



RECEPTION HANDBOOK



**OVERMONNOW
PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

WELCOME



We understand that starting school is a big step for both you and your child, and we're here to make the transition as smooth and positive as possible.

This booklet is designed to help you and your child feel more comfortable as you prepare for school life. We hope it answers some of your questions and helps you feel warmly welcomed into our community.

If there's anything you'd like to know that isn't covered here, please don't hesitate to ask during your stay and play session, parents meeting or transition visits. There will be plenty of time to explore, meet our team, and ask any questions you may have.

In the lead-up to starting school, we encourage you to talk to your child about what to expect. Let them know that school is a fun, friendly place where they'll enjoy learning and playing. You can also share with them the Starting School book that we have provided with photos to help them feel familiar with their new environment.

During your visit to Overmonnow, we invite you to take part in the activities, show your child key areas such as the toilets and play areas, and introduce them to the staff who will be there to support them.

We're really looking forward to welcoming you and your child to Reception at Overmonnow!

Mrs J Child
Headteacher

EVERY CHILD MATTERS, EVERY MOMENT COUNTS





ABOUT OVERMONNOW



School Organisation

The new Curriculum for Wales is set out in legislation for all learners in Wales aged 3 to 16, to ensure all schools cover the same core learning and to secure a consistency of approach for learners across Wales.

The previous names of Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 will no longer be a part of the curriculum; however, the principles of the Foundation Phase will remain. These will become a part of one seamless curriculum for children aged 3 to 16, providing more joined-up learning.

Therefore, we have renamed our phases as below:

Explorers – Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Discoverers – Year 3 and Year 4
Adventurers – Year 5 and Year 6

Within these phases, staff plan collaboratively as a team and work together to ensure that children are having opportunities to develop skills and lead their own learning.

In Overmonnow, all our classes are named after beaches. Our reception classes are called **Dosbarth Tenby** and **Dosbarth Aberdyfi**.

School Staff

Headteacher	Mrs J Child
Deputy Headteacher	Mr R Davies
Senior Leaders	Mrs B Bell Mr A Ravetta
ALNCo	Mr T Middleton
Reception Class Teachers	Miss A Jones / Miss C Ursell Miss J Owen
Teaching Assistants	Mrs G Gabb, Mrs J Hartles, Mrs C Haycock Mrs J Hunter, Mrs S Shepherd
School Administrators	Ms S Fox Mrs D Robbins Mrs C Williams
Caretaker	Mr C Hodgson

How do we keep in touch?

At Overmonnow, we value strong partnerships with parents and carers and encourage open, regular communication.

We use **ClassDojo** to share updates, reminders, and messages. You'll receive a code to join your child's class—please keep notifications on so you don't miss anything. For urgent matters, always call the school office, as teachers may not see messages during the day.

Letters may also be sent home in book bags - please check them daily. Weekly newsletters, with key dates and news, are shared on our website and ClassDojo.

We hold **parent consultations** in October and March, with a written report provided in the summer term. These are a great chance to discuss your child's progress.

Your child's teacher is your first point of contact and is available at home time for any questions or quick chats. If there's anything you're unsure about, or if your child is experiencing difficulties, please do let us know.

Stay connected by visiting our **school website** and downloading the **Dojo** app.

Keeping your information up-to-date

Please let the school office know if your contact details, address, or emergency information change.

It's important we have up-to-date information to keep your child safe and ensure we can reach you if needed.



GETTING INVOLVED

We're very lucky to have a dedicated and supportive group of parents and friends here at Overmonnow. Our PTFA (Parents, Teachers and Friends Association) meets regularly, and everyone is warmly welcome to come along.

All funds raised by the PTFA go straight back into the school to benefit the children. If you'd like to get involved or find out more, please contact the school office, and they'll be happy to put you in touch with the chairperson.

ABOUT RECEPTION



How is the school day structured?

- 8:50** doors open
- 9:00** registration
- morning lessons (including play and snack)
- 12:00** lunch
- 13:00** assembly
- afternoon lessons
- 15:10** end of the day

Home Time

At the end of the day, children in Reception will be dismissed individually from their classroom gates to a known adult. This may take a little extra time as we learn to recognise each child's grown-ups, and we appreciate your patience and cooperation.

For safety, no child will be released without a known adult (over the age of 16). If someone different will be collecting your child, please inform a staff member or contact the school office in advance.

Children travelling by bus or taxi will be collected from class by a staff member and escorted to their transport.

School Uniform

Our uniform policy includes:

- Royal blue polo shirt
- Grey trousers, shorts, skirt or pinafore dress
- Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan
- Grey, black, or white socks / grey tights
- Blue and white gingham summer dress
- Black school shoes (no branded trainers)

As the uniform is identical, it can be difficult for younger children to recognise their own belongings. **Please label all clothing, especially coats and jumpers.** Children need a coat in school every day, as we spend a lot of time outdoors.

House System

Your child will be put in a house when they start at Overmonnow and will need the appropriate coloured top:

North (Blue)
East (Yellow)

South (Red)
West (Green)

All Children will represent their House on Sports Day and will be expected to wear their House colour. A weekly award assembly 'Seren Yr Wythnos' enables house points to be added up and recorded as a whole school. Privileges often occur to the winning house as an incentive to follow our Overmonnow School Pledge.

All of our uniform options can be purchased from MyClothing.com or FlexiPrint who are based in Monmouth Town centre.

What do we need to bring to school?

Every day:



A healthy snack of fruit or sliced raw vegetables



Book bag with sound cards or reading book

To leave in school:



A pair of wellies



A set of waterproofs large enough to fit over their winter coat



LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

What will my child learn?

We place a strong focus on developing phonemic awareness through daily activities that reinforce letter and sound recognition. This lays a solid foundation as children begin to read and write. When your child is ready, they will follow a progressive reading scheme, and we'll provide more information at that stage.

You can support this journey at home by sharing stories, visiting the library, and encouraging songs and rhymes.

Children also take part in daily maths sessions. You can help by counting together, playing number games, and supporting number formation.

Outdoor learning is an important part of our curriculum. We use these spaces to inspire creativity and extend learning across all subject areas through play.

Reception Initial Assessment

When children start Reception, we carry out an informal initial assessment through play-based activities and focused tasks. This helps us understand each child's individual skills and abilities.

The insights gained allow teachers to plan meaningful and tailored learning experiences, supporting every child as they take their next steps in learning.

Topics and Home Learning

At the start of each term, a topic web of proposed activities will be sent home for your information. This contains ideas of what your child may be learning and experiencing in school as well as suggestions of home learning ideas. We encourage the children to suggest their own ideas for our topics and bring in relevant books, artefacts and home learning.

Trips and Visits

Children in the Explorers Phase enjoy regular opportunities to explore the local area, with visits to places such as St. Thomas' Church and the Savoy Theatre.

We also welcome a variety of visitors to school, including Reverend Greaves, the Road Safety Officer, our School Liaison Police Officer, the fire brigade, and more.

As part of our topic work, past trips have included Abergavenny Castle, Puzzlewood, St. Fagans, The Royal Mint, Noah's Ark Zoo Farm, Cefn Mably Farm, and Bristol Aquarium.

Consent forms and further details will be shared as needed ahead of each visit.

What if my child is finding things tricky?

If your child is finding anything tricky - whether socially, emotionally, or with their learning - please speak to the class teacher, who will be happy to help. We understand that every child develops at their own pace, and we're here to support them.

If needed, Reception staff can also seek advice from the school's ALNCo (Additional Learning Needs Coordinator), speech and language therapists, or Acorn Family Support, to ensure your child gets the right help at the right time.



Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club runs daily from 8:00am to 8:40am.

- **8:00am – 8:30am:** £2.00 per session (childcare charge, payable via ParentPay)
- **8:30am – 8:40am:** Free “Take Ten” session for children who are just having breakfast

Children can enjoy a selection of breakfast options, including toast, cereals, and yogurts. All children must be signed in by a responsible adult.

Please note: **doors close promptly at 8:40am**, and we cannot admit children after this time

Lunch Time

Children can choose either a school lunch or bring a packed lunch from home. The current menu is available on our website - please take the time to review it with your child.

Each morning, children select from the following options:

- Cooked meal of the day (vegetarian option available)
- Jacket potato

All children eat together in the hall. Please ensure lunch boxes and bottles are clearly labelled with your child's name.

School meals are **free** for all primary school children in Wales.

We promote healthy eating and ask that packed lunches include balanced options. Please limit crisps and chocolate, and do not include fizzy drinks, sweets, or foods containing nuts.

For information about preparing age-appropriate healthy lunches for your child, please see our school website: <https://www.overmonnow.monmouthshire.sch.uk/healthy-eating/>

After School Club

After-school club runs daily from 3:10pm – 5:30pm. Session prices vary and are bookable via the their app which you will receive access to once enrolled. After School Club provide the children with a range of activities and outdoor play, along with a healthy snack and drink.

Children will need to be signed out from After School Club by a responsible adult.

Parent Pay

We are a cashless school so payments for trips and visits will be made electronically via ParentPay. You will be provided with an activation letter for ParentPay in September (or once your child has begun school). We ask that all parents/carers activate these accounts as it is used to pay for trips and other visits. The link for ParentPay is <https://www.parentpay.com/parents/>

ILLNESS AND ABSENCE

What do I do if my child is ill?

If your child has been unwell overnight, please consider whether they are ready to manage the busy school day, including outdoor play and group activities. If you're unsure, it's best to keep them at home until they're fully recovered.

If your child is going to be absent, please let us know by calling the school and using our dedicated absence line: **01600 713458 (option 1)**.

From time to time, we do see small outbreaks of tummy bugs, which are often caused by highly infectious viruses. Following medical advice, we ask that children stay at home for **48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhoea**. This helps prevent the spread and reduces the risk of reinfection.

What will happen if my child becomes ill at School?

If your child becomes unwell during the school day, we will contact you or one of your nominated emergency contacts. It's important that the school office has up-to-date contact details, so please let us know of any changes.

If your child needs prescribed medication, please speak to the school office. Staff are not permitted to administer non-prescribed medicine, but you're welcome to come in during the day to give it if needed.

For children with asthma, a medical form must be completed—these are available from the office. Inhalers should be clearly labelled and kept at nursery. Please also inform us of any allergies your child may have.

Although accidents are rare, they can happen. Any minor injuries and treatment given will be recorded and shared with you when you collect your child. If we feel your child needs medical attention, we will contact you immediately.

What if I'm going to be late or someone else needs to pick up my child?

If you're going to be late collecting your child, or if someone else will be picking them up, please inform the school office as soon as possible. For safety reasons, we can only release children to authorised adults.

In some cases, we may operate a password system to ensure your child is collected safely. If your arrangements change, just give us a quick call to let us know.

 01600 713458

 www.overmonnow.monmouthshire.sch.uk

 overmonnowprimary@monmouthshire.gov.uk

 Rockfield Road, Monmouth, NP25 5BA

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

Here are some ways you can help to prepare your child to start school:

1. Encourage Independence

- Practice using the toilet independently
- Get dressed and undressed (especially for PE – try it at home!)
- Put on and take off shoes – Velcro is ideal
- Use a knife and fork, open lunch boxes and packets
- Solve small problems and know when to ask for help

2. Develop Social Skills

- Arrange playdates with future classmates
- Practise greetings and simple conversations
- Encourage turn-taking and sharing through games

3. Support Early Literacy & Numeracy

- Help them recognise their name (to find their peg or tray)
- Share stories regularly
- Build fine motor skills through cutting, threading, drawing, and colouring
- Explore numbers with counting songs, number hunts, or everyday objects

4. Talk Positively About School

- Visit the school and talk about what they'll see and do
- Discuss the daily routine and what to expect
- Share our Starting School book with your child regularly so the adults and classroom environment become familiar
- Establish school-friendly bedtimes and morning routines in the days before starting



At Overmonnow, we strongly believe that learning to read is a crucial part of a child's education and skill development, supporting all future learning. Research also shows that children whose families read together at home are much more likely to become successful, confident and independent readers. Adults read with pupils weekly within school and change reading books when necessary to ensure that progression and challenge are balanced.

We would ideally like all children to read to or with an adult (depending on age and ability) a minimum of 4 times a week. Please ensure you (or another adult or older sibling) signs and comments in your child's reading record with the date they have read with you.

Reading is a lifelong skill and the more your child practices now, the easier it will be for them to continue to learn and progress with this skill.

Sound Cards

When your child starts in Reception, they will initially be given sound cards to read and practise at home. These follow our Read Write Inc scheme of phonics teaching and are used to help your child begin to read. Pupils are encouraged to sound out (segment) and blend words to become fluent. Once our staff feel your child is making good progress with these, they will move onto reading books.

Reading Books

Reading books are sent home when pupils are deemed ready. They will be sent home with a reading record which records the book they've been reading and a comment regarding their progress. Reading books are changed at least once a week in class if the child has finished the book and is reading it confidently. Sometimes books will be sent home multiple times to allow a child to practise and become more confident with their reading.

Reading Records

It is really helpful for those who are reading with the child to record accurate comments each time that they read with the child (this includes reading both Green Word sound cards and books). These will be positive but may also be constructive. This will allow us to know how a child is reading at home and whether we need to adjust the books we are sending home. Occasionally, it may be necessary to change the book band that a child is reading to ensure that it is providing the appropriate level of challenge. We want children to be challenged in their reading but not overwhelmed with a difficult book.

Comments for Reading Records

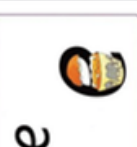
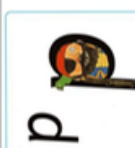
Here are some comments that may help you to accurately record your child's reading:

...read familiar words independently	...struggled to concentrate	...found this book too hard to read
... was able to predict what happens next in the text	...used the picture cues and the first sound of a word to work out words	...enjoyed reading this book a lot
...showed good understanding of the text	...self-corrected own errors independently	...did not understand what he/she has read
...read with good expression	...would not read tonight	...made a number of errors
...struggled to work out a lot of the vocabulary	...worked out new words by sounding out	...could not retell the story
...able to read this book with lots of help	...discussed the story and characters well	...read with fluency and expression

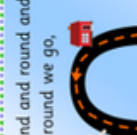
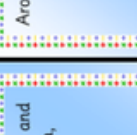
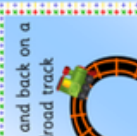
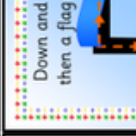
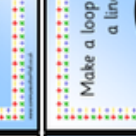
Tips for Reading at Home

- Read anything and everything with your child. There are words all around – signs, supermarkets, posters, packets, on television, on the internet.
- Let your child see you reading for pleasure – keep books, magazines and newspapers at easy reach.
- Play “I spy” games. Can you find words beginning with...? Can you find a picture of...? How many ... can you see?
- Enjoy reading together. Give characters funny voices and engage with the pictures. Make a game out of finding words that rhyme or start with the same sound.
- Visit the public library. Find books you loved as a child to read together.
- Use reading to inspire drawings or new stories.
- Look online and in app stores for appropriate word and spelling games.
- Have a special place or a certain time when you read together.
- If your child misreads a word, do not interrupt immediately, instead allow them the chance to correct themselves.
- Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.
- Do not cover pictures in the book and expect children to only use the words. The illustrations are there for a reason and actively support reading development.
- Talk about the book before, during and after you have read it. Ask questions about the story, characters, what could happen next?
- Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Ten minutes is usually long enough. You don't need to read the entire book each time, a couple of pages is often enough, especially as the texts get longer.

Here's how we form our letters

a		Around the apple and down the leaf.
b		Down the laces to the heel and around the toe.
c		Curl around the caterpillar.
d		Around the dinosaurs bottom, up his tail neck & down to his toes.
e		Lift off the top and scoop out the egg.
f		Down the stem and draw the leaves.
g		Around the girls face, down her hair and give her a curl.
h		Down the head, to his hooves and over his back.
i		Down the body and dot for the head.
j		Down his body, curl, dot for his head.
k		Down the kangaroo's body tail and leg.
l		Down the long leg.
m		Down Maisie, mountain, mountain.
n		Down Nobby and over his net.
o		All around the orange.
p		Down the pirates plait and around his face.
q		Round her head, up past her earring, down her hair, and flick.
r		Down the robots back and curl over his arm.
s		Slither down the snake.
t		Down the tower, across the tower.
u		Down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle.
v		Down a wing, up a wing.
w		Down, up, down, up.
x		Down the arm and leg, repeat the other side.
y		Down a horn, up a horn and under head.
z		Zig-zag-zig.

Here's how we form our numbers

0		Around and round and round we go.
1		Start at the top and down we run.
2		Around and back on a railroad track.
3		Around the tree and around the tree.
4		Down and over, down some more.
5		Down and around then a flag on high.
6		Down we go and make a loop.
7		Across the sky and down from heaven.
8		Make an 's' and do not wait.
9		Make a loop and then a line.