

ROBERT  
ARKENSTALL  
PRIMARY SCHOOL  
PURSUE POSSIBILITIES  
LOVE LEARNING

# Parent handbook



*"PURSUE POSSIBILITIES; LOVE LEARNING"*

# Welcome

Robert Arkenstall Primary School is a happy and welcoming school within the rural village parish of Haddenham and Aldreth, between Ely and Cambridge cities.

We serve the children and families from our catchment area and beyond. We are very fortunate to be part of a vibrant and supportive community in the villages with many partners working with us from the actively engaged and thoughtful parents and carers, the wonderful Friends of Robert Arkenstall School (FORAS), the skilled and effective Governing Body, the mighty team of volunteers and the networks of educators and professionals, but of course most importantly the delightful, ambitious and articulate children.

We are a village school with a big vision!

**We want to equip our children with the attitudes, values, knowledge and skills to be caring and active citizens eager to explore the possibilities of their world.**





# Welcome

At Robert Arkenstall Primary School, our curriculum places communication, aspiration and wellbeing at the heart of all our learning, in an environment which fosters care for each other and ourselves, courage to take up challenges and curiosity to explore.

Our school motto is *pursue possibilities; love learning* and this is the beating heart of the work we do through school life to help children grow in confidence and character and learn the joy of pursuing interests which will shape their future. The future is theirs to build and our role is to facilitate that.

At Robert Arkenstall each child is celebrated for their uniqueness. Our values teach them personal and emotional wellbeing skills for the future and learning dispositions which build resilience and curiosity. We love that pupils in school show care for the environment and use their voice to be change makers in their world right now.

Robert Arkenstall works in collaboration with partnerships of educators in Cambridgeshire and further afield. We share expertise and professional development with our partners and value the impact they have on pupils by enriching the learning we can offer.

We have a list of key staff available on our website.



# School Values

Our values are **Kindness, Honesty, Respect, Self-Belief, Courage** and **Empathy**. Our values are integrated throughout school life, in our lessons and in our play. We regularly explore these values in assemblies and celebrations of achievement. We share successes widely through our newsletters and website and other digital platforms ensuring parents and carers are partners in our endeavours.

Our school believes in creating an environment of care, courage and curiosity where rich and deep learning happens. Learning, which is both academic and social, establishing extensive knowledge which allows children to build upon prior learning and explore connections whilst also learning how to collaborate, building the resilience to gain confidence and self belief, and the shared joy of achieving goals both personal and collective.

## **Our Values Support us to Achieve our School Aims**

- To provide an education which develops the child intellectually, academically, physically, socially, emotionally, culturally and morally.
- To provide a rich stimulating curriculum that promotes high expectations and secures high standards through engaging, interactive, and stimulating programmes of study.
- To provide an environment where each child is valued as an individual with unique skills and talents and is made to feel special and unique.
- To encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning and be encouraged to achieve their potential.
- To offer a local/global connected and creative curriculum where children are encouraged to take care of and appreciate the world and the people around them.



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## KS1 School Day

8:50 am - KS1 gate opens for KS1

9:00 am - Gates shut

9:05 am -register closes for KS1 pupils

10:10am - 10:30 am - break time for KS1 children

12:00p - 1:00 pm - lunch time for KS1

3:15 pm - end of school day for KS1 pupils

Please would parents drop their KS1 child off at the top entrance door, by the pirate ship on the KS1 playground. This door will be for all KS1 classes to use to come into school. If you have a message for your child's teacher there will be a member of staff on duty to take messages to your child's class teacher

The school day will end at **3.15pm** and the children will be dismissed from separate doors along the playground.

## KS2 School Day

8:45 am - KS2 gate opens for **all** KS2 pupils

9:00 am – Gates shut

9:05 am - Registers close

10:30am - 10:45 am- break time for KS2

12:15 pm - 1:15 pm - lunch time for KS2

3:20 pm - end of school day for **all** KS2 pupils

# The School Day



If you have a Key Stage 1 and a Key Stage 2 child, please drop off your eldest child first at the main KS2 gate and then walk to the Key Stage 1 playground.

When collecting your child at the end of the day, please collect your youngest children first.

# Communication



Class Dojo is an app for your phone. Teachers use this to communicate changes to day to day activities. Students are also awarded with 'Class Dojo Points' for Showing school values. You can communicate directly with teachers using this app and keep up to date with any points your child has earned.

All log-ins will be issued when your child starts school. You will be signed up to ParentMail prior to your child joining so you can keep up to date with the latest school newsletters.



ParentMail is a communication tool where most information is relayed from school to parent. Any information regarding trips, clubs, fundraising days or your child's class will be sent via ParentMail.

There is a school newsletter which is sent out every Friday full of information and news. We highly recommend you keep an eye out for this and read it thoroughly!

ParentMail can be set up as an app on your phone where you received notifications and ParentMail emails also come through to your email address.

The ParentMail app can also be used to report short term absence.



The My Child At School app (MCAS) is linked to your child's school record. Using this app you can check attendance for your child. It can also be used to pay for trips, dinner money and products like school bags.



# Lunch

**Lunch will be in 3 sittings everyday.**

- Key Stage 1 will have lunch from midday and will have playtime after lunch
- Key stage 2 will be in 2 sittings, years 3&4 and then 5&6
- All children will eat in the hall
- All children will have time to play outside either before or after they have eaten their lunch

We offer 3 choices as school dinner lunch options:

**Red**—A meat option

**Green**—A vegetarian option

**Blue**—Jacket potato with various fillings

We are committed to a dining experience where children's learning continues through developing social skills and continuing to practice our school values outside the classroom.

Older children help younger children serve desserts and the salad trolley and there are always adults on hand to help cut up food and assist with clearing of plates.



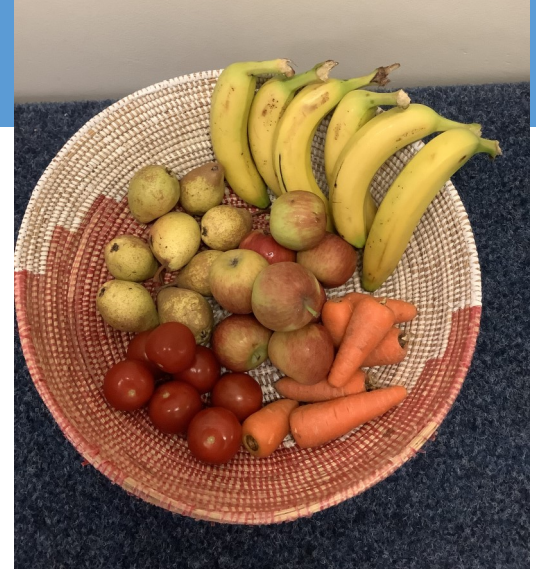
# Lunch—Quiet play

We offer a quiet play provision every lunchtime in key stage 2 and Mondays and Wednesdays in Key stage one. This provides a calm and safe space for children to play and craft inside school. Key stage one children eat their lunch in quiet play away from the school hall.

Key stage 2 children have quiet play in the library and often play chess together!



# Snack



Please ONLY send raw fruit and vegetables in to school as a snack.

Key Stage 1 children have 2 snacks a day, one is provided by the Government fruit and vegetable scheme.

Key Stage 2 can have one snack a day which they need to bring into school themselves.

Please can we remind you we are a NUT FREE SCHOOL



# School Uniform

## Clothes

A white shirt, red or white polo shirt – plain or with school logo

A red jumper, cardigan, sweatshirt or fleece – plain or with school logo

Black or grey trousers, long shorts, skirt or pinafore (no denim)

A sunhat for hot days and a coat for cool or wet days (children are expected to go outside for learning activities and play throughout the year)

EYFS children will keep wellies in school for rainy days, muddy kitchen and woodland learning

## Shoes

**Black shoes suitable for outdoor play. Children who wear high-heeled shoes or open toed sandals to school will be asked to change into their PE shoes to avoid accidents in the class or playground. Please note: only allow your child to wear lace up shoes if they are able to tie their own shoe laces.**

PE Clothes ( PE will differ by class. Each class will have PE twice a week)

Black shorts or plain black cycling shorts // Jogging bottoms or leggings for outdoor activities

Plain cotton red or white T-shirt for indoor activities // Jogging bottoms or leggings for outdoor activities

Trainers for outdoor activities

Spare underwear and socks if your child needs to change



# School Uniform

## Equipment

Book Bag with shoulder strap\* to hold reading book, reading record and snack pot

Lunch Box (if required) to be carried separately // Water bottle to be carried separately // Fruit or vegetable snack in slim line snack pot (to fit into Book Bag)

\*Book Bags and PE bags are available to buy from the school office.

It is essential that children can manage their school equipment independently. The book bag, water bottle and snack pot are kept in classrooms during the day. Lunch boxes are stored on a trolley outside of the classroom. To comply with our Health & Safety risk assessment the cloakrooms can **ONLY** accommodate coats and PE bags. No ruck sacks are allowed until Year 5 due to restricted cloakroom space!

## Jewellery

For reasons of Health & Safety we follow LA guidelines: only studs or sleeps in ears. These need to be removed independently by the child for PE. We do not recommend you have your child's ears pierced during the school year, given it may take at least 6 weeks for piercings to heal. No other jewellery is permitted unless it is worn for religious or cultural reasons.

## Ordering Items

Uniform bearing the school logo can be purchased through our approved supplier Gooddies Ltd [www.gooddies.co.uk](http://www.gooddies.co.uk)

**Please name all your child's equipment and uniform**

**We accumulate lots of unnamed lost property every half term!**





# Attendance

We are keen to ensure that we promote the highest attendance possible for all our young people as this is a fundamental life skill that will ensure young people's future success. Not only is it vital that our young people establish the very best habits and routines to ensure their success as future employees but there is also very clear national data which evidences the impact that poor attendance has on young people achieving the best possible outcomes and educational achievements. In short, if children are not at school we cannot teach them and this will affect their academic achievement at all levels. As a result of this we are taking a very firm and consistent view when parents seek permission for an absence from school for their child due to circumstances other than genuine illness. All parents can expect that all requests from parents seeking permission for leave of absence for their child will be refused and therefore unauthorised. Permission may be sought where there are exceptional circumstances.

Full details can be found in our attendance policy, available via our website.

## Effects of non-attendance

Attendance during school year	Equates to days absent	Which is approximately	Which means the number of lessons missed
94%	10 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 Lessons
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks	150 Lessons
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	200 Lessons
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks	250 Lessons
70%	57 Days	11.5 Weeks	290 Lessons
65%	67 Days	13.5 Weeks	340 Lessons

# Reporting an absence



To report absence because of an illness, medical appointment or any other short term absence please contact us one of the following ways:

- Via the Parent Mail app
- Email [office@robertarkenstall.co.uk](mailto:office@robertarkenstall.co.uk)
- Call us on 01353 740253—Option 1 and leave a message

## Dojo

Please DO NOT rely on Dojo to report absence - although it is very helpful and a courtesy to let class staff know if you can, absence needs to be reported to the office.

# Requesting a leave of absence

There is a leave of absence request form on our website or you can request one from the school office in person or via email.

Please fill in the form as soon as possible to notify us of an absence. There is no penalty notice for unauthorised absence if the absence is 5 sessions or less (each registration is a session so a morning and afternoon registration counts as 2 sessions).

If an absence is 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) there will be a penalty notice issued depending on the reason for absence. Absence is rarely authorised. Our full attendance policy detailing authorised and unauthorised absence is on our website.

There is also a wealth of information on the county council website about term time leave and holidays. Google the term “Cambridgeshire term time leave”

Once the absence form is received it will be processed and you will receive a letter to let you know if the absence is authorised or unauthorised and whether there will be a penalty notice issued.





# Behaviour

Through our therapeutic approach to behaviour teaching we ensure every child has the support and encouragement which is right for them.

**Empathetic:** show empathy and understanding for how they feel – knowing that empathising is not the same as agreeing or condoning.

Then, when able, through the consequences children repair and restore the situation.

**Educational consequences:** consequences that focus on the learning that needs to happen in order for your child to know how to be pro social next time, or catch up on learning missed as a result of their behaviour or choices. E.g. writing a letter to reflect on their actions, staying in at break to catch up on learning missed, tidying the room / area if their actions have caused mess.

**Protective consequences:** consequences that are designed to protect and remove potential damage or harm e.g. not taking part in a football match or not be able to go on a visit due to broken trust.

We know that children's behaviour can be understood in terms of an expression of need. We seek to work in partnership with parents to support children's emotional, social, and behavioural development through consistency and structure.

All children come to school with different prior experiences and as a school community, we have a duty of care for all.

## ROOTS AND FRUITS



# Behaviour

**We recognise that appropriate behaviour is necessary for effective teaching, learning and enjoyment whilst at school. Every member of staff strives to develop the whole person, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.**

**Within our school community, we aim:**

- To be welcoming and inclusive.
- To create a firm and consistent approach throughout the school.
- To maintain, encourage and promote positive behaviour, self-discipline and respect.
- To encourage independence and personal confidence.
- To uphold our school values as a school which respects the rights of all individuals.
- To encourage consideration for others in the community by promoting kindness, honesty, empathy, self-belief, respect, courage.
- To support the development of self-esteem and self-respect by distinguishing between a pupil and that pupil's behaviour.
- To develop pride in the school through work, effort and achievement.

**All learners, parents, staff and visitors who come into school have responsibility for promoting positive behaviour by demonstrating clear values and principles through:**

- Teaching right from wrong, honesty and respect for others.
- Encouraging internal discipline, self-management of behaviour and a sense of responsibility for positive behaviour.
- Praising positive behaviour.
- Using positive phrasing and reminding.
- Providing pupils with experiences that create positive feelings and therefore positive behaviour.
- Being good role models through patterning and copying.
- Using scripts, repetition and structure where appropriate (see appendix 1).
- Using consistent, clear and agreed boundaries.
- Providing comfort and forgiveness.
- Adopting a 'Growth Mindset' approach, where pupils learn to value their mistakes and move forward from them, and resilience is promoted and celebrated within classes.

## **A Therapeutic Approach**

At Robert Arkenstall, we recognise that negative experiences create negative feelings and that negative feelings create negative behaviour, whilst positive experiences create positive feelings and positive feelings create positive behaviour. It is the responsibility of every adult at our school to seek to understand the reason why a young person is presenting problematic or complex behaviour. A change in the circumstances in which the behaviour occurs will be identified and addressed accordingly. Behaviour management and responses need to be personalised and designed to meet the specific needs of each individual child, their age and any special circumstances that affect the pupil. To enable change, we need to understand the child's behaviour not just suppress the behaviour.

## **Praise, Reward and Celebration**

Learners should develop the understanding that their positive behaviour can be rewarding in itself and can also bring about positive experiences and feelings in others. When they are engaged and learning, we need to 'catch the children getting it right' through specific praise. This can be done by:

- Praise from adults and peers.
- Rewarding of individual merits or Class Dojo points depending on year group. Individuals are recognised for their personal development in the school values of kindness, honesty, empathy, self-belief, respect and courage, and in demonstrating their learning skills as articulated in being Resilient, Reflective, Reciprocal and Resourceful. Merits are not a comparison to other pupils but are personal and specific to each child to acknowledge their achievement in skills and values and to share that with their family.
- Merits are sent home from EY and KS1 on personal 'balloon' cards.
- Dojo points are awarded by class teachers in KS2 with comments which parents can see on the app.
- Showing good work to other classes, teachers, Deputy Head or Head Teacher.
- Displaying good work and achievements around the school, on the school website or via social media.
- Being awarded a Celebration assembly certificate for demonstrating the school's core values of kindness, honesty, empathy, self-belief, respect, courage.
- Earning team points on special occasions, such as sports day.
- All children being celebrated individually during the year in special day assembly.



# Safeguarding

*“Robert Arkenstall School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff, visitors and volunteers to share this commitment”*

Safeguarding is of paramount importance to us and underpins all that we do. We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for children, staff and visitors and promoting a climate where children and adults feel confident about sharing any concerns which they may have about their own safety or the wellbeing of others. We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children are respected and valued. All our staff are trained to identify and report any concerns they have to the designated safeguarding officers. This training is updated annually. Should you have any concerns about any child please contact the school Designated Persons for Child Protection or/and the Head teacher.

## Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's)

Kate Bonney

Rob Fisher

Karen Gale

Full details can be found in our safeguarding policy, available on our website.



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Robert Arkenstall Primary School is committed to the provision of a rich and varied education which meets the needs of all pupils enabling them to realise their full academic, personal and social potential. The school recognises that all children have both individual talents and learning needs. For some pupils they may permanently, temporarily or intermittently have Special Educational Needs. A Special Educational Need may refer to learning difficulties, emotional or behavioural difficulties or a physical disability. Special needs are something children may have from time to time, not something they are. Pupils with Special Educational Needs participate fully in lessons ensuring inclusion and equality of access to all subjects. Teachers and Teaching Assistants are suitably informed and trained to support the children. As a result of the adults working together closely, the children make progress, have a positive attitude towards work and are proud of their achievements.

## MISSION STATEMENT FOR ROBERT ARKENSTALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

We support and value the abilities of all our pupils. It is our duty to provide equal opportunities for every child in our care and a safe and fully equipped learning environment which caters to the needs of every child as an individual. We are committed to inclusion within the school curriculum and participation in all aspects of school life. We provide an exciting, creative and effective learning environment, recognising and responding to individual learning styles. We aim to help each child experience success and to reach their full potential by providing the highest standard of education and care. All staff work to ensure inclusion of all pupils. The school is committed to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs can fulfil their potential and achieve optimal educational outcomes.

## INCLUSION STATEMENT

We endeavour to make every effort to achieve maximum inclusion of all pupils whilst meeting pupils' individual needs. This policy builds on our school ethos that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broadly based curriculum. Our SEND policy reinforces the need for quality first teaching that is fully inclusive. The Governing Body will ensure that appropriate provision will be made for all pupils with SEND.

The Special Needs Coordinator (SENDCo) at Robert Arkenstall Primary School is Mrs Karen Gale. The Special Needs Governor is Mrs Jo Collins. If you have an SEND issue you are invited to phone Karen Gale SEN Coordinator on 01353740253 or by emailing [office@robertarkenstall.co.uk](mailto:office@robertarkenstall.co.uk)

# Raising Concerns

We strive to be a place in which children can learn happily and enthusiastically and where educators and administrators are empowered to be the best that they can be. Schools are highly complex organisations and as with any community there may be times when you disagree with our approach. You will have your own opinions and suggestions and we want you to resolve any matters before they become an informal or formal complaint. It is in both our interests to resolve quickly because we will spend a considerable amount of time investigating and responding to concerns and complaints. We ask therefore that you raise concerns responsibly and in a timely way. We have a number of policies to guide the process which can be found on our website.

## DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A SUGGESTION?

- You can telephone, write to or e-mail the Headteacher at the school giving your ideas. You can expect the school to consider suggestions and to keep in touch in writing over how and when problems can be raised with the school



office@robertarkenstall.co.uk



01353 740253

The spirit of our school is one of partnership and collaboration. We aim to be a listening school. We would like to reassure you, that as professionals, we take seriously and reflect on any parental concerns with the utmost importance. We will not be able to make changes based on individual opinion. But we will always listen and try to find a way through for the good of all our children.

## DO YOU WISH TO RAISE A CONCERN?

Our procedure is designed so that there is a stepped process—the first point of call is always the class teacher. We ask that you refrain from raising concerns on social media, e.g. WhatsApp, because we do not hear about these and can not address any matters.

### 1. Class Teacher / Teaching Assistant:

We are here for parents and carers and will always make time to talk to you if you have a concern. You can pass a message through the office or direct contact via Class Dojo.

### 2. Head of KS1 / Head of KS2 / Deputy Head Teacher:

If parents and carers are still concerned after speaking to the class teacher, we would encourage them to arrange a meeting **and that most concern can be again resolved at this stage and a way forward agreed upon.**

### 3. Headteacher:

We hope that after speaking to the class teacher and the Key Stage lead the concern would have been addressed and we are sorry if it hasn't been. If the issue needs to be escalated it is at this stage an appointment can be made with the Headteacher.

### 4. Formal Complaint:

If, after going through the above channels, parents and carers would like to take their complaint further that are able to make a formal complaint. The procedure is laid out in our complaints policy.

# Raising Concerns

## **WHAT CAN THE SCHOOL EXPECT OF YOU?**

It is usually best to try to solve a problem first by raising a concern informally; however, if you wish to complain formally you should write to the Headteacher at the school (completing the form below) If you need help or advice to do this, you should contact either the school, or the Local Authority (LA) on the number below. You will be asked to give permission for your complaint to be shared with any person you are complaining about.

## **The LA and the School expect anyone who wishes to raise problems to:**

- treat all school staff with courtesy and respect
- respect the needs of pupils and staff
- avoid the use of violence, threats of violence, abuse and aggression towards people or property
- recognise the time constraints under which members of staff in schools work and allow the school a reasonable time to respond to a complaint
- recognise that resolving a specific problem can sometimes take some time
- Follow the school complaints policy when necessary.

## **YOU CAN CONTACT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY on 01223 706399.**

The role of the LA is to advise parents/carers and the school, and help resolve difficulties. You will be given the name of an appropriate officer who, if unavailable, will contact you usually within 48 hours. A meeting may be arranged to discuss issues with the school.





# Curriculum Enrichment

