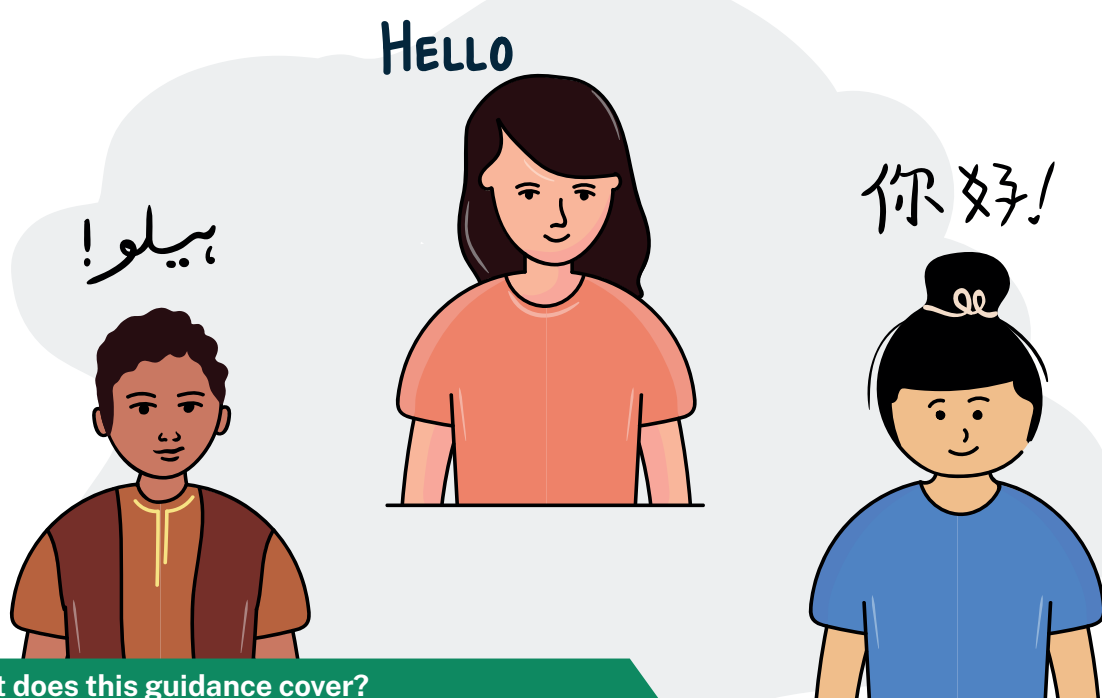


## About the English Education System: Primary Schools

Guidance for parents of children who use  
English as an Additional Language (EAL)



### What does this guidance cover?

Here you can find practical information to help you find a school place for your child and to understand the English Education System.

There are different types of schools in England, including some which parents have to pay for (i.e. *fee-paying/independent/private schools*).

This guidance tells you about English schools which you do not have to pay for (i.e. *state schools*). There are different kinds of state schools, including:

- *Local Authority (LA) schools* – funded by local government
- *Academies and Free Schools* – funded by central government, often part of a Trust
- *Faith schools* – associated with a particular religion

You can also choose to teach your child at home, either full or part-time. This is called home education (or *elective home education* or *home schooling*). Find out more here:

<https://www.gov.uk/home-education>



## 1. How can I find a school place for my child?

Contact your *local council* (also called the *Local Authority* or *LA*) to find a school place for your child because:

- The *local council* must find a school place in the local area if your child is aged 5 to 16 years old
- You can find more information about school admissions here:  
<https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions>

### Here are some ideas to help you decide which school you like:

- Visit the school during open evenings
- Look at their school website
- Read their most recent Ofsted inspection report: <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>
- Check the school's overall performance:  
<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>
- Talk to other parents about what they think of the school

### When you know which schools you like, you will need to:

- Fill in the online application form, giving a few schools you like
- Include your *catchment area* for a primary school application
- Ask for help from your local council's *School Admissions Team* [CB2] as the school application process can be complicated
- Ask the council if there are other people, community groups or interpreters who can help you

## 2. What age will my child start school?

All children in England must start full time education the term after their fifth birthday. However, most children join a reception class in the September after they turn four.

Contact your Local Authority or school for more information on when your child should start school.

## 3. How do I find out the school term and holiday dates?

School term and holiday dates vary across England.

Speak to the school to find out the dates or look at this website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/school-term-holiday-dates>

## 4. What can I expect from school?

Read the *School Prospectus* or *Welcome Booklet* for new parents and visit the website; ask the school for help to translate information if you need to.

### For your child, there will be:

- Induction activities to help your child settle into school
- A place in a class of about 30 pupils of the same age
- A regular timetable of lessons taught by the same teacher
- Some lessons (e.g. Physical Education (PE) and music) possibly taught by a specialist teacher
- Access to a full curriculum – see below for more information
- Homework linked to classroom learning
- An inclusive approach where all children are treated fairly

### What else will my child do at school?

Your child will be able to take part in extra-curricular activities, school trips and other events, including:

- *Assemblies* and opportunities for *collective worship*
- *Extra-curricular activities* and *clubs*, e.g. sport, music and drama
- *School trips* to places of interest/ theatres/ sports events
- *Class assemblies* and *productions* to watch children perform
- *Social events* and *fundraising events* such as *sports days*, summer and Christmas *fairs*, *discos* and *quizzes*



### How will I know what is happening at school?

Your school will communicate regularly with you so that you know what is happening in your child's class. Schools will use different forms of communication including:

- *School website*: important dates, information and announcements
- *Notifications*: text messages, social media (e.g. Twitter) and apps
- *Online systems*: *school meals* and *parents' evening* appointments
- *Emails* and *letters*: school, classroom and holiday information
- *Parents' evenings* and *reports*: face-to-face meetings and reports
- *Meetings* and *information evenings*: about school life and subjects
- *Direct communication*: one-to-one conversations by phone or email



Find out more information by talking to other parents in the playground.

## 5. What will school expect from me?

### As a parent, you will be expected to:

- Send your child to school every day and on time, unless they are ill, have an appointment or it is a religious holiday. Find details on *free school transport* from your local council here: <https://www.gov.uk/free-school-transport>
- Contact the school to tell them why your child is absent. Tell the school in advance if you can.
- Take your children on holiday in the school holidays only. If you decide to take your children on holiday during term time, you may have to pay a fine. Speak to the school to find out more or look at this website: <https://www.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence>
- Tell the school about any important events or circumstances for your child or family. They will try their best to support you.
- Provide *medical* details and *contact* details
- Complete *consent forms* to say that your child can go on school trips, have photographs taken etc.



## 6. Who is who in school?

Look at the *School Prospectus* or school website to see photographs and names of staff members; sometimes these are on display in the school entrance too.

Ask the school which staff members will be working with your child. These may include:

- *Senior Leaders* –e.g. the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher
- *Office Staff* –e.g. the school Receptionist
- *Teaching Staff* –e.g. the Class Teacher and the Teaching Assistant
- *Pastoral Staff* –e.g. the Home-School Officer or Learning Mentor
- *Specialist Staff* –e.g. EAL Teachers (English as an Additional Language), SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator), Designated Safeguarding Lead Teacher (DSL)



## 7. What is taught and tested in school?

Please look at the table below to find out which *Phase, Stage* and *Year Group* your child will be in – and which *Assessments/Tests/Exams* they will have:



Phase	Stage	Year Group	Age Range	Assessments/ Tests/ Exams	Subjects studied
Primary	Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)	Reception Year	4-5	End of Reception: EYFS profile completed	Communication and language, physical development, personal, social and emotional development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, expressive arts and design
	Key Stage 1	Year 1	5-6	End of Year 1: Phonics screening check	English, maths, science, design and technology (DT), history, geography, art and design, music, physical education (PE, including swimming), computing
		Year 2	6-7	End of Year 2: Key Stage 1 SATs tests	
Key Stage 2	Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6	7-8 8-9 9-10 10-11	Years 3-5: On-going internal assessments  End of Year 6: Key Stage 2 SATs tests	English, maths, science, design and technology (DT), history, geography, art and design, music, physical education (PE, including swimming), computing, ancient and modern foreign languages	

Find more detailed information at <https://www.gov.uk/national-curriculum>

## 8. What will my child need?

### Ask your child's school if there is a school uniform and where to buy it.

- Lots of schools in England expect children to wear a school uniform but some do not
- Your child's school will provide a list of what to buy and tell you where you can buy it; ask about PE kit and swimming kit too
- If you have financial difficulties, speak to your school as they may be able to help



### Ask your school about equipment for learning, which may include:

- A bookbag for reading books, homework and letters from school
- A rucksack for PE kit, packed lunch and other equipment
- A pencil case for stationery, e.g. pens, pencils etc.
- A calculator and other maths equipment



### Ask your school about lunchtime meal options for your child, which include:

- A *school meal* – sometimes called a school lunch or dinner
- A *packed lunch* – brought in from home
- A *home dinner* – going home for lunch



### Ask about the *school meals* menu, the cost and how to pay, because:

- The school can help with special diet requirements, e.g. Halal meals
- Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 get *Free School Meals*
- Other children can also receive *Free School Meals (FSM)* if the family is on certain benefits. You can find out more here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>

## 9. What extra support is there for pupils who need it?

- *Pastoral support*: to help with any worries about school or home
- *Designated Safeguarding Lead*: to help with serious concerns
- *English language (EAL) support*: to help to learn English in class
- *Learning support*: if your child has *Special Educational Needs* or *Disabilities*
- *External agencies*: specialists to help the school to support children



## 10. How can I help my child to learn?

Find out how to help your child to learn [here](#).