Lower Farm Academy

New Starter Information Pack



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Welcome to Lower Farm Academy

A message from the Head Teacher

My name is Mr How and I am delighted to welcome you to our amazing school and I would like to thank you personally for choosing Lower Farm. Lower Farm is a state of the art primary school which welcomes children from age 3 in Nursery right through to Year 6.

At Lower Farm, we provide an exciting and challenging curriculum which is designed to engage and motivate all children. We want our children to become resilient, independent thinkers with a genuine love of learning. Whilst we strive for high academic standards, we are also fully committed to developing the creative, physical, emotional and social aspects of all of our children's lives.



We offer a safe, nurturing and stimulating learning environment, which enables us to ensure our children are supported, challenged, inspired and motivated through a breadth of learning experiences and opportunities. The school is committed to safeguarding and all staff will actively promote the welfare of all children.

Our aim is to establish our school at the heart of our community and we therefore endeavour to foster strong relationships between children, staff, parents, governors and the wider community. We welcome the opportunity to work with you to develop ambitious, confident and inquisitive children.

At Lower Farm, every child will be respected and treated as an individual, with no limits placed on their learning – just opportunities to continually improve. We believe in the potential of every individual and that every child in our care can achieve and enjoy their time at our school. We will give all children equal opportunities to challenge themselves through the range of learning journeys presented to them – empowering children to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning.

I look forward to meeting you and showing you what a fantastic place for learning Lower Farm Academy is.

Mr A. How
Head Teacher

Our Curriculum

Our inspiring curriculum is delivered through a series of engaging, hands on learning activities which bring the children's learning to life and engages them in their learning.

Each learning journey is carefully planned and sequenced to ensure a fluid curriculum design which builds on skills and knowledge to a clear end piece and celebration. Each classroom is a language rich environment reflecting the learning that is being absorbed and immerses the learning of a range of subjects within that learning journey.

Children are effectively scaffolded and challenged within their learning through carefully prepared and attractive resources. Our curriculum is centred around active learning, and quality resources which expose our pupils to new vocabulary which ensures every child is effectively supported and can flourish.

We use adaptive teaching to ensure every child can access learning and make progress. Teachers adjust how they model, explain, support, and challenge so all pupils can participate confidently. This might include breaking tasks into smaller steps, offering extra guidance, using visual/concrete resources, or providing additional challenge. Our aim is simple: every child included, engaged, and supported to succeed.

Pupils at our school take on a role in their learning and become artists, geographers, scientists, historians, theologists and so many real-life roles. We believe it is important that children understand the real-life application of their learning and that a subject is not merely something we learn in school, but it has implications all around us. For example; We Are Designers – with a focus on a design brief and an understanding that everything we use has been designed for a purpose. Children's books also reflect these roles.



Governors

School governors are volunteers who help to run our school and make up our 'Local Governing Body'.

Governors are involved in the strategic decisions of the school; for example, running buildings and budgets, ensuring health and safety measures are in place, supporting staff and setting standards of school discipline. They also contribute to the school's long-term goals. They support the Head Teacher and make sure the school is always heading in the right direction.

Parent Governors

Are you interested in becoming a parent governor? If you would like more information about what the role involves then please contact Lindsay Martin or the school office. We look forward to hearing from you!

Lindsay Martin- Chair of Governors
chairofgovs@lowerfarmacademy.org

School Uniform



Uniform:

- Purple sweatshirt or cardigan
- White polo shirt
- Grey or black trousers/shorts/skirt
- Grey pinafore dress or purple/white summer dress
- Plain black school shoes (no heels).

PE Kit:

- Purple T-shirt/polo shirt
- Black shorts/leggings/tracksuit bottoms
- Purple sweatshirt/cardigan/fleece
- Plain practical trainers, football boots or pumps.

(In Key Stage 2 pupils will go swimming and so will need a swimming costume/trunks and swimming hat).

Please ensure all school uniform and PE kit are clearly named.

Not every item of uniform has to have our logo on so parents can choose where they wish to buy it from. Our recommended suppliers are: www.yourschooluniform.com and Schoolwear Centre, 1-3 Abbeygate Street, Nuneaton, CV11 4EJ. Tel. 02476 341682

Friends of Lower Farm (PTA)

Our PTA group, Friends of Lower Farm, is a friendly group of parents, teachers and volunteers.

Over the past few years, they have held many fun events to help raise extra funds for school including Summer and Christmas Fayres, school discos and Easter bingo.

The money raised is contributing towards our library, climbing equipment and road safety measures. Our PTA are always on the lookout for new members and help so please come to one of their meetings to find out more.

Please contact them via email to find out more: friends@lowerfarmacademy.org



Home - School Partnership

Communication

We truly believe in the importance of home-school communication. It is essential that key events, developments and challenges are discussed regularly to ensure your child receives the best start to their education.

We can only solve problems we are made aware of and would ask that you bring them to our attention. There are many ways you can do this such as speaking to a member of staff in person, communicating via SeeSaw or phoning our school office.

Meet and Greet

Pupils are greeted each morning on the gates and at external doors by staff members and messages can be passed on to relevant teachers.

Teachers will be available to discuss anything with you at morning drop off from 08:35 to 08:45 and afternoon collection from 15:15. The Senior Leadership Team will also be available to discuss any concerns you may have. Please speak to the school office to arrange an appointment outside of these hours.

Parent/Carer Handbook

This is shared with parents and carers to hopefully provide you with everything you need to know about the day-to-day workings of our school.

Regular newsletters are also sent via email, and our SeeSaw App.

SeeSaw APP

Our SeeSaw APP is our main form of communication. It includes regularly updated learning posts, message section and weekly news.

Sharing Learning

We will be using an online Learning Journal called 'SeeSaw' which will ensure we can record your child's achievements and share these with you. This will correlate with their developmental milestones and provide next steps that you can focus on at home. You will also be able to provide your child's home learning achievements through the SeeSaw App which will provide a rounded picture of all the amazing things your child is achieving.

We will invite you to parents/carer evenings where we can discuss development, however if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to speak to class teachers who are always happy to discuss with you.

Home-Learning

We assign 'Homework Menus' on SeeSaw each half-term. These include a range of activities for you to choose from, and homework can then be brought into school or shared via SeeSaw. We will also provide reading books for your child (decodable books linked to their phonics level, as well as a 'book for pleasure' which can be read to them).



Behaviour



At Lower Farm Academy, we have the highest expectations for our pupils so that they can all be the best that they can be.

Our Behaviour Policy clearly demonstrates how we nurture children and proactively work with our families at Lower Farm. We promote a high standard of behaviour and have a positive ethos where all members of the school community are valued as individuals, we believe in encouraging the development of self-esteem, respect for others and self-discipline.

Emphasis is placed on positive reinforcement of behaviour through praise in accordance with our school values. Children's confidence and self- esteem are developed through encouragement and incentives, both verbal and written. Please read the full version of the Behaviour Policy on school's website for more detail.

School Dinners

Our school dinners are prepared and cooked on site using fresh ingredients. There is a wide selection of choices available. If you would like a menu, please look on our website.

School dinners are charged at £2.70 daily (subject to change). If you would like your child to have a school meal, booking and payment must be made in advance via Parent Pay.



Children eligible for Pupil Premium are entitled to a free school meal. Please complete the attached form if you think you are eligible.

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are eligible for Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) and will receive a school meal free of charge if requested.

Pupil Premium and UIFSM children can still select their meal choices in advance via Parent Pay.

Parent Pay

We are a cashless school. All booking for lunches, trips, breakfast club and nursery fees are done electronically through Parent Pay.

Attendance

School attendance is vital for pupil's development physically, emotionally and socially.

It is important that your child attends every day and on time – **gates open at 08:35 and are locked at 08:45** when the school day officially starts.

Children should only be kept at home if they have a serious illness or injury. If this is the case, parents must call the school by **08:45.**

Pupils should miss as little time as possible—every learning opportunity matters!

The school will implement strategies in order to improve attendance for any child who's absence is falling below 96%, who has a pattern of erratic attendance, or persistent lateness. Our full policy can be found on the school website. We look forward to working in collaboration with you in order to ensure your child is present in school and can learn to their full potential.

Pupil Premium

Pupil premium is additional funding given to school for extra support and to help close the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Please read the information within the Pupil Premium statement on the website which gives details of our Pupil Premium Grant and how we allocate the funding. The Pupil Premium Grant is a sum of money that is allocated to school to ensure that all children have an equal chance to succeed. Your child may qualify for Pupil Premium. If you qualify your child will receive free school meals, discounted school trips and classroom targeted interventions.

If you ever feel your family qualifies, even for a short period, please complete a Pupil Premium application form online as it can provide your family with additional support throughout their time in primary school :

https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/education-learning/apply-free-school-meals

Nursery Provision

We are proud to offer our Nursery provision that starts from 3 years old.

You can apply for a place at our fantastic Nursery 'Acorns' the term after your child turns 3 years old. Please enquire at the school office and about funding available. We currently offer 15 hour and 30 hour funding depending on your eligibility.



Wrap Around Care

We are very proud to offer an extensive provision offer to support all of our families.

Breakfast Club

Our breakfast club starts every day **from 07:45.** The children will be provided with a selection of cereals, toast and fruit juices as well as a variety of fun activities. The cost of this is £5 a session.

Payment and Booking

For Breakfast Club, we require bookings and payment in advance for the purpose of staffing via Parent Pay. Bookings will only be accepted with payment. Places are limited so will be allocated on a first come first served basis. The full terms and conditions will be provided within the Extended Services Policy which is provided upon booking. You can read the full policy on the website.

Afterschool Club

Our After School Club is run by external provide**r MHR Sports Services**, an Ofsted registered provider, and operates between 15:15 and 18:00.

Children will be provided with a safe, engaging and structured environment, with a wide range of activities including sports, creative workshops and arts & crafts. We always aim to offer at least one sports-based activity alongside a creative or alternative activity, giving children the opportunity to choose what they would like to take part in. The club is open throughout the school year for pupils in Reception to Year 6.

Sessions & Times:
Early Session – 15:15 – 16:15
Mid Session – 15:15 – 17:00
Late Session – 15:15 – 17:30
Full Session – 15:15 – 18:00



Prices can be found via our booking system/website to ensure they are always up to date: https://mhrsportsservices.co.uk/wraparound-care/

Rather than fixed themed days, our team plans activities weekly through dedicated staff meetings. This allows us to keep sessions fresh, tailored to the children attending, and consistently high quality.

Food Provision:

Children collected by 17:00 will be provided with a light snack such as toast, cereal bars, crisps or fruit, along with a drink.

Children staying until 17:30 or 18:00 will receive a hot meal, with menus rotating on a two-week basis. Menus are available upon request and are also displayed within the school.

All bookings are made online via our booking system, and we accept Tax-Free Childcare and childcare voucher payments.

Emergency Contact Details

When you fill in your application pack you will fill in the emergency contacts and collection form details. If somebody other than who is on your list of who can collect your child, please inform the school office and use the password you have chosen.

Early Years

Preparation for Early Years

Practical Preparations

Understanding Spoken Instructions

Classroom instructions often contain several parts for children to remember. A simple game of 'Simon Says' during long car journeys this summer could really help. Give your child an instruction to do, like 'Simon says put your finger on your nose' and see if they can follow your instruction. You can challenge your child further by giving them 3 instructions in one go.

Mathematical Development

One-to-one counting is of great benefit to your child and when completed in a practical 'real world' way can be a great source of confidence for your children too. It can also be done incidentally throughout the day, for example counting steps as your child climbs the stairs.

You can also help your child learn about colours by looking for different colours in the environment throughout the day. Learning about the position of objects will also ensure your child can tell us where certain items that they need are. We use White Rose Maths in Reception alongside using practical resources and engaging provision activities.

Phonics Development

Children in Reception will begin their RWInc journey within two weeks of starting with us. This will include learning sounds, blending and segmenting. We will host RWInc workshops to help develop parental understanding throughout the term. It would be fantastic if you could practise name writing at home too.

Through **Kindred Squared**, the following guidance is available:

- **Starting Reception Guidance** – supporting smooth transitions from early years settings into school, with a focus on children's emotional wellbeing, routines, and partnership with parents and carers.
- **Potty Training Guidance** – providing clear, consistent advice to support toileting readiness and effective partnership working with families.
- **Supervised Toothbrushing Guidance** – promoting positive oral health habits and supporting public health priorities within early years and school settings.

The guidance can be accessed here:
https://kindredsquared.org.uk/



Early Years Curriculum

Communication and language focuses on developing speech and ensuring that children can use a variety of language in conversation. A focus on listening and attention ensures that children develop the skills needed to listen and respond appropriately.
Personal, social and emotional development focuses o n ensuring that children are able to manage their behaviour in different situations and engage in social scenarios with others.
Physical development focuses on both large movements and small movements. A big focus for the start of the year will be developing pencil grip and beginning to form letters correctly.
Literacy development focuses on developing your child's reading and writing skills by exploring a love for reading and developing a growing phonetical understanding.
Mathematics A focus on mathematical language ensures that children can discuss the world around them. We will also focus on recognising, ordering and counting to 10. Children will also learn about number bonds and odds and evens.
Understanding the world develops the children's understanding of the world around them. Through exploring different cultures, observing nature changing over time, looking at maps and learning about the past.
Expressive arts and design develops the children's creative abilities and allows them to develop their own preferences using a variety of materials. The children will have daily opportunity to be imaginative in creative play, explore instruments and use different media.





Preparation for Nursery

Social Skills

Being able to interact appropriately with other children and share resources is a key skill that will help your child when they start school. Play dates with other children will help to promote these skills and you could arrange these with future classmates if possible. During the play date, you can model useful social phrases such as 'my turn please' or 'let's share' and join in with pretend play to start the game off and then fade out as children get into character.

Communication and Language

Many parents worry if their child will be able to tell the teacher if they need something or if they will make friends. Good communication skills underpin these abilities.

Your child may be starting Nursery with identified communication difficulties, or you may have concerns that have not yet been addressed. If this is something you are concerned about, please speak with the Nursery teachers so that can reassure, and work closely, with you.

Listening and Attention Skills

Your child will be given many spoken instructions throughout the school day and will need to be able to shift their attention from what they are doing to listening to what the teacher is saying. A lovely activity to promote this is to go on a 'listening walk' where your child listens for all the sounds around them in the park or town centre. You could also jot down all the sounds your child notices and talk about these back at home to retell the journey based on the sounds they heard.

Preparation for Reception

The period before a child starts Reception for some parents can be an anxious time. The following information is a simple guide to how you can best prepare your child for this exciting time! To help your child transition smoothly into school, it can be useful to count down the Summer together using a visual calendar. Playing simple turn-taking games such as, *I Spy* or board games can also encourage sharing and positive interactions with others.

Promoting Independence

Your child will benefit from being as independent as possible when they start Reception. Of course, teaching staff will always be on hand to help, but children feel a sense of achievement when they can accomplish things by themselves! For example: being able to go to the toilet independently, put on and take off their coats and gather their own belongings.

Children in Reception have access to an outdoor environment throughout the day, so being able to put their coat on and zip it up independently will really help them-as will being able to put on a pair of wellies and taking off their jumper to put it somewhere safe.

Another important part of being independent at school is being able to use the toilet independently, including washing and drying their hands.

Being able to eat their snack independently will be helpful as children will be encouraged to get their own milk and fruit as much as possible. Practicing opening fruit such as bananas and oranges will be helpful.

Children in Reception will also have lunch whilst in school and will need to be able to cut their own food and feed themselves. It would be fantastic if you could practise this at home too. An advised activity we like to use to practise this is to cut slices of bread into different shapes.



Early Years



Transition into Early Years

Parent/Carer Welcome Meeting

Parents and carers are invited to join us on **Monday 29th June 2026 at 17:00 – 18:00** to meet some of the staff and hopefully get all the information you need ahead of your children starting in September.

We will have a number of staff in attendance, including our EYFS teaching team, to introduce themselves, share key information and be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

Transition Day

Children in Nursery and Reception are invited to join us on our transition morning on **Wednesday 8th July 2026** to come and experience a morning at Lower Farm and allow us to get to know them and them to know us ahead of starting in September.

Included into the transition day are showing the children:

- Where their pegs are
- Where they sit
- Routes around school
- Early Years outdoor space
- Reception – Year 2 playground
- The dinner hall

The Children will also explore a range of activities already set up for them both indoors and outdoors, as well as being able to choose for themselves what they would like to explore.

Please look out on the school's Facebook page for updates of what we have been doing in our first weeks at Lower Farm Academy!



Home Visits

In order to get the most up to date information to help us welcome and support your children, we will be conducting home visits for both Nursery and Reception children in September. We will complete a home visit with yourselves between **Wednesday 2nd and Friday 4th September 2026** so that we can again learn how we can best support your child(ren) when they start with us the following week.

You will be given an appointment slot for one of these days in due course and a member of the teaching team will come and visit you at home and get to know you and your child(ren). This is an invaluable part of the transition process.

Starting School

Reception and Nursery children will start with us on **Monday 7th September 2026.** During our settling in period, we will complete an individual baseline assessment of each child. The children will have plenty of open-ended activities set up daily for them to explore as well as access to all other resources in the environments.

We have always found that starting on full days is best as most children have attended nursery/preschool settings already and are used to full days. If you feel your child(ren) may need a tailored approach, please speak to a member of the team at our parent/carer welcome meeting

Setting Visits

For our new Reception children, prior to the summer holidays we will arrange visits to Nursery settings in order to gather information so we can best support your child(ren) when they start school in September.



Phonics in Reception Class

At Lower Farm Academy, we use Read Write Inc. Phonics, a highly successful and widely used literacy programme. It helps us teach key early reading skills in a secure and structured way from the very beginning of each child's school journey. The programme is taught throughout Reception and Year 1, giving children the tools they need to confidently decode words and begin reading independently.

Your child will learn to read in a very simple way. He or she will learn to:

1. Read letters by their 'sounds'
2. Blend these sounds into words
3. Read the words in a sentence

The sounds which provide the children with the tools to read are split into three groups:

1. **Set 1 sounds** are sounds written with one letter, as well as some common digraphs (sh, ch, th, qu, ng, nk, ck, ss, ll, ff, zz)
2. **Set 2 sounds** (ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, ar, or, air, ir, ou, oy)
3. **Set 3 sounds** (ea, oi, a-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, aw, are, ur, er, ow, ai, oa, ew, ire, ear, ure)

Your child will be taught to say the sound for the letter and not the letter name to begin with. Some children will also benefit from our focused and targeted interventions to further support the development of their early reading.

For more information on how you can support your child's reading at home, please visit https://www.ruthmiskin.com/

Phonics in Nursery Class

Nursery will complete Phase 1 Phonics activities daily (listening games), and they will then begin the Read Write Inc programme in the Summer term.

Setting up the SeeSaw App

To get you set up on SeeSaw, we will provide a QR code for your child's individual profile once they start school in September. This is a private account so others will not have access to your child's learning journal.

You can log on to SeeSaw at any time and see your child's profile. You will see observations uploaded from school, which will include both observations of your child individually, as well as group and whole class learning activities. Teachers will share homework menus and half-termly overviews of the curriculum so you can further support your child's learning at home. Teachers will also share weekly overviews of the learning and activities so you can discuss this with your child at home.

SeeSaw is also used to support your child's reading progress. Teachers upload Phonics videos weekly that are linked to your child's Phonics level. These videos are part of the RWInc scheme and include games and interactive opportunities for your child to practise their reading. They are a fun and engaging addition to the books your child will take home each week in their reading packs.

If you would like to share learning from home on SeeSaw, you can upload pictures and videos of your child's achievements with a brief description of what they have done/said. You can also add comments to posts uploaded by teachers.

Finally, you can contact your child's class teacher using the 'Message' feature on SeeSaw.



Contact Information

To stay up to date with information from school please visit our Lower Farm Academy Facebook and Twitter pages.

Find more information on our website www.lowerfarmacademy.org

A member of the school team is always happy to help you. Mrs Luke and Mrs Graham, our admin team look forward to hearing from you. You can contact us via the number or email below.

If you require any information that is related to Special Educational Needs, please contact our SENCo – Mr Tyson on the school number or email below.

Get In Touch

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REAch2 ACADEMY TRUST

Part of **REAch2 Academy Trust**

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