



Tannery Drift First School

ROYSTON • HERTFORDSHIRE

Frequently Asked Questions Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024/25

Admissions

Are you generally oversubscribed?

Every year is different. We are currently at capacity in Nursery and full in our Reception classes. Our Nursery over-subscription criteria can be found on our website within our [Nursery Admissions Policy](#) document.

The Hertfordshire County Council over-subscription criteria for Reception to Year 4 can be found [here](#).

In Nursery we usually have a waiting list, although we work with parents wherever we can (to adjust hours where necessary) in order to accommodate additional applications, such as offering 15 hours taken over afternoons instead of mornings, for example.

Do Nursery children attend 5 days per week or can they attend 3 or 4 days per week? Do you accept applications for less days per week?

You can apply for the days and hours you need, however it is worth bearing in mind that as per our Nursery over-subscription criteria, priority will be given to children who access their free funded hours across 5 days, Monday to Friday. 15 hours places will be allocated as either a block of 5 morning sessions or a block of 5 afternoon sessions.

Does it increase our chances of getting a place if we have a sibling at the school already?

If you have a sibling at Tannery Drift First School, your priority level for securing a place for your reception child increases. The sibling rule only applies if they will still be attending the school from September 2023 (current year 3 or younger).

Can children in Nursery, if doing morning only, stay for lunch some days and not others? If staying for lunch, is this included in free hours?

If you are interested in your child attending lunchtime club in addition to their morning sessions, please include this in your application. If your child is entitled to 30 hours free childcare, lunchtime club can be covered by this, however if you plan to use your 15 free hours funding we would refer you to our admission policy as this may impact the success of your application if you are not applying for a place across 5 days, Monday to Friday.

How possible is it to get mid-year admission into Nursery?

Our Nursery caters for children from the September following their third birthday until their admission to Reception. It is very rare that we open to mid-year admissions and have only been able to do so during particularly low birth years.

When applying for a Reception place, does it lower your chances of getting your first choice if you add additional school choices?

We would always recommend including additional school choices to increase the likelihood of your child being allocated a place at a school of your choosing.

Early Years

How are the Reception classes set up?

At Tannery Drift we have two Reception classes, Little Tigers and Red Robins, which share a large open plan classroom. Each class has a defined carpet area for registration, story time and other class-specific learning activities and children can access all areas of the classroom in play, which includes role play, construction, small world and crafting, as well as free flow access to the garden.

What does a typical day look like for reception and nursery children in terms of routine and curriculum?

In our Early Years we follow the Foundation Stage curriculum which covers seven areas of learning; Personal, social and emotional development, communication and language skills, physical development, literacy, maths, understanding the world and expressive art and design. Our daily routine is carefully planned to provide periods of uninterrupted play where children can explore the indoor and outdoor environments and become absorbed in their own ideas and processes alongside all adults in the setting. Below is an example timetable of a day in our Early Years.

<i>On arrival...</i>	<i>Morning activities (fine motor practice)</i>
<i>9am</i>	<i>Whole class phonics / Adult led activity</i>
<i>9:30am</i>	<i>Child initiated play and free flow snack</i>
<i>11am</i>	<i>Whole class maths / Adult led activity</i>
<i>11:45am</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
<i>12:45pm</i>	<i>Dough disco</i>
<i>1pm</i>	<i>Guided reading / storytelling</i>
<i>1:30pm</i>	<i>Child initiated play and free flow snack</i>
<i>3pm</i>	<i>Daily reflections</i>

What kinds of activities do children in Nursery do?

In our Nursery, the children are offered a wide range of learning activities indoors and outdoors that they can choose to try. These include mark making and painting in the creative area, constructing and building with wooden blocks and tubes and storytelling with small world characters and props. Outdoors we have large climbing equipment and a rope bridge as well as a large sandpit, mud kitchen and bike path. Adults are there to support children with these activities in their play but will also plan small group sessions based around stories, music, cooking, PE, fine motor practice and maths to ensure there is a balance of adult planned activities and child-initiated play.

How do you approach the balance between teaching curriculum topics such as English and Maths versus play-based learning?

We feel that children learn best through a combination of adult led sessions and child-initiated play. This allows the adults in the setting to work with children on specific skills such as reading, writing, fine motor and number but also means that they can be there to support children to develop these skills in their play. We ensure that our environments support children in all areas of their learning so they are developing English and maths skills during their play as well as in adult led teaching sessions. In play, all adults are present with the children and respond in the moment to their needs. This enables them to focus on each child’s next steps and find opportunities to support and challenge them.

Do you find that children starting at your nursery struggle more if they have not attended another Nursery/ Pre-school before?

Many factors can contribute to a child feeling unsettled as they get used to a new environment and new adults. During the first few weeks of starting Nursery all children receive lots of transition support to ensure they are happy and settled in school. Our Nursery team make sure that during this time they build relationships with the children and find out what they are interested in. They are then able to suggest areas of the environment the children would enjoy playing in and we find that they very quickly become confident to be in school.

Before joining Nursery it is always beneficial for children to have spent time playing and interacting with other children, either within their wider family, meeting friends at the park or

potentially at another setting. This enables them to have the skills to build relationships with their peers at school and share interests and experiences with each other.

Do Early Years participate in Forest School? How much time do they spend outside?

We have a wildlife area at school that every class has access to and regularly visit. Children throughout the school day spend a lot of the day outside and Early Years have free access to the garden throughout the day.

Will children in Nursery be shown Reception class before starting the follow year?

If your child attends our Nursery their classroom is next door to Reception and they share a garden. They will be very familiar with the area and staff. We will arrange settling in sessions in June/July.

Whole School

What are your typical class sizes?

At Tannery Drift we have a two form intake each year, with a capacity of 30 per class from Reception to Year 4.

I heard from a current parent that there are cookery facilities. At what age does this get introduced?

Every class will learn about food and has access to cookery lessons, either in-class or in our Enrichment room. The type of equipment used and activities planned will vary depending on age-group and ability, for example, Nursery children may begin with fruit skewers and smoothies to learn cutting and peeling skills and talk about healthy eating.

How many school trips do children have in a year? Do children have an opportunity for a residential trip?

In an ordinary school year we aim to take children on a minimum of one day trip away from Royston. Additional activities out of school can include: posting a letter to Santa, carols at the Church and a local care home, history lesson at Royston Museum, litter picking, train ride to Letchworth, nature walks on the Heath, among others.

In year 4 we take the children on a residential trip for 2 nights, where they have the opportunity to try a number of outdoor activities with their peers, such as zip wire, abseiling, kayaking, etc.

How often and how do teachers communicate progress / concerns with parents?

We have 'Open Classrooms' one day each term where we invite parents and carers to visit their child's class at the end of the school day, providing an opportunity to see the work they are doing in class and have an informal chat with the teacher. Parents will also receive an annual written school report.

We also hold parent consultations in the Autumn and Spring terms, which provide a more formal setting to discuss your child's progress and targets. If there are things you would like to talk to the teacher about in the interim we encourage parents to agree a mutually convenient time to discuss this with the teacher outside of the school day.

Are there any languages taught or any support for bilingual children?

We plan our curriculum around the needs of the children in each cohort and would always support children who may speak additional languages at home. We celebrate diversity in school and encourage all children to share their experiences and skills with others. This, in particular, allows other children to learn about languages, traditions and cultures that are different from their own. For children that may need support to learn English we would include a variety of text in different languages around our environments so all children feel represented within the class. We place a strong focus on communication and language skills in our Early Years and would plan group activities for children that may need additional support. When children move into KS2 we teach French as part of the Curriculum.

What kind of behaviour management approaches do you use?

Throughout the school we have a positive approach to supporting behaviour, with clear expectations, and ensure we are praising the children when they are making the right choices. We encourage all children to work as a class team to gain rewards and support each other to try their best. Across the school we have Golden Rules that reflect the expectations we have for behaviour and children earn stamps when they are demonstrating these rules in class.

What is the plan for extra-curricular clubs next year?

We have a variety of clubs during and after school, these are run on a voluntary basis by our teaching staff, with some external providers also offering clubs including football (reception to year 4), tennis (year 1 to 4) and multiskills (year 1 to 4). We do not offer clubs to our Nursery children and usually provide an option for reception children from the Spring term, to allow time to settle into their new environment.

How much formal learning takes place in Year 1 and how much opportunity is there for children to continue to learn through play?

In Year 1 our timetable consists of whole class teaching, adult led focus groups and time for children to play and explore in the provision. We feel that so many learning opportunities can be achieved through children's play, when they are engaged and motivated by what interests them, so we have developed our environments to support this approach. Our adult led time is used to teach phonics, English, maths and Foundation Subjects that are often linked to a topic or theme. When new skills are taught and modelled the children then have time to rehearse and consolidate these in their play.

Wrap-around Care Provision

How / when do you book Breakfast Club and After School Clubs?

Wrap-around care provision is booked via the School Office and paid via Arbor (payment is also accepted using Childcare Vouchers and the Tax-Free Childcare scheme). Every parent is set up with an account on joining the School as we use this app to administer payments such as extra-curricular clubs, milk and music tuition (KS2). Sessions are booked in advance for half a term at a time. Please note that this is a paid for service and cannot be used as part of the 30 hours funded free education for Nursery aged children.

How much flexibility is there with wraparound provision if our situation changes?

We require 4 weeks written notice for any changes to allocated days. Adding days on a regular basis will be dependent on our waiting list at the time. This varies throughout the school year.

Is Breakfast Club/ After School Club open to all age groups?

Wraparound care provision (Breakfast Club and After School Club) at Tannery Drift School is available to all pupils from Nursery up to Year 4. Children in our Early Years setting (Nursery and Reception) attend Breakfast Club and After School Club in our Enrichment room, which has been set up to meet the particular needs of the Early Years.

Breakfast Club is open from 7.40am, serving breakfast until 8.20am. There is also the option to attend Stay & Play from 8.30am, which does not include a meal. Further details can be found on our [website](#).

After School Club can be booked until 4pm, 5pm or 6pm. Further details can be found on our [website](#).

Is this wraparound provision available in school holidays?

Our wraparound provision is term time only. We do not provide a holiday club but can direct you to locally run clubs on request.

Headteacher: Mrs Anna Greetham

Tannery Drift First School | Tannery Drift | Royston | Hertfordshire | SG8 5DE

T: 01763 246549 | admin@tannerydrift.herts.sch.uk | www.tannerydrift.herts.sch.uk