



Fir Tree Primary School



Prospectus 2016 – 2017



Fir Tree School is part of the Newbury Academy Trust family of schools, which includes Trinity School.

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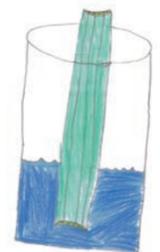


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I love Fir Tree because it is fun and everybody is friendly which makes me feel very safe.

We also get to do lots of exciting things such as cool experiments.





“The curriculum is well planned and has positive impact on pupils’ learning. Leaders ensure that opportunities are available for all pupils to enjoy a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities.”

Ofsted 2014

Welcome to Fir Tree

Dear Parents

At Fir Tree Primary School and Nursery we are committed to providing a high quality education for all of our pupils. We offer a well balanced and stimulating creative curriculum that encourages children to develop a positive attitude to their learning. We encourage our children to develop enquiring minds and life skills to prepare them for adult life.

We have set high standards and expectations both in work and behaviour. We aim to ensure that each pupil is treated with care and sensitivity and they all learn how to live harmoniously in the school community.

Our school has a welcoming and friendly ethos with an ‘open door’ policy. Parents are closely involved in their child’s education and we like to work with parents positively to ensure each and every child is given the best opportunity at Fir Tree.

We look forward to meeting you and welcoming your family into our school community.



L Dove

Mrs L Dove
Headteacher



Vision and Aims

We work together in our community to create a happy, caring safe environment for all. We inspire, create and challenge everybody to achieve their full potential through a love of learning.



"The touchstone of an excellent curriculum is that it instils in children a love of learning for its own sake. This means that primary children must not only learn what to study, they must also learn how to study."

The Primary Curriculum Review Executive Summary



Curriculum

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At Fir Tree, our children have an inspirational start to their learning journey in the Foundation Stage. They have a safe and nurturing environment where they feel secure and have respect for the beliefs, values and cultures of others. We prepare our children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We therefore focus on developing essential communication, social, literacy and mathematics in a creative environment to prepare them for the challenges in the future.

The curriculum at Fir Tree has changed significantly and children now experience a holistic approach to learning. This enables teachers to plan areas of the curriculum around a common theme to enrich and ignite the children's enthusiasm for knowledge and learning. Wherever possible teachers make links between different areas of the curriculum to support the children's understand of each theme and allow time for them to be covered in greater depth.



I love Fir Tree because the lessons are amazingly interesting, also everyone's polite.

Literacy

The importance of developing children's speaking and listening, reading and writing skills is highly valued. We use the New Curriculum 2014 as a basis to inform our teaching and learning and to ensure progression of key skills. We then use this as the driving force for our curriculum thus adding relevance to the themes that the children are learning and encourage them to identify the purpose of particular types of writing.

Developing our children's speaking and listening is central to our curriculum, as we believe that without the opportunity for talk we can neither read with understanding nor write meaningfully.

Opportunities for shared, guided and independent reading are well established; regular reviews and renewal of our book stock as well as reading rewards and promotion events are essential features underpinning or commitment to encouraging reading. Our Library is now at the heart of the school with books being regularly audited and updated to ensure they continue to develop the children's love for reading.

Phonics is taught in ability groups on a daily basis across Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and is reinforced throughout the curriculum. A new spelling scheme has been implemented this year to follow on from the excellent phonics work covered in KS1.

Handwriting is also given curriculum time, taught both discretely and reinforced at the point of writing.

Maths

The Mathematics curriculum is taught through the New Curriculum 2014, and unlike other curriculum area is linked to the theme when it is appropriate. Maths teaching utilises a variety of resources to support children's learning and they are encouraged to apply this to real life situations. Our children are encouraged to question and explain through problem solving and investigative activities and enhance their knowledge while developing a wide variety of mathematical concepts.

ICT

Information Communication Technology at Fir Tree is well resourced. Each classroom has 3 networked computers which allow all pupils controlled access to the internet, as well as a wide range of curriculum enhancing programmes on our own school network. The school also benefits from a brand new ICT suite and interactive board in order to allow the children opportunities to learn about computer coding, amongst other areas. Children are given a range of opportunities to develop their ICT skills including using the internet as a reference tool and how to keep safe while online.

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“The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils care for and are respectful of one another...”
Ofsted 2014



I love Fir Tree because we have a lot of practical lessons and more challenging maths lessons.

Science

Learning about the amazing world around us should be fun! Whether we are studying physical processes, living things or the properties of materials we want our children to ask questions, explore first-hand evidence and communicate their findings in exciting ways. They will be challenged to devise and plan investigations, make careful observations and recordings, interpret results and draw conclusions. Throughout the school we encourage children to apply their Maths, English and ICT skills in their science work and to make links between their scientific ideas, knowledge and understanding and their everyday life experiences.

History

History is all about people and how they have shaped the communities and environments in which they live. Through teaching this subject as an integral part of class topics we aim for children to understand the impact and importance that key events and people can have on our world. As they do this, children will develop a chronological framework for their knowledge of significant events and people; use a range of historical sources and to interpret the past.

Geography

Through Geography, children develop an understanding of the interdependence of places and people and their natural environment. Children develop a range of skills such as mapping to topics relating to not only our local area, but also the wider world and local and world environments.

Art

As with all subjects at Fir Tree, Art is directly linked to the topic which the children learning. In this context children are given opportunities to develop their understanding of colour, line, shape, form, texture, tone and pattern and how they are used. This is achieved through working with a variety of media such as pastels, paint, fabric and clay, and learning a range of technical skills.

D&T

Pupils are taught to develop their design and technology capabilities through a combination of knowledge and designing and making. Design and Technology (D&T) is about challenges, the exploration of ideas and seeing projects develop from start to finish. Children are provided with a balanced, stimulating and challenging programme of learning experiences.

Music

Music lessons involve singing and work on rhythm using percussion and tuned instruments. Children are given opportunities to improvise and compose music in response to different stimuli. We aim to develop abilities and interests in making and appreciating music. We have specialist music teachers from Trinity come to our school to teach Clarinets, recorders and the trumpet. Year 3 children take part in the recorder lessons, Year 4 in the clarinets and Year 6 in the trumpet. There are then further opportunities to have lessons at school as well.

PE

PE at Fir Tree is taught by class teachers and specialist PE teachers from our Academy partner school, Trinity, who pass on their expertise to the children in Games, Gymnastics, Dance, Athletics and Swimming. We also have our very own full time Sports Co-ordinator who teaches PE alongside the Trinity staff, runs various clubs during lunchtime and after school and takes children out to different sporting events in and around Newbury. In addition children learn about health related exercise. They are also taught to recognize and follow relevant rules and safety procedures in different activities. Sport has an important role within society and we aim to ensure that children develop the physical skills and attitudes necessary for active participation.

RE

Religious Education (RE) follows the Berkshire Agreed Syllabus for RE. It teaches knowledge and understanding of the faiths within our multi-cultural society. Parents who wish to withdraw their children from RE lessons and/or assemblies may do so. However, assemblies are an important feature of school life and every effort is made to make them relevant and accessible to all children. Parents who wish to exercise this right should contact the Head Teacher.

Homework

Research has shown that schools with an effective homework policy are effective at raising standards. At Fir Tree, we always wish the best for our children. We expect all children to take their reading book and spellings home and share these with an adult. In addition, the KS2 children will have at least one piece of 'formal homework' to consolidate activities learnt during the week. This is given out on a Wednesday to be handed back in on a Monday. This will help to develop independent study skills and encourage children to extend their learning. Your help and encouragement is warmly welcomed.



Special Educational Needs

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The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is Mrs Kayleigh Knight. She has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the schools' SEN Policy. At Fir Tree all children are special and valued equally. They have an equal opportunity to be involved in a broad and balanced curriculum and are entitled to an appropriately differentiated curriculum to ensure access and success. The school recognises the importance of early identification and assessment of children with special educational need and that these needs must then be met.

Special Educational Needs encompass a broad spectrum including learning difficulties, health and medical problems, physical disabilities and emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Where there are concerns regarding a child's learning being affected by any of the above, observations and assessments will be carried out. The child may then be placed on the Special Educational Needs Register. The school uses a graduated approach in recognising a continuum of Special Educational Needs as set out in the New Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0-25 years. At all stages parents are informed of the school's actions.

We recognise that some children have more challenging needs than the others. To ensure all children have an inclusive curriculum, they may require additional or different help with their

learning to allow them to take part and achieve to the best of their ability. In order for them to participate fully we will:

- Create an appropriate learning environment
- Identify special needs as early as possible
- Identify appropriate specialist help
- Ensure support plans are in place and regularly reviewed
- Create provision for as full an access to the curriculum as the special needs allows
- Ensure parents are involved in supporting their child's education
- Take into account, where appropriate, the child's view of their learning
- Help children manage their behaviour and emotions
- Use differentiated teaching in the classroom
- Use Intervention programmes when necessary.

We have high expectations of all children. We look to provide a stimulating and varied curriculum for all.

Gifted and Talented

We use the term 'gifted and talented' to refer to pupils from the top 5-10% of their cohort. Gifted refers to pupils who achieve or have the ability to achieve at a level significantly in advance of their year group, in one or more subjects in the statutory curriculum. Talented refers to pupils who have the ability or potential in art, music or PE. The Able, Gifted and Talented co-ordinator is Mrs N. Purcell. It is her role to ensure that these children are identified and that provision is put into place to allow them to reach their potential.

Accessibility

The key objective of the Accessibility Plan at Fir Tree is to reduce and eliminate barriers to access the curriculum and to allow for full participation in the school community for pupils, and prospective pupils, with a disability.

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"The academy has placed a love of reading high on its list of priorities and has created a new and inviting library area."

Ofsted 2014



Child Protection Procedures

The Law requires that the safety and welfare of all children to be of paramount importance and it should override all other considerations. All schools are legally required to follow the procedures for child protection and to report any obvious or suspected cases of child abuse. The Designated Child Protection Person at Fir Tree is Mrs Laura Dove. It is her role to ensure that all child protection procedures are followed in school and to make appropriate referrals to Children's Services. If the Designated Person is unavailable, the Deputy Designated Child Protection Person, Miss Clare Hayter, will act in her absence.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety Act (1978) has to be followed in school and everywhere on the school site. Under this act every person is responsible for the safety of themselves and others. Children too are responsible and we need to ensure that parents and their children are aware of the health and safety rules. Please can we ask for the co-operation of all parents in reminding their children of the importance of obeying the safety rules.

Behaviour and Supporting each Other

Collaboration and caring is encouraged at all levels, in both the staff and the pupils. Older children help younger children in the playground and the classroom. This happens both spontaneously and more formally through organised activities such as our House Challenges. In these, a group of children who share the same house but not the same age are tasked with completing a teamwork project. A happy, supportive working environment is further promoted through our traffic light system. This is a school-wide approach to classroom discipline, where red means stop.

PSHE

Personal, Social and Health education is central to the ethos of our school and our aim of educating our children to become well-rounded members of society. During PSHE lessons children are encouraged to develop their understanding of feelings and ability to deal with challenging situations. Links are also made to the core British values of individual liberty, the rule of law, democracy and mutual respect and tolerance. Children are taught to appreciate and respect the viewpoints and beliefs of others. We use our value of the month system in every aspect of our school life.

School Organisation

National Curriculum Stage	National Curriculum Year Groups	Age of Pupils
Foundation Stage	Acorn Class – Nursery	3-4 year olds
	Elm Class – FS	4-5 year olds
Key Stage One (KS1)	Beech Class – Year 1	5-6 year olds
	Willow Class – Year 2	6-7 year olds
Key Stage Two (KS2)	Chestnut Class – Year 3	7-8 year olds
	Maple Class – Year 4	8-9 year olds
	Rowan Class – Year 5	9-10 year olds
	Oak Class – Year 6	10-11 year olds

The School Day

All children should be at school at 8.45am. The bell for registration will ring at 8.50am and lessons will begin at 9am.

Break time is at 10.40-11am
Lunch time is at 12-1pm

The school day ends at 3.15pm. Any children arriving to school after 9am will be marked as late.

Nursery morning session – 8.45-11.45am
Nursery afternoon session – 12.30-3.30pm





“Parents speak very positively about teaching, saying that the teachers know their pupils very well and often ‘go the extra mile’ to help them achieve well.”

Ofsted 2014

Extra Curricula Activities

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Typical clubs you can expect at Fir Tree are; various instruments, football, running, gymnastics and other after school sports clubs. Also cooking club, Art club, English as an additional and more.

School Uniform

Girls Winter

Grey skirt or long grey trousers, navy blue sweatshirt/cardigan, white polo shirt, white socks, black/blue tights, black sensible shoes.

Girls Summer

As winter uniform, or blue and white candy striped/checked skirt or dress, black sensible shoes no strappy sandals.

Boys Winter/Summer

Grey trousers/shorts, navy blue sweatshirt, white shirt, grey socks, black sensible shoes.

It is most important for health reasons and for adequate freedom of movement, that suitable clothing is worn for all physical activities.

PE Kit

Please provide the following PE kit for your child: navy blue shorts, white t-shirts, plimsolls or trainers. A school track suit is also available.

PE kit should be in school everyday stored in a named kit bag and left on the child's peg.

PLEASE NOTE – all equipment and clothing must be properly labelled. Whilst every effort is made to recover lost items of clothing, the school cannot be held responsible. It is important that children be encouraged to look after and put away their own things.

Fir Tree t-shirts, sweatshirts, polo shirts and shorts can be purchased from the School Office. Please ask at the office for further details.

Volunteer Helpers

Some mothers, fathers, grandparents and friends have special skills that they might like to share with the school – for example cookery, football, needlework, art and craft, listening to reading, general classroom help, etc.

Others have helped in the past with anything from assisting a group of children painting life size dinosaurs to clearing out cupboards!

To anyone, whether a parent or a friend who can help in school in any way at all, we say –

Fir Tree School Association

The Association helps organise and support many school activities – not all of them in order to raise money. However, any money that is raised from special events helps to create a better working environment for our children. But more importantly, the F.T.S.A. enhances relationships between parents and those who work at the school, ultimately for the benefit of the children. The F.T.S.A. constitution can be seen in the school office at any time. The Association is also a registered charity as it regularly generates more than £2,000 a year!

The Association is open to anyone interested in the well being of Fir Tree Primary School. It is not just a Parent/Teacher Association. The committee is made up of past parents as well as present parents and many friends of the school; they all assist whenever they are able.

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I like fir tree because I
love learning with my
friends



Admissions

Admission to Fir Tree Primary

The planned admission figures refer to the number of children admitted at the age of five in one academic year. Fir Tree's admission number for 2014/15 is 30.

The criteria for admission to school in priority order:

Looked After Children

- Children from within the area normally served by the school
- Children from the nursery unit
- Children from outside the area who already have brothers or sisters attending the school
- Children from outside the area where a social or denominational reason for admission is given
- All other applicants.



Admission to Fir Tree Nursery

Children can be admitted to the nursery following their third birthday.

The criteria for admission to nursery in priority order:

- Living in the area normally served by the school or being cared for by a registered childminder who lives in this area (Registration Certificate must be shown) or
- Brother or sister of a child in Fir Tree Primary School or
- Transferring from an LEA Nursery in another area or
- Living in the Newbury area.

Nursery Class

The Nursery runs two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. It is parental choice whether they opt for the morning or afternoon sessions.

The Nursery Class offers a total of fifty-two part-time places to children aged 3-4 years: 26 in the morning and 26 in the afternoon. Children attend for 5 sessions per week.

The Nursery is part of the Foundation Stage – it is an important part of the school and maintains close links with other classes.

All Foundation Stage children are given free milk and fruit every day.

Delivering and Collecting Children

Unless you are visiting the School Office, all access to school is via the pedestrian entrance – entry through the small gate on Fir Tree Lane – keeping off the grass please! Parents collecting or delivering children by car are asked not to use the main car park. Parking should always be along Fir Tree Lane or Gaywood Drive. As the main entrance is used by many different people visiting the site it is too dangerous for any children to be around the car park. For this reason the main school entrance is not to be used by unaccompanied children.

Healthy School

Meals are provided on the premises and there is a choice of meals each day which present good value for money. The weekly menus are posted up in and around school, and on the school website. It is always recommended that your child has a sensible midday meal. The prices are fixed by Chartwell (our food provider) and currently stand at £2.25 per meal. Your child should bring his or her dinner money in a container (purse, envelope, tin etc) clearly marked with a name.

A healthy packed lunch may be eaten at school where adequate supervision is provided for the children in the hall. Please remember – no drinks in glass containers should ever be in school.

Free School Meals

All children are entitled to receive a free school meal if their parents receive the relevant benefits. At the beginning of each term parents who feel they may be eligible are required to fill in a form giving the necessary details and their child will receive the free school meals from that day until the end of term. Please see the School Office for the forms and all the relevant information. All children from Reception to Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal under the new government initiative.





Absence

If your child is absent for any reason it is very important that you contact the school as soon as possible and leave a message telling us why (telephone number 01635 42129). Every absence is marked in the attendance register and the Educational Welfare Officer regularly follows up unauthorised absences.

Please write a note explaining your child's absence from school. Any child who is absent from school – and for whom no adequate reason has been received in writing by the school – is presumed to be an unauthorised absence.

We are now required by law to publish the percentage of unauthorised absences from school.

Open Morning and Parents evening

Parents are encouraged to visit the school throughout the year to see their child's work and discuss progress with the teaching staff.

Formal evenings are held during the year. Termly open mornings are held where parents can accompany their child into school and have a look at their work and take part in a lesson with them.

A written annual report will go home to all parents in the Summer. All parents are invited to comment in writing on the report and also in person at the Parents' Evening.

Interim reports are also sent home at the end of the Autumn and Spring terms which include targets.



I like fir tree
because I like
doing homework

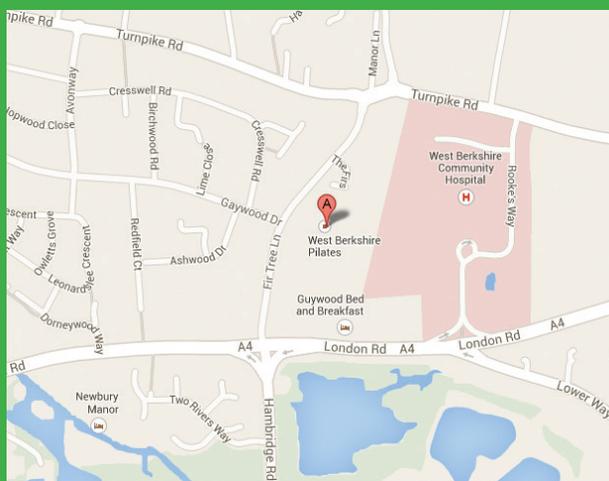


Contacting School

If you need to talk to your child's teacher remember that all teachers are busy during school hours; the best times to contact staff are out of school hours, ie before 08.45, during lunchtimes, after 15.15. The school secretary can take messages and general inquiries at any time during the day. Any parents wishing to speak to the headteacher on any matter are requested to ring first to arrange a suitable time.

If for some reason there are no staff available to take your call, then the answer phone will be switched on. Any messages left will be followed up as soon as possible.

How To Find Us



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Fir Tree Lane
Newbury
RG14 2RA

Tel: 01635 42129
Fax: (01635) 230484
Email: office@firtree.newburyacademytrust.org
Website: www.firtreeschool.co.uk

All details are correct as of 1st September 2016

