



Falconhurst School

Prospectus 2024-2025

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Dear Families,

I am delighted to share this prospectus with you as a way of providing you with a flavour of what it means to be part of the Falconhurst learning community.

Our school is in Eaglestone, central Milton Keynes, where the vibrancy of city living is balanced by nearby places of natural beauty. We use this rich environment to the full. Children could well find themselves understanding the work of artists at the local art gallery one day and getting 'in touch with nature' at one of the many local lakes another day.

Falconhurst is a safe, welcoming, friendly and purposeful school where the children and their families provide a rich and varied mix of heritages, cultures, strengths and talents. All are welcome as we recognise that learning is universal and our diverse school community is a place where there is much to learn from each other.

Children's learning and their achievements at Falconhurst are of paramount importance. Our highly skilled and deeply committed staff provide a curriculum which is purposeful, enjoyable, and focused on the children themselves. By starting with what children already know, and what they would like to know, our learning is actively led by the children themselves. We pride ourselves on our ethos which enables all children to flourish in a safe and stimulating atmosphere where we endeavour to motivate, challenge and inspire our children through a differentiated, creative and personalised curriculum.

I am proud of our school's shared approach to children and their wellbeing. Falconhurst is a school where the drive for high achievement is balanced with values and care that ensure children feel safe to grow socially, emotionally and academically. We enable children to develop the confidence in themselves and their learning that can last a lifetime.

Providing inspirational and exemplary education for all our children is of paramount importance. The governors, staff and I are committed to ensuring that we grow and sustain a rich, caring and aspirational culture in our school, which in turn will benefit all its children and their families.

Much of our school's ongoing success is reliant upon the partnerships that we build with our community - locally and globally. Consequently I look forward to getting to know our families and visitors by personally welcoming you in to school should you choose Falconhurst as the school for your child or just as a place to visit.

If you would like to find out more please contact school for an appointment to view our fabulous school.

Mrs Louise Aird
Head Teacher

Our Vision

Courage

To make a positive difference to yourself and those around you

Determination

To give your best in all that you do, whatever the challenge

Ambition

To aspire and reach your personal goals

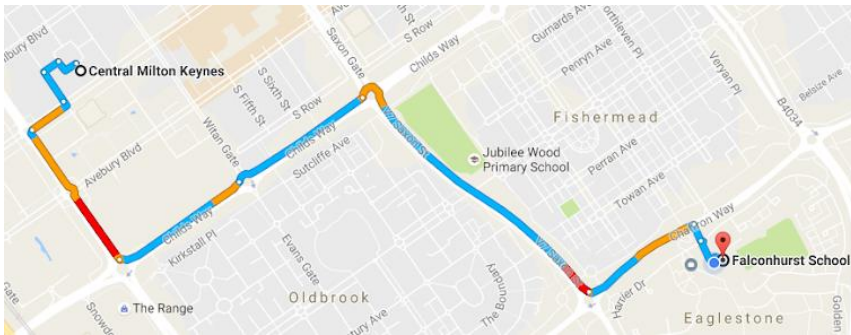
Success

In your endeavours and perseverance to be the best version of yourself.

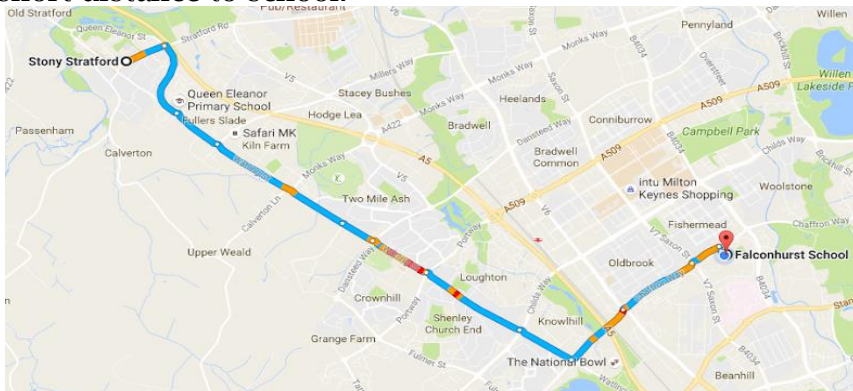
The vision for our school underpins all that we do, whether it is in the choices that all of us make on a daily basis or the plans and decisions that are made to shape the school for the future. Everyone within the Falconhurst learning community had an opportunity to contribute to this vision so that it truly reflects what matters most to us...Working together and placing the children at the heart of our school.

How to Find Us

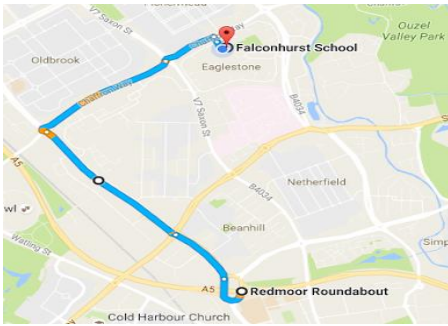
From central Milton Keynes... Travel east along Childs Way (H6) until the junction with Saxon Street (V7). Take the third exit off the roundabout and continue to the next junction with Chaffron Way (H7). Take the first exit off the roundabout onto Chaffron Way (H7) and continue until the right filter into Harrier Drive (signposted Eaglestone Local Centre). Turn right into Harrier Drive and take the second exit off the mini roundabout. The school is directly ahead of you. There are no parking facilities specifically for school visitors so you will need to enter the public car park on your right hand side. In the event of this being full it is often possible to park on Harrier Drive and walk the short distance to school.



From the North of Milton Keynes.... Travel south on Watling Street (V4) until the junction with Chaffron Way (H7) where you turn left. Travel east along Chaffron Way (H7) until you meet the junction with Saxon Street (V7). Take the second exit off the roundabout continuing along Chaffron Way (H7) until the right filter into Harrier Drive (signposted Eaglestone Local Centre). Turn right into Harrier Drive and take the second exit off the mini roundabout. The school is directly ahead of you. There are no parking facilities specifically for school visitors so you will need to enter the public car park on your right hand side. In the event of this being full it is often possible to park on Harrier Drive and walk the short distance to school.



From the South of Milton Keynes Travel North along the A5 until the Redmoor roundabout (MK Dons exit), take the second exit onto Grafton Street and continue north until the junction with Chaffron Way (H7). At the roundabout, take the third exit right continuing along Chaffron Way (H7) until the right filter into Harrier Drive (signposted Eaglestone Local Centre). Turn right into Harrier Drive and take the second exit off the mini roundabout. The school is directly ahead of you. There are no parking facilities specifically for school visitors so you will need to enter the public car park on your right hand side. In the event of this being full it is often possible to park on Harrier Drive and walk the short distance to school.



What sort of school is Falconhurst?

Our school is a Local Authority maintained Primary School, including a Nursery, which provides learning and care for children from the term after their 3rd birthday up until their transfer to secondary school aged 11. We are fortunate to learn in a large building built across three levels set close to the centre of Milton Keynes in the Eaglestone development. We have our own playing fields and are surrounded by housing and easy access to all areas of Milton Keynes.

There are 12 formal teaching areas, several small study and group work rooms, a Social Emotional and Mental Health Hub, a community room, a dining area, a cookery space, a large hall, offices, teachers' workrooms and a staffroom area, as well as many toilets! Our hall is big enough for us to gather the children together for assembly or to enjoy productions from children or visitors. Our outside learning area is safely enclosed for the children and we make good use of the field and climbing areas as well



The school was initially opened in 1977 with the two storey extension being completed in 2013. Often referred to as a 'tardis' because of its deceptive nature, our accommodation is primarily organised along a long corridor with the new two storey extension across the end. Despite the multi-level nature of our school, it is fully accessible, with stairs and a lift between the levels. There is a well-developed outdoor area for the Foundation Stage which includes enclosed areas for climbing as well as sensory play. Large fields complement the site and are used extensively throughout the year for playtimes and sporting events.

Because of our central location within Milton Keynes, we are able to ensure that the children experience trips and visits which complement their learning. From an early age children explore the local neighbourhood with short walks to discover what sights and sounds there are around them. As the children get older and more adventurous, we travel slightly further afield from school with visits to local museums, garden centres, allotments, other schools and the cinema. Once our children are in the final stages of primary school learning we look forward to the annual residential trips in Years 5 and 6. Nothing is more exciting than seeing children experiencing outdoor activities such as canoeing and abseiling for the first time!



Admissions to Falconhurst

When can children start at Falconhurst?

Children can enter our Nursery class (Little Falcons) from the start of the term after their third birthday. Every family is entitled to 15 free hours of learning and we provide this in morning only, afternoon only or two and a half full day sessions. Alongside this families can also book extended learning times so that children can stay for a maximum of 5 full days per week, term time only. Further information about timings and pricing is available from the school office.

Children also enter our Reception classes at the beginning of the autumn term (if they turn 5 between 1 Sep and 31 Aug the following year). Children coming to Falconhurst arrive from a wide variety of pre-school settings and many come from our own nursery, but there is no automatic right of entry and children attending the nursery apply for a school place along with those from other settings.

What is the school's admissions policy?

The Local Authority (LA) co-ordinate admissions to all maintained schools in Milton Keynes. Details and further information about their admissions arrangements can be viewed on their website <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/school-admissions>. The catchment area for the school has been defined as Eaglestone and Peartree Bridge; however many of our children live outside of this catchment area.

In the event of there being greater demand for admission than there are places available, then the LA will allocate places according to their 'oversubscription' criteria. These are detailed below:

1. A **looked after child** or previously looked after child.
2. A **sibling** at the school who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission of the younger sibling
and the place of residence is **within the catchment** area of the school.
3. The child's place of residence is **within the catchment** area of the school and there is **no sibling**.
4. There is already a **sibling** at the school who is expected to be on roll at the school at the time of admission of the younger sibling and the place of residence is **outside of the catchment** area.
5. Distance from the school to the place of residence.

In the event of there being more applicants meeting any of the criteria above places will be allocated in distance order using the distance between the child's normal home address and the school's main entrance, measured in a straight line, using the council's computerised measuring system with those living closest to the school receiving the higher priority.

In the unlikely event of joint oversubscription, having exhausted distance, random allocation will be used as the ultimate tiebreaker. For applicants living in flats, the distance will be measured from the school's main entrance to the front door of the ground floor flat underneath the applicant's main residence. Where two or more pupils live at the same distance, the tie breaker will be random allocation.

All admission authorities are required by section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit to a school a child with a statement of special education needs or an Education Health Care Plan that names that school. This is not an oversubscription criterion and the council will therefore admit such children whether the admission number has been reached or not

Is there an admission limit?

The school has an agreed admission number of 45 children per year group. In Reception, children are grouped in single year group classes; thereafter, the school is vertically grouped and children learn in double year combined classes. Vertical grouping results in 3 classes for each phase of learning – Year 1 and 2 (Lower School), Year 3 and 4 (Upper School) and Year 5 and 6 (Upper School). In the event that any of our year groups are full, the Local Authority as admissions authority will refuse any additional applications.

What happens if a child joins in the middle of a year?

Children arrive at Falconhurst at all sorts of times, and we welcome them whenever they come to us. We recognise the difficulties of moving in the middle of a school year and we work hard to help children settle in as quickly and easily as possible. Your child will undergo some straightforward assessments when he or she arrives, and we will help provide friends, a “buddy” to work with them for a few days, and a Learning Mentor who will check on their welfare after they have been in school for a few days. You are more than welcome to come in after a couple of weeks to talk about how well your child is settling and to discuss any concerns either you or we may have. All “in-year admissions” are coordinated by the Local Authority Admissions Team using a form which can either be collected from the school office or downloaded from the council’s website at <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/school-admissions>

Can we reserve a place at the school if we are coming from overseas or elsewhere in the UK?

No. The Local Authority follow their very clearly defined admissions criteria, which cannot apply until you have either exchanged contracts on a property in the defined area or have a rental agreement from a landlord if you are renting.

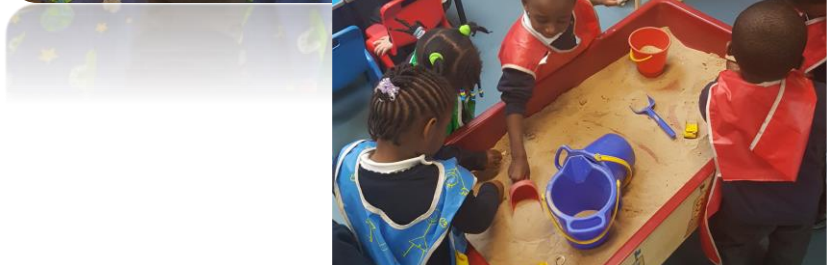
Do you have a nursery?

Yes. Our Nursery is within the building of the school, and has a maximum number of 52 places (26 in the morning and 26 in the afternoon). Nursery times are 8.40 - 11.40 a.m. (morning session) and 12.10 - 3.10 p.m. (afternoon session). If you wish to apply for a place at the Nursery, please contact Miss Edwards via the School Office either by popping in or emailing her on sedwards@falconhurstschool.co.uk; she will be only too happy to help you with information and advice. Please remember though that a place in the Nursery does not guarantee a place at the school and all families **must** complete the council admission forms within the timescales provided.



Falconhurst
Nursery

A school where every child's
first steps into learning are
encouraged, developed and
celebrated.



The School Day

What happens at the start of the school day? When must my child arrive for school?

Depending on their year group; children either enter through the main playground gate which is accessed via a pathway and gates to the right-hand side of the school building if they are in Early Years or KS1, or through the 'middle gate' at the front of the school if they are in KS2. Gates open at 8.40 a.m. ready for the school day and learning to start. Parents are asked to leave the site swiftly so that the playground gates can be secured by 8.55am. This is very important as the doors from the classrooms lead directly onto the playground and we must make sure that the children are safely enclosed within the school grounds whilst they learn and play. In extreme weathers children gates may be opened earlier to allow children access into school where it is dry and warm.

Children will hang their bag and coat up on a peg in the cloakroom area, and report straight to their classrooms for registration. Once registered, children may well start their day with a 'Circle' where each child shares a thought in response to a question or thought from the teacher. Classes may also use stimuli such as cultural festivals or news events to engage children in developing an awareness of the wider world in which they live.

Children who arrive after the gates close must report to the school office. If they arrive after registration but before 9.10 a.m., they are recorded as a late arrival. If they arrive after 9.10 a.m., they are recorded as absent for that session.

Nursery hours are a little different: sessions run from 8.40 - 11.40 a.m. (morning) and from 12.10 - 3.10 p.m. (afternoon).

What if I want to talk to my child's teacher?

We welcome all opportunities to talk with parents. You are more than welcome to briefly talk to your child's teacher at the end of the school day. If you want to talk about a specific subject or issue, it is advisable to message your teacher directly on Class Dojo or make an appointment through the school office, as staff often have clubs, meetings or other appointments at the end of the day. You can then be assured of somewhere quiet or private to talk. The start of the day is a useful time if you just need to pass on a message, but is not usually a good time for a longer talk.

What about my child's personal belongings?

We encourage children to bring as few as possible of their own belongings with them to school. Children are expected to keep their personal possessions safe in their tray in class or in their school bags. Please ensure that all clothing is clearly labelled as one blue jumper looks very much like another! We do not allow children to use mobile phones in school. However, we recognize that sometimes it is necessary to bring phones in for safety or contact reasons at the end of the day. If a mobile phone needs to be in school, then it must be brought to the school office at the start of the school day. Please be aware that the school is not in any way responsible for items brought in from home, including mobile phones

What happens at the end of the school day?

School finishes at 3.10p.m., and families are able to collect their child from the main playground (Nursery to Year 4) or the middle gate (Years 5 and 6). Older children may walk or cycle home alone provided that the school has been previously told of this arrangement and any relevant forms have been completed. The school gates will be unlocked at 3.10p.m. to allow children out from school. We do not expect or encourage children to be collected from the reception area, as this is a very tight space and can easily become congested at the start and end of the day.

What happens at break times?

Children in Years 1-6 have one break time per day, plus 20-25 minutes free time to play at lunchtime. Children in Foundation, Years 1 and 2 are given a piece of fruit for a break time snack, free under the National Fruit Scheme. We do not allow sweets, crisps, biscuits or chocolate to be eaten at break time, and prefer fruit or health bars (e.g. muesli bars) to be consumed. If children want to go to the toilet at break time, they are encouraged to go on their way out or on their way back to class. Children are supervised by members of the teaching and support staff at break time, and first aid cover is provided.

How is lunchtime organised at Falconhurst?

Children coming to Falconhurst can have school lunches, which are provided on site by Dolce Catering. Lunches have to be ordered and paid for via the School Grid Ordering app no later than 9am each morning - we would strongly encourage families to order at least for a full week ahead. **All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to free school meals daily. This is in addition to any further Free School Meal funding.** If you think that your child may be entitled to free school meals, **please do not hesitate to contact us and we can explain the Local Authority's online application process to you.**

Packed lunches may also be brought to school. Because we think children learn best if they are eating healthily with a balanced diet, we urge parents to provide lunches that are nutritious and healthy. If children are bringing their own drinks as part of their packed lunch, this must not be a fizzy drink, and, because of leakage/spillage problems, is in a carton or leak proof container. Children are not allowed to bring glass bottles onto the school site at all.

Classes have lunches in the Dining Hall on a rota system over three sittings. Nursery and Reception class children eat first, followed by children in Years 1 and 2 with Years 3 - 6 having the final sitting. During the time they are not eating lunch, children are playing on the playground under the supervision of the dinner supervisors, or in their classes if it is too wet. Children eating packed lunches also eat these in the Dining Hall. We keep this arrangement under review so children enjoy their lunchtimes to the fullest.

School Dress

What will my child wear for school?

All children attending Falconhurst must wear the school uniform, this includes children in the Nursery as they are very much part of our school. We believe that uniform contributes to the sense of belonging and pride that our vision strives for. Our uniform consists of the following:

Winter Uniform:

- Navy Blue sweatshirt/cardigan with/without the Falconhurst logo
- White polo shirts with/without Falconhurst logo
- Grey trousers/skirt/pinafore dress
- Navy Blue Falconhurst fleece (optional)
- White/grey socks or tights
- **Black** flat shoes or trainers or plain flat boots in extreme weather.

Hijab any appropriate plain colour

Jewellery must not be worn to school unless for cultural or religious reasons. Ear studs must be covered with tape or removed during PE for health and safety reasons.

Uniform can be bought from our providers Maisies who are based in Wolverton. They hold all of our uniform in stock in their shop on Church Street and their website <http://www.maisies-superstore.co.uk> provides a one stop online shop for all your needs. For families who do not wish to purchase uniform with a logo any supermarket or high street shop generally stocks a wide range of tops, jumpers, cardigans and bottoms for children of all ages.



We also ask that children are dressed appropriately for the weather. This means coats, hats and gloves when it is cold; sun hats when hot and sunny. Please do not assume that children will be kept in if the weather is drizzly or cold.

Summer Term (up until the October half term):

As Winter, with the options of:

- Blue checked summer dresses (optional)
- Grey shorts (optional)

P.E Kit

- Plain navy shorts/joggers
- Team Falconhurst navy blue t-shirt or plain blue t-shirt
- Plain navy jumper or tracksuit jacket (outdoor)
- Black plimsoll/white-soled trainers



If children are not dressed properly in school uniform, we will remind parents at the end of the day or via a note home. We strongly discourage the use of jewellery and other accessories that are not appropriate for school use (e.g. glitter in hair, hair shaved in patterns, hair dyed in colours outside the range of natural shades, bandanas, makeup, etc). For any families who are unable to provide school uniform because of financial difficulty, please contact the School Office as you may be eligible for support through the Pupil Premium grant.

Does my child need a change of clothes for PE?

Yes. PE takes place at least twice a week and all children are expected to arrive for school in their PE Kit on days when they have PE. We do not permit children to participate in games, athletics or gymnastics without the correct PE kit, for reasons of hygiene and ease of movement. There are often extra PE sessions for one or another reason, and you will be told in good time of the

need to send your child in with his/her PE kit.

Transport and Parking

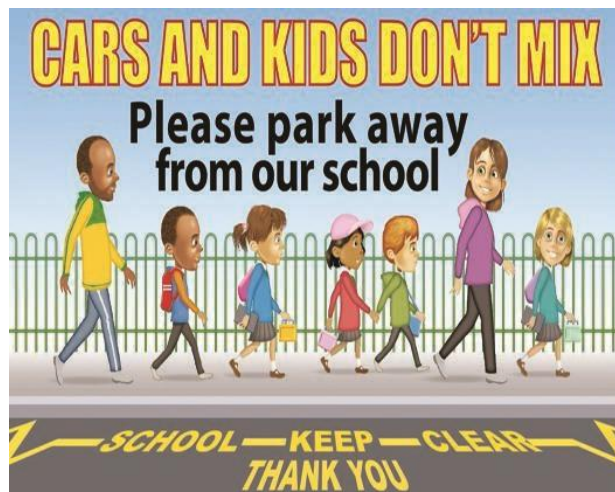
Where should I park when dropping children off for school?

We encourage as many children to walk or to bike to school as possible. This is vital for your health and your children's, as well as providing a form of friendship between families and children that is not possible in a car! We strongly encourage you to make an arrangement with another parent to walk your child to school if you have to go to work by car. However, *if you need to use your car*, we ask that you park in the public car park outside the school. You are **not permitted to park** on the area marked by yellow lines outside the front of the school. If you are intending to "drop and go", then this should be done to the right hand side of the front entrance where the road is at its widest. Parking or dropping off anywhere else is both inconvenient and illegal. We recognise that the lack of parking for school families is frustrating; however there are a number of safe options for parking in the local area which then mean children can walk a short - but safe- distance into school.

Is there a place to keep bikes safe at school?

We strongly encourage children to cycle to school - it is both safe and healthy to do so, and we have a bike shelter that is both within school grounds but also out of bounds for children during the school day. It is very important for all users of the bike shed that children secure bikes in an upright position and chain or lock them. We do not allow children to leave their bikes lying on the ground near the bike shelter. When children on bikes approach the school grounds, they should dismount and walk their bikes to the shelter, rather than riding them. The pedestrian gates should be used for those with bikes, and cycling within the school grounds is not permitted. Children must wear cycle helmets when riding to and from school. Cycle training is offered annually to children who are 10 and over. Please note that the school is not responsible for bikes and scooters left in the bike shelter. These are left at parent's own risk and we do strongly encourage you to use a chain to lock your bikes at all times. **Children wishing to cycle to school must have a Cycle Permit, obtainable from the school office.**

Electric scooters are not permitted on school site.



The Curriculum at Falconhurst

Falconhurst is a Local Authority maintained school that delivers the full requirements of the National Curriculum for Years 1-6, and the Foundation Stage (Early Years) Learning Goals. We also believe that children should experience a wide range of educational experiences within and beyond the National Curriculum. Consequently we ensure that the Curriculum is supplemented by an ever-widening range of extra-curricular activities, opportunities to rehearse and share productions, educational visits and residential stays for our older children.

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that over time, children are able to build their knowledge across all subject areas. We offer a wide range of exciting and engaging activities so that all children can explore new ideas, build on previous learning, deepen knowledge, exercise skills and present their learning in a range of ways. This learning can also take place at home so learning for us happens all around our children and at all times.

What curriculum areas will my child have access to?

From age 5 onwards your child will have access to all 5 **core** areas of our school curriculum: English, Mathematics, Science, Physical Education and Religious Education and the foundation subjects: Geography, Design Technology (DT), History, Computing, Art & Design, Music and Modern Foreign Languages (y3-6).

The areas that children are taught in the Foundation Stage (age 3-5) are divided into:

- Three *prime areas*:
 - **Communication and language,**
 - **Physical development**
 - **Personal, social & emotional development**
- Four *specific areas*:
 - **Literacy**
 - **Mathematics**
 - **Understanding the world**
 - **Expressive arts and design**



English, Mathematics, PE and Science, though often taught as separate subjects, make strong curriculum links with all other subjects. Art, Music, DT, PSHE, Computing, Geography and History are often interlinked, and in all classes are often grouped into themes. English and Mathematics are taught mainly through the programme of study outlined in the Primary National Curriculum, set out for each year group. They nearly always take place in the morning, either side of break time. PE is taught in the hall or outside, whilst music is generally taught in the music room.

What provision is made for the teaching of Religious Education?

Religious Education is provided at Falconhurst using the Milton Keynes Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education (2011). Children are taught to learn *from* religions as well as simply *about* them. All RE teaching takes both perspectives into account. Parents who wish to withdraw their children from RE should let the school know of their intention in writing. Alternative provision will be made for any pupils who have been withdrawn, after consultation with their parents. It is a policy of our school RE provision that it is broadly based on the Christian faith but includes other major religions of the world. Our RE policy is available for parents to see if they wish. RE is one of the best subjects for encouraging thinking, reflection and an early understanding of philosophy and dealing with the abstract, so we believe it is vital for children's development.

Will Falconhurst be teaching Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

We are committed through our broad curriculum, network of professional partners, exploration of values and attitudes and close links with families to ensuring that RSE enables all children to develop scientific knowledge and understanding about growth and development and human reproduction; understand the value of loving relationships and of family life; foster self-esteem, self-awareness and a sense of moral responsibility whilst developing the awareness, strategies and confidence to avoid, disclose and resist unwanted sexual experience. The 2021 DfEE definition of RSE includes the ‘teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health’; after consultation with our families, it has been decided that we will deliver a sex education programme to our children at a level of detail appropriate for their age group. Further detail about this can be found in the policy which also includes information on families right to withdraw their children from Sex Education lessons should they so wish.

Relationships Education for all children at Falconhurst is developmental and appropriate to the age and stage of the child. It provides information and knowledge in order to develop their awareness, respect and responsibility for oneself and for others whilst also challenging beliefs and highlighting misconceptions. Through the promotion of skills necessary for effective communication the children will be encouraged to examine opinions, participate in discussions and develop the assertiveness skills necessary to enable them to make well informed choices

What will happen if my child experiences difficulties with behaviour or learning?

Many parents face concerns their child is not making the progress expected of them, or encounter difficulties in learning or behaviour. We take these concerns very seriously, and face them head-on with our provision for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) as well as in our whole school approach to positive behaviour management. Our inclusion policy at school is based on the revised Code of Practice for Children with Special Educational Needs (DfE 2014), a summary of which is available upon request from the school office. We also publish our “local offer” on our school website, which explains how we assess and provide for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We employ a graduated response for each child, asking the help of outside agencies if this becomes necessary. These include:

- learning support advice (SENDIST)
- behaviour support teachers
- an educational psychologist
- speech and language therapists
- occupational therapists
- teachers of the deaf/visually impaired

Within school we employ a wide range of Teaching Assistants who work with the class teachers across all classes to enable those children who struggle with one or other area of learning to make progress. Support may be offered for a variety of reasons, ranging from specific learning difficulties and behavioural issues through to physical disabilities that may affect their learning. Children who require additional support are usually catered for within the class itself, although for specific learning schemes, groups may be withdrawn if it makes it easier for the children being supported. **Mrs Peachey** is the school’s SEND Coordinator (SENDCo), with responsibilities for ensuring that every child with special educational needs has an individual learning plan that is followed by the class teacher and updated each term. If your child is assessed as having a special educational need or requiring some extra support in class, we will inform you immediately. We aim to involve you fully in any work with your child, so you will be consulted for permission before we ask any outside educational professional to assess your child.

Our school behaviour policy is very clear. All children have the right to learn in an environment where they feel safe all of the time and where inappropriate behaviour is challenged and supported to improve. Details of our policy and practice are within our Positive Relationships Behaviour Management Policy (available upon request). In the event of a pupil’s behaviour requiring immediate support to remove a risk of harm to them or those around them, minimal reasonable physical guidance with maximum care



will be used.¹

What provision is made for those children who make faster progress than others?

Children who show greater than expected progress in any subject are given every encouragement at Falconhurst. We provide a range of 'stretch and challenge' opportunities for them such as: extensions beyond the work their peers are doing in class; encouraging independence in learning so that they can research and explore beyond the confines of what is being taught in class or specific homework which may enable them to develop the higher-order reading and thinking skills necessary so that they can make the most of the information they encounter. Our aim is to teach in such a way that we remove any barriers to children's progress at every level. We believe that every child has the capacity and right to astonish us and we need to be careful to watch out for those moments when it happens! Parents of children who have specific abilities in one or more areas are welcome to come and talk to staff about their children's interests and specific abilities. Experience shows us that children with particular skills shown at home are sometimes reluctant to let this shine at school, so we always seek parents' advice on this issue.

How are classes organised at Falconhurst?

In Years 1-6, children are taught in mixed ability vertically grouped classes, three per phase of Y1/2, Y3/4 and Y5/6. Most years, the classes stay together when they transfer from Y2 to Y3 but from time to time we re-examine these to see if the relationships are working as well and as are as productive for learning as they should be.

Alongside our general class provision, children may also be taught in small groups or tutoring sessions so that learning can be personalised for support or extension even further still.

¹ Team Teach Positive Handling Protocols.

Will the children at Falconhurst have opportunity to take part in educational visits?

Visits beyond the school are often the most effective way to fire children's enthusiasm for learning. All children will have the opportunity to take part in educational visits each year. We believe that they are an essential feature of children's education as very often they are a chance to provide a context for the learning that they undertake each term. Visits are made by year groups to support work across the curriculum.

Due to the rising costs of transport, these can often be expensive - and show every sign of becoming more so. Under the terms of the Education (Reform) Act 1988, no charge may be made for educational visits occurring during school hours. With Governors' approval, we ask for parental contributions to cover the cost of school visits. Visits are in general unlikely to take place unless we receive enough voluntary contributions to cover the overwhelming cost of the visit. We aim to subsidise and help families where we can, especially on the more expensive trips. If you are unable to afford the trip costs, please contact the School Business Manager, Mrs Patti Gurney, as you may qualify for a reduction in the fees.

At the start of each academic year, all parents will be asked to sign a form allowing school staff to take their child on local trips. Local trips are defined as those within Milton Keynes. This enables us to save paper and to plan local visits during the day (such as walks to woods, participation in music and arts activities, sports events, etc) without a further letter. This becomes very useful if there is a sudden change in the weather or availability of certain sites. Obviously, if we need to charge for a trip, then we will contact you in good time. Residential opportunities at an outdoor pursuits centre are offered to children in Year 5 (Caldecotte) and Year 6 (Kingswood). We use the visit to provide many of the requirements of the PE curriculum that we are otherwise unable to offer. For this reason, we strongly encourage all children to go.



What is the procedure for transferring to secondary school?

Children from Falconhurst can transfer to one of a variety of secondary schools at age eleven. Applications for secondary school are the responsibility of the pupil's family and are completed online via the Milton Keynes portal. Families needing advice or guidance for this are welcome to ask at the school office. In order to support transition, Falconhurst staff liaise with secondary school staff before and after transfer. This liaison includes:

- ◆ Signposting to open evening events in the Autumn Term prior to transfer
- ◆ Hosting visits from secondary school staff throughout the school year.
- ◆ A "move-up" day in early July when the Y6 children spend a day at their new school, and receive a full day of lessons.

If your child has special educational needs, it is important that you contact us as we can usually arrange for a separate visit.

Parents and the School

How does the school communicate with parents?

Our main tool for communicating with parents is the Class Dojo app. Class Dojo allows for direct messaging with your child's class teacher and with the main school office. It is a single point of information for all families where the school will post reminders, issue guidance, update letters and notify you of any emergency closures. All families are provided with login details for Class Dojo when their child starts school with us.



Other forms of communication include the website itself (www.falconhurstschool.co.uk), regular formal and informal 1:1 consultations, opportunities to view children's work and meet the teaching staff during Open Evenings, weekly celebration of children's successes and birthdays, and the noticeboard on the playground where news of meetings, etc. can be found. The school website contains a lot of information for families from dates and newsletters through to how we organise our teaching and learning at school. There are also a growing number of links to websites which will help you to support your child's learning at home.

How will I be able to be involved in the life of the school?

At Falconhurst we strongly welcome parental involvement in any area of school life where you have skills, interests or simply a desire to help. The best way is to contact school either via the office or by talking to your child's class teacher.

If you *do* wish to help in any way at all, you will be asked to fill out a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) clearance form. All adults regularly in contact with children are required to do this. The school will help you with the form if you wish. While awaiting the processing of your form, we are happy that you work with children with other adults present in class or in a public part of the building where you can be seen easily. This is for everyone's protection.

As currently constituted, the Governing Board has two parent governors, and we strongly encourage parents to put their names forward when vacancies arise. They offer a vital perspective on the governance of the school and their contribution is both welcomed and encouraged.

How can I know how well my child is doing at school?

We believe it is very important that you are confident of how well your son or daughter is doing at school. Informally, you are of course welcome to check from time to time at the beginning or end of the school day with your child's class teacher. However, we also have more formal ways of helping you get an insight into your child's progress.

- ◆ **Progress update and Target-setting.** During the Autumn and Spring terms we hold parents' evenings in school. At these meetings, you review with your child's teacher the progress your child has made and how they can improve further still over the remaining months of the academic year. You will also be supported in understanding what activities can be undertaken at home to ensure they reach their agreed targets. If your child has special educational needs, these meetings are the time to talk with your child's teacher on the progress of your child's individual plan (which we refer to as a Pupil Passport).
- ◆ **Reports.** In the Summer Term, the school issues a written report on your child. This is a summary of the previous year, and for each subject offers a way forward for the following year. Shortly after

the reports go home, we offer an open evening to show off the work children have been doing. You are welcome to talk informally with class teachers at this point, or make an appointment to talk to your child's class teacher about issues raised in the report.

- ◆ If we feel that there are grounds for concern in your child's behaviour or attitude to work, or if we feel that by explaining something to you it would enable your child to make faster progress, we may ask you to come in and talk with your child's class teacher or with one of the senior leadership team.
- ◆ **Statutory Assessments.** Throughout every child's education there are continuous assessments being made by their teachers in order to know what progress has been made and what gaps still remain. Whilst a teacher's professional judgement is our preferred method of assessment, there are specific year groups within the Primary school phase when national statutory assessment must take place.

Children in our Reception Classes are assessed against statutory Early Learning Goals for reporting to families in July.

Children in Year 1 complete a Phonic Screening Check during June with an opportunity to re-take offered in Year 2 for any child who is not yet ready to meet the national required standard. There are any number of reasons why children may need to re-take their Phonic Screening Check; however once a child leaves Year 2 the test is not administered again.

Children in Year 4 complete an online multiplication check which assesses their rapid recall of all multiplication facts up to 12x12.

When your child is 11, they will sit a series of externally marked national tests called the Key Stage 2 SATs (Standard Attainment Tests) in English and Maths, usually in the second week of May. These are a statutory requirement, and when the results are known (normally in July), we report them to you, both as a summary document of your own child's results, but also a percentage summary of how well the year group did as a whole.

At all times, we would encourage you to speak to us sooner rather than later if there are any concerns about progress that you wish to raise with the school.

How does the school deal with complaints?

The teaching staff involved in the running of the school on a day-to-day basis, should be a parent's first "port of call". We are a school that works in a restorative manner with children and adults alike so it is vitally important that open and honest communication is encouraged and welcomed. Please help us to be well informed about your concerns or complaints by approaching us directly and quickly. Should you wish to discuss a sensitive or serious issue, you are of course welcome to contact the School Office to request an appointment with a Phase Leader, Assistant Head Teacher or the Head Teacher for an appointment to discuss the matter. However, if it concerns something within the class, it is always best to go to the class teacher, for the simple reason that he/she will be better informed than anyone else. Our Complaints Procedure is available upon request or via our school website.

Health and General Issues

What if my child is absent from school?

All children from the age of 5 are required by law to attend school. Should your child be absent from school due to illness, you will need to provide a written note on their return to school. This can be given to the class teacher. However, it is in everyone's best interests for you to inform the school by phone or e-mail before the beginning of the school day, if your child is going to be absent. Teachers mark registers at 8.45 a.m., and it is far better that they are informed of absences prior to that time. Ensuring our children's safety means that we will telephone all families from the first morning of any child's unexplained absence.

At Falconhurst we value promptness. Children arriving between 8.50am and 9.10 a.m. are recorded as "late", but more importantly they struggle with having missed the start of the school day. This is the time where each class comes together as a community to build their connections to each other and start the school day off on a positive note. Children who miss this can feel upset, embarrassed or left out of the group which in turn means that they can struggle to engage with their learning. Children who come into school after 9.10 a.m. are recorded as absent for that session. Please make every effort to get children to school on time.

If a prolonged illness or absence is likely, please telephone or e-mail the School Office. Please note that if a child has suffered with **diarrhoea or vomiting, a period of 48 hours** must elapse between the end of the symptoms and the return of the child to school. Any unexplained absences from school will be recorded as unauthorised.

What happens if my child has a medical/dental appointment during the day?

If you know in advance that your child has a medical or dental appointment during the school day, inform the School Office or your child's class teacher, the day before if possible. If an accident has occurred, or toothache has developed overnight, a simple phone call to the school in the morning will do. If an appointment is in the middle of the day, we recommend you bring the child to school then collect him/her from the foyer at a pre-arranged time. We would expect children to be brought directly back to school afterwards wherever possible.

What if my child requires medication during the school day?

If a child is well enough to attend school, but requires medication, this be given to the School Office. You will need to complete a medicine form to provide dosage instructions and your consent. Children requiring emergency treatment for anaphylactic conditions (usually involving administration of an epipen) or who have conditions such as diabetes, may also be provided with an Individual Health Plan.

It is very important that you do not send any form of medication into school with your child, e.g. Calpol, etc. If they need to be administered, they are to be regarded exactly the same as the medications above, i.e. brought in by yourselves, with the appropriate documentation complete

What happens if my child has an accident during the school day?

Cuts and grazes from falls on the playground (by far the most common accident in school) are dealt with by trained First Aid staff. If the injury is of a serious nature, we will contact you and the emergency services immediately. If we are unable to contact you after repeated attempts, and the injury is serious enough to warrant it, the child will be taken by ambulance to the Accident and Emergency Department of Milton Keynes Hospital. If a notable injury is sustained to the head, we will ring home immediately to inform and consult with you. In cases of head injury, we recommend that you take the child home and seek medical advice if you are concerned in any way.

What happens if we need to take our annual holidays during term time?

No term-time holidays will be authorised by the Headteacher unless there are exceptional and extenuating circumstances such as weddings, overseas funerals and other family events not deemed to be holidays. In accordance with the school statutory safeguarding procedures, children undertaking holidays in term time will result in a fine being issued. Our reason for strongly discouraging holidays during term-time is the impact it has on children's learning and social development.



What do I do if I think my child is being bullied?

If you suspect or have evidence that your child is unhappy in any way, please speak first to the class teacher, who will be skilled at helping your child to feel happier and more at home in the class. They may also involve support from one of our highly skilled pastoral team if it is appropriate to do so. If there is any incidence of bullying by other pupil/s, then please also report this to your child's teacher who will deal with what s/he can, and then inform the head or Phase Leader if further action needs to be taken. We will do our best to keep you informed of all we do in relation to the situation. Do tell us also if there are circumstances of bullying or unhappiness for your child outside the school. We can often help simply by reporting back to you how your child has responded and whether we think the problem is persisting into school time as well.

How does the school ensure equal access and treatment for those with disabilities?

Falconhurst is a school that has a strong tradition of treating everyone equally. To ensure this, our Single Equality Policy clearly identifies what our attitudes and commitment are to everyone. This is further supported by our learning and teaching program which ensures that all children learn to treat each other with respect and not just acceptance. All children are admitted without any regard to disability, and in all cases, we accept the judgment of the Local Authority Admissions Team if admitting a child who is disabled exceeds our admissions number. There are accessible entrances front and back, a lift located in the new build area of the school and an accessible toilet near to the office area.

How will I know if the school is closed due to bad weather?

In the event of extreme weather conditions or the failure of heating it may be necessary to close the school. The fundamental need is to look after children safely, so closure will be dependent on the ability of staff to reach school, not the quality of the weather! In the event of closure at the beginning of the day, we post a notice on Class Dojo and inform families through notices on the school and shared word of mouth. If enough staff can make it to school, we will keep school open, and make the best of the weather conditions (especially if it is snow!!).



Will I receive information about the school holidays?

Information on school holidays is available from the School Office or the Milton Keynes Council website <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/information-for-parents/school-term-dates>

We send it out separately every year to each parent and it also appears on the school website. Milton Keynes Council suggest term dates for school and each school will then choose when to hold 5 INSET days during the year.

What steps does the school take to protect children?

The most important thing we do is to provide a safe and secure environment and to care for all children on the school site. We have a security system at the front of the school so that nobody can enter the site without speaking to the secretary or another member of staff. All visitors to the site have to sign in and out, and wear badges whilst on the premises.

Child Protection

The protection and care of all children at Falconhurst is the first responsibility of everyone employed at the school. We work hard to guarantee the safety and security of all children on our site. All staff have received training in the school's Safeguarding policies. All staff have also received Child Protection Training and are aware of the steps to take in the reporting of any evidence of abuse. The Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and a Learning Mentor are the named Designated Safeguarding Leads. We liaise with the Child Protection team in Milton Keynes Social Services and receive regular and appropriate training. If we suspect that there is any evidence of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect affecting any child in our care, we are legally bound to report it to Social Services, and we do. Staff and governors are trained in Child Protection issues annually. Our Policy for Child Protection is reviewed every year and is inclusive of the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education amendments. It is a robust document fully compliant with UK expectations, and is available for viewing at the school.

Health and Safety in School

Health and safety throughout the school is monitored by the School Business Manager, Site Agent and Team who then report directly to the Governing Board's Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee. Whilst all persons are responsible for their own safety and the safety of others, the site team monitors all health, safety and security matters on a termly basis. The school health and safety policy is on our website and is also available upon request from the School Office. Particular attention is given to school visits when procedures include risk assessment of the site to be visited, vetting of safety standards of the transport and briefing of staff as to health and safety throughout the visit. Regular Fire Safety audits are also completed.

Is the school available out of hours to other organisations?

Yes. The governors have adopted a lettings policy, which can be obtained from the School Office. Please contact the School Business Manager, Mrs Gurney, for further information.

Falconhurst School Breakfast Club



BREAKFAST CLUB - At Falconhurst School, children can arrive as early as 8.00am and start off the day at our Breakfast Club which provides a variety of cereals, toast and juice each day. The charge is only **£1.00** per child per day and you don't need to book. The children can be brought into the playground when the gates open at 8.00am and taken to the dining hall where staff from the school will supervise them until they start the day in their classrooms. Breakfast Club gates close at 8.15am so please ensure you arrive anytime between 8.00am-8.15am. If you receive Pupil Premium then children get their breakfast **FREE!**

Everyone knows the importance of having a good breakfast to start the day but the children also enjoy the social side of having breakfast with their friends and using the time to complete homework or practice reading. **We welcome children from Nursery to Year 6** and we have an allocated member of staff to support the younger children.