



Bethersden Primary School

2024 Prospectus



Belonging ☆ Compassion ☆ Respect ☆ Collaboration ☆ Creativity ☆ Resilience

Welcome to our school!





Headteacher's Welcome

A warm welcome to Bethersden Primary School. We are a small village primary school situated in the beautiful village of Bethersden, just outside Ashford, Kent. As a school, we pride ourselves on the strength of our relationships within our community. We work closely with parents and families, our governors and our local community, to ensure that our school is a warm and welcoming place, where children feel valued, respected, and feel a strong sense of belonging.

We are very lucky to have a team of dedicated staff, who work tirelessly to ensure that our children receive an excellent education. Our curriculum has been chosen to reflect our high expectations and ambitions for our children, with a particular emphasis on the development of vocabulary. We know that every child is different, and has differing needs, and we believe that it is our job to ensure that we provide the support and scaffolding to allow every child to succeed, whatever their barriers may be.

The first word that many people say, when speaking about our school, is 'family'. We are small, strong community, where we get to know every child, and every child is cared for. This environment allows every child to grow in confidence- supporting them in their successes as well as their failures, to help them develop into well rounded, motivated and responsible young people.

At Bethersden Primary School, we believe that an excellent education is a well rounded one. Not only is academic achievement important, but it is equally the experiences, opportunities and values which we give our children, which mean that children love coming into school, and they leave, we hope, with many happy memories of their primary school.

It is my absolute pleasure to say good morning to every child as they come through the gate each morning, and goodbye as they leave. If you would like any further information about our school, there is no better way to get to know us, than through a school tour. We look forward to welcoming you to our community.

Ms Rebecca Heaton

Headteacher





Mission and Aims

At Bethersden Primary School, we aim to deliver an education which ensures:

- Every child feels safe and secure
- Every child receives an excellent academic curriculum, setting them up for future success in secondary school and beyond
- Every child develops in their personal attributes, focused on our core values of belonging, compassion, respect, collaboration, creativity and resilience. These attributes support children to grow into young people who are able to make a positive contribution to society
- Every child experiences a wide breadth of experiences and opportunities, which are memorable, enjoyable and special.

About us

We are a small village primary school, with a pupil admission number of 20 pupils per year group, which we group into 5 classes. Our mixed class structure means that our children get to know not only children in their year group, but those in the year groups above and below them too. This means not only do pupils have friends across the school, but it also means a very tight knit, cohesive atmosphere across the school.

Our class structure is:

- Starfish- Reception
- Turtles- Year 1 and 2
- Penguins- Year 2 and 3
- Stingrays- Year 4 and 5
- Orcas- Year 5 and 6

We are not a church school, however we work closely with our local church, St. Margaret's. As well as regular assemblies, the Church also help us to mark Harvest, Remembrance, and Christingle. We do this because our local community is important to us, and we believe that the values of the church are well aligned to our school values, regardless of faith.





We are very lucky to have a highly experienced staff team, who do an incredible job for our children. In addition to our class teachers, we have TAs who support our pupils with special education needs and disabilities.

Our senior leadership team comprises of our Headteacher, Ms Heaton, our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Price, and our SENDCO, Mrs O'Neon.

Our School Values

We have six school values, which underpin our school community:

Belonging- every member of our community is important and belongs here. Like any high performing team, we work together, support each other and are proud to be part of our school.

Compassion- we think about and consider other people's feelings and thoughts. We are kind to one another, and understand that we, and others, make mistakes sometimes.

Respect- every interaction we have is underpinned by respect. We respect ourselves, others and our environment.

Collaboration- working together makes us stronger.

Creativity- we thrive on opportunities to be creative, and come up with our own ideas. Creativity means that there doesn't always need to be a right answer, but instead celebrates our individuality and different opinions.

Resilience- we know that change can be difficult, but we have a range of strategies to help ourselves in more difficult moments- whether that be through talking to others, focusing on the positives ahead, or looking after ourselves.

Ofsted report

Our most recent Ofsted report was undertaken in June 2023, when we achieved a 'Good' rating. The report is well worth a read. We were particularly proud of our Early Years provision which was rated as 'Outstanding'.





Admissions

The application process for entry to primary school opens on Tuesday 5 November 2024, the deadline for applications for 2025 entry is 15th January 2025. We encourage families to book a tour of the school, to really get to know us and see our school in action.

For mid-year admissions, we ask parents and carers to contact the school office in the first instance- we have spaces in some year groups, and a waiting list in others.

Facilities

We are very fortunate in our surroundings. We have a large playing field, with a full-sized mud kitchen, a boat, lots of climbing equipment and a slide, newly installed pull up bars and monkey bars, a stage, large loose parts, digging areas, a large sandpit and more!

Our Reception classroom has a wonderful outdoor area, which is next door to Bethersden Play School. We are not officially linked to the playschool, but we have strong links with them and would certainly recommend them.

Outside our mobile classrooms we have a greenhouse, pond and planting area. We recently gained our Level 1 and 2 RHS awards, which we're very proud of!

Next to our school grounds, is our forest school area. We have a wooden gazebo, and this area is used for outdoor learning every week.

Curriculum

We have an ambitious and exciting curriculum in place, which Ofsted describes as being 'rich and balanced' (Ofsted, 2023).

We teach children to read through Read Write Inc, a well-established and highly regarded phonics scheme, from Reception.

For maths teaching, we teach using Power Maths, and teach in year group classes- being a maximum of 20 pupils being taught in a class.





The modern foreign language we teach is French, and the standard of French speaking and writing which we achieve by Year 6 is something we pride ourselves on.

We are very lucky to have a forest school teacher who is with us one day a week, and every class has outdoor learning lessons for one term each year.

For PE, we have previously worked with Chance to Shine, an organisation which brings a cricket coach into school. We also work closely with Bethersden Tennis Club, where the upper year groups have benefitted from their facilities and coaches during PE lessons in the summer.

The Upper School (Year 4, 5 and 6) go swimming each year, using the facilities and teachers at Ashford School.

School Times

At Bethersden Primary School our day begins at 8.30am for children when the school gates open ready to welcome children in to school. Children need to be in school by 8.40am. The school day ends at 3:10pm.

Wraparound Care

Breakfast club starts at 8am each morning. Our after-school care runs until 5:00pm.

Our Extra-Curricular Offer

At BPS we pride ourselves on our extra-curricular offer, which we believe is hugely important in offering pupils additional opportunities, which we can't always fit into the school day.

We have a range of clubs, which change each term. These can include: Craft Club, School Team Football Club (for girls and boys), Girls Football Club, Eco Club and Drawing Club.

We work with a range of outside providers, to offer a high calibre of additional clubs, including Spotlight Acting, The Yoga Man, Bethersden Tennis Club and Code Kids. Whilst these come at a premium cost, we believe that they offer some brilliant opportunities, which come with the convenience of being just before, or straight after, school times.





Bethersden Passport

Every child at Bethersden has a Passport. This is a set of experiences which we want every child to have had, by the time they leave our school. Each time children complete an activity, they stamp it off in their passport. Experiences include:

- Visit a place of worship
- Go to an art gallery
- Experience live theatre
- Enter a competition
- Go abroad
- Go to the beach
- Meet an inspirational person
- Fruit picking
- Represent the school at an event
- Exchange messages with other children
- Camp outdoors
- Visit London
- Host a tea party
- Have something published
- Grow fruit and vegetables
- Cook on an open fire
- Visit a farm
- Care for animals / wildlife
- Go to a museum
- Visit the zoo
- School sleepover
- Learn basic first aid
- Volunteer
- Raise money for charity

Assemblies

Monday to Thursday we have an assembly at 8:45. On Mondays we have a whole school assembly, based on our school value of the term, led by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. On Tuesday, we have singing assembly. On Wednesday we have OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) assembly, when we introduce any new equipment outside, and talk to children about risk management, in order to play safely with our range of opportunities. On Thursday, we alternate between Rev. Mike coming in, and assemblies from Open The Book- a Christian organisation who retell biblical stories.

On Friday, we have our celebration assembly at 2:45. We celebrate our School Value Stars of the Week, sing Happy Birthday, announce the winner of Attendance Ted, announce House Points, and celebrate anything else pupils have achieved in or out of school.





School Uniform

We take real pride in our school uniform. We're a team, and it's our team kit!

Our uniform consists of:

- Royal Blue sweatshirt
- Pale blue polo shirt or cotton shirt
- Dark grey trousers or dark grey shorts
- Dark grey skirt or dark grey pinafore
- Black school shoes
- Black, white or grey socks or tights

In addition pupils may choose to wear:

- Royal Blue cardigan
- Blue gingham dresses, in warmer weather
- Royal Blue fleece for outdoor use
- Leggings are not a suitable alternative to trousers.
- For PE all children need:
- Blue PE t-shirt (available with a school logo)
- Black PE shorts
- A pair of trainers or plimsolls
- A plain black tracksuit (without fashion logos, pictures or patterns) for outdoor use (a black hoodie with the school logo is available)

For breaktimes and lunchtimes all children need:

- A waterproof coat with a hood
- Wellies
- Children are encouraged to bring in water proof trousers





Positions of Responsibility

We believe that giving pupils positions of responsibility, is a brilliant opportunity for children to grow in their confidence, and be part of the organisation and running of our school. Every year group has two members of their class elected onto our School Council. In recent years they have been hugely influential in school life, including choosing new class names, leading our Christmas fundraising and surveying children about our outdoor provision.

In Year 6, we offer a range of additional positions of responsibility. Every September we hold Democracy Week, in which children can nominate themselves as candidates for Head Boy and Head Girl. This vigorous process includes writing and giving a speech to the whole school, putting up posters and canvassing pupils for their votes.

We also nominate House Captains in Year 6, and appoint Librarians.

School Dinners, Snacks and Drinks

For lunch, we offer hot meals which are prepared off site, or children can choose to bring in a lunchbox. Children choose day to day if they are having a hot meal or are having a packed lunch, and the menu is always available on our website (Fish and Chip Fridays tend to be popular!)

At breaktimes, only fresh fruit or vegetables are permitted.

Children can only drink water during lesson and break time. They may have an alternative drink with their lunch.

Starting School

For children who start in Reception, we have a transition process which includes Stay and Play and Transition Afternoon in the summer term, and a Teddy Bear's Picnic at the end of August.

For the first week of school (which depending on Inset Days, tends to be around 3 days), children come in for mornings only. After that, children begin their full time timetable.





Safeguarding

Safeguarding our children, is our most important job. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Ms Heaton, or Deputy Safeguarding Leads are Mrs Price and Mrs O'Neon.

SEND

Bethersden Primary School is an inclusive learning community dedicated to excellence for all our children. We provide holistic support at the universal level by planning and delivering provision for a wide range of needs in the classroom. These needs include dyslexia, dyspraxia, speech and language needs, physical needs, Autism, ADHD and other social, emotional and mental health difficulties. When we are less familiar with an additional need, we access support from our local advisory services such as the specialist teaching and learning service (STLS) and other external agencies.

Special Educational Needs are currently identified in four broad areas of need:

- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Communication and Interaction
- Sensory and Physical

The definition of SEN in the new Code of Practice is a child who has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child has a learning difficulty if he or she:

Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in a mainstream school.

When identified as requiring additional support in school, children may have a plan with targeted SEND support or in some cases require an Education, Health and care plan (EHCP) when the need for specialist support above and beyond the school's targeted offer is required.

At Bethersden we are committed to the early identification of need, planning robust support and delivering a fully inclusive offer.





The SENCO at Bethersden Primary School is Mrs Sandra O'Neon.

The SENCO works closely with all staff at the school, parents and external agencies to be sure that our children have the targeted support and understanding that they need in order to thrive in all areas of their life. We focus on a strong inclusive offer and empower all staff to be teachers of SEND through their universal offer in their classrooms.

Governors

We have an extremely active Governing Body at Bethersden who work very closely with the Headteacher, and all the staff. They are all passionate about the children in our school and the rich education and wider opportunities they receive.

In broad terms, as a Governing Body they:

- Take a strategic role in the running of the school.
- Act as a critical friend to the school.
- Ensure accountability to the school community.

They work in partnership with the senior leadership team and all the dedicated staff, taking an active interest in the development plans for the school, as well as financial monitoring. They do not get involved in the day-to-day operation of the school, as this is the responsibility of the Headteacher, senior leaders and staff.

Governors are appointed through various routes. There are parent governors, who are elected by the parents themselves, and co-opted governors who are people from our community that can bring skills to the Governing Body to contribute to the school. Co-opted governors are appointed by the Governing Body itself.

PTA

We have an active and friendly PTA team, who do some brilliant event throughout the year to raise money for our school. This includes discos, Father's Day Football, cake sales, afternoon tea, sports day refreshments, ice cream sales and more.

They are always looking for volunteers!





We are very proud of our school- our children, our staff, and our community.

If you'd like to see some more, have a look at our Instagram and Facebook pages.

