches for reception to year 6 children are free. Food is cooked on site and has a range of choices for children – shared on our menu on the website.

Fruit, water and milk are made available throughout the day for all children. We also offer toast to children as they come into school to ensure no child starts the day hungry.



Why is play so powerful?

'Play is essential for children's development, building their confidence as they learn to explore, relate to others, set their own goals and solve problems. Children learn by leading their own play, and by taking part in play which is guided by adults.'

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK FOR THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE, EYFS REFORMS EARLY ADOPTER VERSION 2020

Adult supported play and independent (child-initiated) play indoors and outdoors is fundamental to learning – this is how children try and test out their thinking. Through play, and with support from adults, children will develop crucial skills across all learning areas. This also supports the development of the characteristics of effective learning and working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals.



Your child will have access to a wide range of experiences and resources during their time in our Early Years – some of which are listed below (this is not an exhaustive list):

Indoors: Sand, water, clay, dough, painting, gluing, cutting, drawing, writing, role play, block play, building/making things with a variety of equipment, cooking, working on the computer, talk around books, listening to stories/tapes, musical instruments.

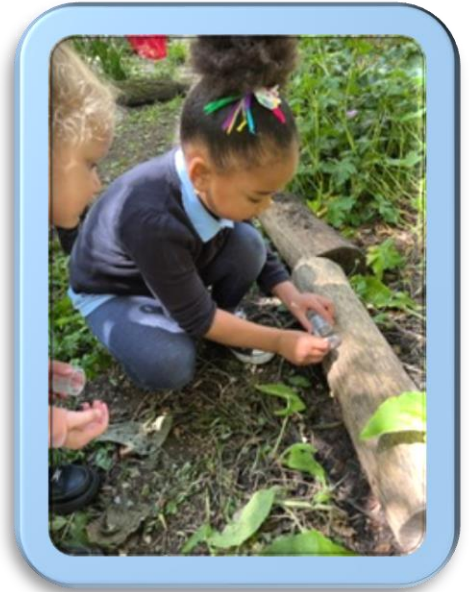
Outdoors: Climbing, balancing equipment, construction with large blocks, boxes, wheeled equipment, hoops, balls, gardening, woodwork, weaving, digging in earth, play in the mud kitchen and on bikes and scooters. These types of activities allow children to explore using all of their senses, as well as challenge their physical abilities, allow them to take risks in a safe environment and develop their spoken language as they talk about their experiences.

These are all very important aspects of young children's learning and development.

What will my child do in forest school?

This year we are introducing forest school. These outdoor learning sessions will take place in the large community garden attached to the school. They will be led by Ali, one of our early years teachers and qualified forest school lead. These sessions are designed to be practical, to help children connect with their natural environment and suitable for year-round learning. In these sessions, children will spend time outdoors:

- developing key social and emotional skills
- Identifying plants and wildlife in the community garden
- Exploring the natural world and how to look after it
- Using sustainable resources
- Playing outdoors
- Taking risks in a safe way
- Completing manageable tasks individually and in a group



How can I help my child be ready to start school?

Here are some of the things you could do at home to support your child:

- Talk to your child about your daily experiences together
- Tell and read stories together
- Sing rhymes and songs together
- Count together and notice numbers and shapes in the environment
- Notice letters and words in books and signs in and around the environment with your child
- Use pencils and crayons to draw pictures together
- Take your child to the park to experience, running, climbing and other physical activities

At Malmesbury, we support our children throughout the school to be independent. Here are some ways you could support independence at home:

- Encourage your child to put on and take off their own coat/clothing
- Allow your child to use jugs to pour water into cups
- Encourage your child to use words to tell you what they need
- Support your child in taking responsibility for their belongings e.g. looking after books or putting toys away
- Encourage your child to use the toilet independently – our staff can give you support with this if your child is finding it tricky.

What should my child wear to school?

In nursery, children do not need to wear our Malmesbury uniform, however, some families choose to do so as our uniform is designed to be affordable and practical for play.

Learning is a messy job in early years so our nursery children need to wear clothing that is practical for physical and play-based learning. It may well get wet, paint, mud or glue on it. Your child will also need a change of clothes in school (including pants).

Our school uniform for all children in reception to year 6

We have a uniform that is designed to be practical, affordable and inclusive. It levels the playing field by supporting equality and reducing disadvantage. Please support us by sending children in wearing their school uniform. It helps our children with their sense of identify and belonging. It is our value of pride: we are Malmesbury. Our uniform consists of:

- A Malmesbury school jumper (Malmesbury cardigans and fleeces are available too).
- A plain navy-blue jumper or cardigan can also be worn.
- A light blue polo shirt.
- Grey trousers.
- Grey shorts are an option in the summer months.
- A grey dress or skirt.
- A blue summer dress is an option in the summer months.
- Black shoes or black trainers
- A plain black, white, grey or navy headscarf if required





Bag/book bag

- Pupils are expected to bring a school bag/book bag with them every day to school (it should be big enough to carry an A4 book)

PE kit:

- Plain grey or navy shorts/tracksuit bottoms
- Light blue polo shirt or plain light blue t-shirt
- Trainers

Forest school:

Our teachers will notify you once your child starts forest school learning. On these days, children will need to wear:

- Long-sleeved top and trousers (arms and legs need to be covered in the woodland)
- Trainers, sturdy shoes or Wellington boots.

We have waterproofs and spare wellies in school for those who need them.

Our uniform can be bought in person from Khalsa in Bethnal Green or ordered online here:

<https://khalsaschoolwear.co.uk/school/malmesbury-primary/>

It is designed to be affordable so unbranded items can also be bought cheaply from many high street shops and supermarkets, including:

Lidl, Asda, Tesco, M&S....

What should I do if my child is sick?

In order to make the most of learning opportunities and build strong relationships, children need to be in school every day.

Young children are building their immune system, they may get lots of coughs and colds as part of this. This is normal and children are able to be in school with most minor ailments. Our staff are happy to offer advice about whether your child is well enough to be in school. If they are unwell during the school day, we will contact you and discuss options.

If your child has been given/prescribed medication, please let us know. It is preferred that parents and carers administer medication outside of the school day. However, in some circumstances it may be possible for staff to administer medication with written consent. Please ask our school office to speak to our school medical lead.

What happens if my child gets hurt in school?

We have lots in place to ensure our learning environments indoors/outdoors are safe and that children are taught how to move around and manage themselves and equipment safely. However, our children are still learning and they may sometimes fall or bump as they explore – this is more common as children settle into a new environment or if they are particularly physical. We have a large number of trained first aiders in school. If your child experiences a minor incident such as a small cut, bruise or graze, they will be seen by a first aider. We record all accidents and you will receive an online record during the day. For any more serious injuries or for a head bump, parents/careers will be called using the emergency contact details you have supplied.

How can home and school ensure my child is safe?

A responsible adult needs to bring your child to and from school. Once children arrive in school, they will be welcomed as they enter the classroom and registered as they arrive.

At the end of the day, children will be dismissed directly into the care of their familiar adult, please keep them near you as you leave. In order to keep children safe, please inform a staff member if your child is being collected by someone else. We will not let children go home if we do not have parental permission for a different adult to collect them.

Our school has a safeguarding and welfare leader. Their role is to work with families and staff to ensure that children are safe. We have a number of senior leaders who support with this designated safeguarding lead (DSL) role. Our staff have a legal responsibility to share any concerns with our DSL. We urge families to talk to us if you have any worries or concerns so that we can keep your children physically and emotionally safe.

Working in partnership

We believe that our parents/carers play a vital role in the education of their children. We understand that you are our children's first teachers and that you know best how your child learns, what comes naturally to them and where they need extra support.

Sometimes children settle in straight away, sometimes children take a little longer. Sometimes children will tell you lots about their school day, sometimes children will tell you nothing. We are here to listen and to help you understand how your child is getting on and how we can best work in partnership to help your child 'be the best they can be.'

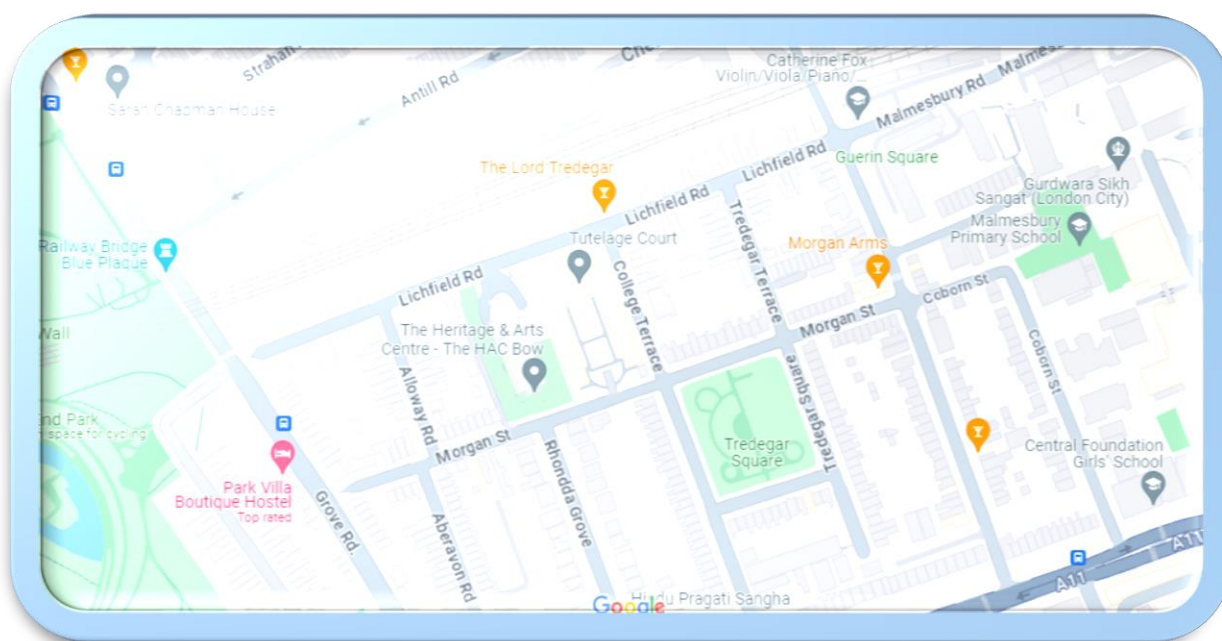
Our class teachers are your first point of contact for any conversations around your child. In addition, we work with families by:

- Inviting parents in for introductory meetings/partnership meetings
- Giving your child the opportunity to spend time with their new teachers and adults in their new classroom before starting school
- Actively providing feedback and ideas for supporting your child at home through conversations, workshops
- Parent-teacher consultation meetings
- Opportunities to come on trips and attend special events



Other key contacts:

- Shaheda Chowdhury is our parental engagement, safeguarding and welfare lead.
- Glynis Kirwan is our Assistant Headteacher for EYFS and is also our EYFS SENDCO.
- Ruth Allen leads our medical team and first aiders.



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Telephone:

For any queries; please phone Malmesbury's office team on 0208 980 4299.

Email:

admin@malmesbury.towerhamlets.sch.uk

You can also find us on X at: @malmesburypri