



**Learning Values for
Life**

**PARENTS' GUIDE
2020**

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Assessment for Learning: At our school we believe good teaching is about assessing children to further their learning and understanding. It is important for our children to be active and involved in their learning. To enable us to do this effectively we consider the four main principles of Assessment for Learning in our teaching. These include sharing the learning objectives, asking effective questions, providing feedback and getting the children to peer and self evaluate their learning. Pink and green highlighters are used to mark learning, both by the staff and children. Pink indicates successful learning and green shows an area that could be improved.

To create an active and involved environment we use Talking partners as an opportunity for children to work collaboratively with others. In each base the children will experience Talking Partners, which are chosen randomly and changed regularly. Having a talking partner allows the children to think and articulate their own ideas and opinions. It also enables them to make their own decisions and choices. We aim to create a learning climate that allows the children to feel confident to question, challenge and seek help with their learning.

Bases: Each year group consists of two register groups of children that share one large, open-plan classroom. These are referred to as bases. The areas in Years 2,3 and 4 can be divided into two areas by a sliding screen, allowing for a variety of learning opportunities. Each base is named after a tree found growing in the grounds: Reception/Dak, Year 1/Sycamore, Year 2/ Beech, Year 3/Willow, Year 4/Ash

Base Evenings: These are held near the beginning of the Autumn term and are an opportunity for parents to view their child's learning area, meet their teachers and find out what their child will be learning in the year ahead.

Break: It is possible to order, via the office, milk and orange juice for your child to have during morning break. We ask you not to provide snacks for this time as the school offers children a piece of fruit to eat.

Car Park: Verwood First School shares the campus with Emmanuel Middle School, the Sports Hall and Youth Club. It is a very busy area at the beginning and end of each school day and, as the safety of our children is paramount, the car park is closed to parents' cars between 8-9am and 2-3.45pm unless you are a disabled badge holder. If you do need to drive to the school we ask you to park safely and respectfully in the surrounding roads. Any issues with parking in these areas should be passed on to the council or police.

Choosing Time: Takes place for part of Friday afternoon across the school. Children who are on the Rainbow or Pot of Gold (see **rewards and sanctions**) will join a special activity. Other children will be able to choose from a variety of activities available in the base.

Class Assembly: Each register group will present a class assembly for their parents during the year. The performances take place on either a Thursday or Friday morning at about 9.15 and are followed by coffee and biscuits. These are a great opportunity to find out what your child has been learning!

Clubs: After-school clubs are offered during the Spring and Summer terms. Currently, they are only available to children in Years 3 and 4, however, this may change. A list of available clubs will be sent home in book bags and children can make a first and second choice. Wherever possible, children will be given first choice. Some clubs, such as cookery, may incur a minimal fee.

Curriculum: For specific curriculum information, please go to the school website/curriculum.

Dogs: For health and safety reasons, please do not bring dogs onto the school campus.

Fundraising: Fundraising for the school has allowed us to improve many of our facilities over the years but, more importantly, it provides opportunities to meet together informally. Each year we hold a Christmas and Summer Fair. We **always** welcome the help and support of parents in both planning and running these events. Fundraising meetings are advertised in the newsletter. A week or so before an event we will usually have a **Rainbow Day**; this is when we ask the children all to bring in £1 and wear their own clothes.

Our School Council also plan up to two fundraising events during the year. Usually they will choose something from the local community as well as supporting a larger charity.

Guided Reading: Guided reading sessions take place daily across the whole school. Each class is grouped according to reading attainment and each group will have one focussed session per week with the teacher. Children share a book together, and through skilled questioning, develop and improve their comprehension skills. We teach reading in a focussed way but acknowledge that we are not able to listen to children read as often as we would like..

Home Learning: This information is different in each year group and will be communicated by teachers at the beginning of the academic year and as changes arise

Home Time: The school gates will be opened from about 2.45. ready for home time. Oak come out at 2.55 so please wait outside the base doors. Sycamore, Beech, Willow and Ash finish at 3.00. If an Ash base child has a younger sibling in school they will be sent to exit with the younger siblings base. Willow exit from their side door and Ash exit via the main hall. Beech will come out either from their cloakroom or the door leading straight from their classroom. Children will only be released when their parent or known carer can be seen.

Important: If someone else is picking up your child, this should be put in writing and given in at the base door or to the office, otherwise we cannot release your child. In an emergency situation, please contact the office.

Illness: If your child is unwell, please contact the office, in the morning, and let them know your child will not be in. It is not necessary to also provide a letter on return. If your child has had vomiting and diarrhoea, we ask that you keep them at home for 48 hours after the last episode of sickness.

Key Stages: The National Curriculum is divided into blocks of years known as Key Stages. Reception is the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 constitute Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 are within Key Stage 2.

Lunch: Children have the option of having a packed lunch or a hot school meal. Hot meals need to be ordered **three weeks in advance** and a menu can be collected from the office. Thereafter, one will be put in your child's book bag. Many children have a hot meal for part of the week and a packed lunch on the other days. **IMPORTANT** As we have children attending who have nut allergies, **no nut products must be brought into school**. We also encourage healthy eating and therefore sweets are not permitted in lunch boxes.

Lunch is eaten in the hall in two sittings. When children have finished eating they go out to play. Although our lunchtime staff monitor all children in the hall, if you have particular concerns about your child's eating, please let us know.

Medication: If your child is on prescribed long term medication eg ventolin for asthma, we are able to hold their medication in school and administer when necessary. We ask that you fill in a medication form at the office and ensure that your child's medication is always in date. If your child has been prescribed short-term medication (most likely to be antibiotics) that requires 4 doses per day but is well enough to return to school, we are able to administer one dose. Please bring the medication into the office and fill in the necessary paperwork.

Morning Entry: The school doors, for each base, will be open from 8.30am. Children may enter from this time but must be in by:

Ash and Willow 8.40

Beech, Sycamore and Oak 8.45

After these times, the doors will be closed and children will need to be brought in via the office. **All children must be accompanied until they enter the school building.**

A teacher from each class will open the door to welcome in the children and be available if you need to talk to them briefly

Newsletters: The school produces newsletters, usually fortnightly, to keep you up to date with important issues and events. These will be emailed to you. If a hard copy is required, please speak to office staff. Each base produces a newsletter six times a year, which details the learning that will be covered over the next half term as well as home learning ideas.

Out-of-School Club: SCOOSC is an independent out-of-school club that is run in the school building. It offers a breakfast club from 7.45am, after-school care until 6pm and a holiday club. More information and contact details can be found on their website: www.scoosc.com.

Parent Consultations: This is an opportunity for parents to look at their child's learning and discuss both settling in and progress on an individual basis with their child's teachers. Dates for these will be given in the newsletter and approximately two weeks before, boards will be placed outside the bases so that parents can sign up for a consultation time. Two dates will be offered, one running from mid afternoon to early evening and the other offering times from mid afternoon to later on in the evening.

Parent Helpers: Parent helpers provide the school with much support and are always welcome. Some may come in on a regular basis to assist with the preparation of resources, supporting choosing time or to listen to children read. We require volunteers in this capacity to have had a CRB check. Other parent helpers may come in to support a one-off special day in their child's base or offer to accompany the school when walking up to the church. Please speak to the office if you are interested in helping in your child's base.

Positive Play: Each half term, 10 children from Ash base are chosen to be Positive Play Leaders. Their role involves putting out and clearing away play equipment, such as skipping ropes, balls and bats and basketballs, each playtime. They are also responsible for encouraging positive use of equipment as well as helping children to have a happy playtime.

Potted Sports: This is a whole-school, non-competitive event that is run during a morning in the Summer term. Children across the school are divided into mixed year group teams and take part in several sports-based activities through the morning to earn points for their team. The aim is to encourage team-building and have fun with sport. Parents are welcome to join us for the morning. If you are able to, please bring a picnic lunch for you to share with your child on the field after the event.

Productions: Once a year, all the children in the school are involved in a musical production! This alternates yearly between Christmas and summer. As we ensure all 300+ children are included and can be seen, we divide the school into two teams, each appearing in two productions. Ash base take on the main roles, but every base performs a song!

Pupil Premium: This is a sum of money paid to schools each year for each child whose family:

- Receive income support
- Are in the armed forces

At Verwood First, in order to support our Pupil Premium children, we invest this money in, amongst other things, bespoke support, evidence-based catch-up sessions and ensuring we provide quality first teaching for every child. We are also able to provide some support, for those children, with school trips, school clubs and uniform. If you feel you may qualify, please drop in to the school office to find out what to do next.

Reading Challenge: Every child is encouraged to take part in 3 reading challenges throughout the year. Every time a child finishes a book we ask that an adult signs and dates the child's journal in the reading section of their journal. After reading the required number of books (the number required is different between the key stages) children are initially awarded a certificate. Further reading leads to a book mark, followed by a reading book which the child can choose for themselves. This will be presented to them in Praise Worship.

Residential: In the summer term, Ash base go on a two night residential trip. Details of this are made available to parents early in the spring term.

Rewards: To encourage good behaviour we operate a rainbow, sun and cloud system. At the start of each week all children have a named peg attached to the sun. We reward children for their achievements in the following ways.

- Choosing Time will take place once a week in KS1 & KS2. During this time, those who have their peg on the sun will have the opportunity to choose from a range of interesting and varied activities. Children who have tried hard to show the 6 R's are in this way recognised and rewarded for the effort they have made.
- Children, who are on the sun and are recognised for doing the right thing on more than one occasion, may be asked to move their peg to the rainbow. These children will then be given the option of doing a special rainbow activity or first choice of choosing activities. If a child's peg is on the rainbow and they continue to demonstrate the R's, they will be asked to place their name on the base celebration list. These children will be celebrated in the base at the beginning of choosing time and Mr Parsons will be notified of their success.
- Four children from each base, who consistently demonstrate the 6 R's, will be chosen to place their peg on the 'Pot of Gold'. These children will be referred to as our 'ALWAYS' children. These children will come together and take part in an extra special adult led activity. These children will be announced and celebrated during praise worship. This system is not designed to reward every child for a particular occurrence of positive behaviour or learning throughout the course of the year. This system is to reward children who are consistently well behaved.
- In Oak base we have a gem jar so that instances of positive behaviour can be immediately reinforced. Individuals or groups can earn gems, which they will place in a base jar. When the base has earned enough gems to fill the whole jar, they will receive a base reward. The children will decide what reward they are aiming for at the beginning of this process. This will foster a sense of teamwork, as it will encourage the children to support each other in reducing inappropriate behaviour and making good choices. As the children go into Sycamore and beyond the base will have 6 jars, one to represent each of our learning and behaviour Rs, the children again will be recognised for using these Rs in groups or as individuals. The 6 jars are emptied into the main base jar, then when this is full they receive a base reward.
- Praise Worship will take place once a week. During this time specific children are awarded a Head Teachers certificate for demonstrating one of the 6 R's and their names will be put on the rainbow.
- In Oak base, the emphasis is on introducing children to the expectations of appropriate behaviour in the school environment. The children in Oak have a different weather system involving only one cloud (which is reset by the end of the day), a sun, a sparkly sun and a rainbow to reinforce positive behaviour. We also use an instant reward system, whereby we reward positive behaviour through names on the smiley board. Children who have displayed one of the 6R's throughout the day are also chosen as our 'Stars of the day' and are rewarded by carrying out special jobs in the base the following day.
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Rs: The 6 Rs are the learning dispositions that are nurtured and encouraged through all aspects of Verwood First School life, with the firm belief that these are skills that allow for successful, life-long learning. The Rs can be divided into the four learning Rs, resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness and reciprocity and the two behaviour Rs, responsibility and respectfulness. The children acquire understanding of the Rs through both direct and implicit teaching as well as modelling from staff. Throughout the school, the R language is used to encourage and praise the children, when they have demonstrated use of any of these skills.

Sanctions: Our main approach to behaviour management is to reinforce positive behaviour whenever possible and to recognise & reward this behaviour at every opportunity. As a school we believe that mistakes are an important part of learning. Therefore, it is important to us that we convey the message that everyone can learn from mistakes. There are occasions when children need guidance and clear boundaries. When inappropriate behaviour takes place, staff members consider each case on an individual basis and any decisions made will be dependent on circumstances.

- In KS1 & KS2, if a child displays persistent or inappropriate behaviour, there will be a whole school reminder. If the behaviour continues, the child will be given an individual warning. If the behaviour continues, the child will be asked to move their peg. If a child displays unacceptable or unsafe behaviour, this would result in a child moving their peg with no prior warning.
- Every time a child moves their peg to a cloud they will miss 5min at the beginning of the next lunchtime (Reflection time) with a member of the Leadership team (Sycamore-Ash). Oak Base reflect with a teacher in their base. During this Reflection time session the child will be asked to think about what they did and the choices they are going to make in order to move their peg back to the sun. They will also be reminded of the consequences of moving their peg for a second time. If a child is asked to move their peg on more than one occasion during a day, they will be sent to another member of staff to discuss the choices they have made.
- If a child moves their peg to the second or third cloud and does not manage to move it back, they will attend 'Sun Steps' at the end of the week. If a child is on the third cloud their parents will be informed.
- Children will be given the chance to move their peg back onto the sun. In Oak Base (Reception) and Sycamore Base (Year 1) the children will be asked to move their peg back as soon as they have been noticed turning their behaviour around. From Beech Base (Year 2) onwards we will operate the same system as discussed above so once they have been noticed making the right choice they will be asked to put their name on the board. Once they have two ticks by their name they will be able to move their peg back one step. So if they are on the first cloud they will move back to the sun, if they are on the second cloud they will move to the first cloud and if they are on the third cloud they will move to the second cloud.
- 'Sun Steps' will be carried out at the start of choosing time and will last for up to 30 minutes. 'Sun Steps' will involve activities and discussions that will provide children with the opportunity to build self-esteem, develop better relationships and teach relevant social skills such as listening and co-operation. It is a time also to discuss issues about behaviour in general and to promote the 6R's. This process will be carried out by a TA (trained in Emotional Literacy Support) who will closely monitor the number of occasions that children attend 'Sun Steps'. If a child attends 'Sun Steps' on 3 or more occasions, parents will be notified by the class teacher and a meeting will be arranged to discuss next steps. *In order to ensure equality for all (Equality Objective 1)* the Head Teacher monitors children of concern and incidents in each base (weekly review). Where poor behaviour persists and the child continues to attend reflection, the Head Teacher will meet with parents and child. Where a pattern of bullying or a serious incident occurs this is followed through weekly reviews and monitored closely. Parents will be informed at an early stage.

School Council: At the beginning of each year, children from Beech, Willow and Ash have the opportunity to stand as School Council representatives. An election is held and reps are chosen from these bases. One of their roles is to supply each base with a worry/ suggestion box that is checked at weekly meetings. Suggestions are considered and discussed and worries and concerns are addressed and dealt with. School council are also concerned with listening to and acting upon pupils' suggestions for improving the school as well as fundraising for chosen causes.

Sports Day: During the summer term, the school holds a more traditional, competitive sports afternoon for Ash and Willow children. Parents are welcome to come along to cheer on their children, as well as compete themselves!

Topic Learning: The school follows a topic approach to learning. New topics are started each half term, beginning with an immersion day, where the children are given opportunities to explore some elements of the topic and help plan a web of learning. Although the overall topic will be the same for every year group, each base will focus on different elements e.g. during the **Britain** topic, year 2 will learn about the Great Fire of London and Year 4 will focus on World War 2.

Transfer Day: At the end of the Summer term, children from first school to upper school spend a day in the class they will be in the following year. This gives children the opportunity to meet their new teachers and teaching assistants and experience their new classroom. New starters to Oak base either attend for a short morning or afternoon session, depending on their register group.

Trips: Every year group plans one school trip each year, linked with one of their topics. These provide great learning opportunities for the children and give a real-life context to their topic. Parent helpers are invaluable on such trips and would be allocated a small group of children, including their own, to be responsible for. The teacher will take the lead in all situations regarding management and behaviour on the trip and we ask that parent helpers offer their help to Verwood First School for the smooth running of the trip rather than to spend time with their child.

Uniform: We are very proud of our uniform and we encourage the children to wear it smartly and respectfully. Our expectation is that children will come to school dressed appropriately.

Verwood First uniform can be purchased from **Threads and Treads** 5 Station Road Verwood. Approximately once a term, good quality second-hand sales are also held at the school, run by parent volunteers. Look out in the newsletter for dates or contact the school office.

Girls:	Grey skirt/pinafore dress	Boys:	Grey trousers/shorts
	Checked red and white summer dress		Checked red and white shirt
	Checked red and white blouse		Red, logoed jumper
	Closed toe shoes—no boots or trainers		Closed toe shoes—no trainers
	Red, logoed jumper/cardigan		Black/navy PE shorts
	Black/navy PE shorts		Red, logoed t-shirt
	Red logoed t-shirt		Black plimsolls
	Black plimsolls.		

Autumn and Spring terms, children should bring coats into school. During the summer term, children should have a sun hat in school. A suitable hat can be brought in from home, alternatively, logoed baseball caps can be purchased at the office.

Water Bottles: Children need to bring a **named** water bottle into school each day filled with water (squash is not permitted). This needs to be separate from their lunchbox as it is kept in the classroom and accessed through the day.

These events and activities may be affected due to COVID-19. We will be following the government guidelines on social distancing and will inform you on these changes as soon as possible. Thank you for your continued support in these very different times.