

Maple Tree  
Lower School



# School Brochure For 2016

Maple Tree  
Lower School



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Maple Tree Lower School is a Foundation School and a  
member of the Pinnacle Trust.



### **Our Vision:**

As a welcoming, enthusiastic and outward looking school, Maple Tree Lower School provides a happy, safe, secure and stimulating learning environment in which all individuals will become numerate, literate, creative, curious and caring; valuing themselves and others.

We will work alongside others in the local community to ensure the further development of all and in doing so, will endeavour to become a centre of excellence within our learning community.

### **Our Aims:**

We believe that all at Maple Tree Lower school should demonstrate the school values and:

- be happy and enjoy their school life
- feel that learning is worthwhile
- have a sense of pride and belonging in all that they do
- act as good role models for others
- be able to act independently, whilst also co-operating with others
- feel secure in a safe environment
- have the ability to cope with change no matter how big or small
- aim high and achieve their full potential in all areas
- understand their role in the community and be a good citizen
- build on their self-esteem, be confident
- feel valued by everyone and have a sense of their own value
- have opportunities to think creatively
- be respectful towards others and develop good social skills
- feel encouraged and keen to try a wide variety of experiences
- work in partnership with each other (pupils, parents, Governors, other schools, local community, Pinnacle Trust and LA) to promote high expectations and continuous improvement



# General Information

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## **Welcome to our school**

I am very pleased to welcome you to Maple Tree Lower School.

The school was opened in September 2000. Our school is a member of the local Pinnacle Trust and is managed by the school Governors.

In September 2003 the school opened its new building for the Foundation stage which was part of the 'Classroom of the Future Project'. More recently, a further addition has provided an additional classroom, a working area for staff and a large resource room. As of July 2010, we have just completed another extension to provide facilities for our out of school groups including our Kids Club, mother & toddler group and drop-in group.

The vision for our school encompasses the ideals of providing a rich and broad curriculum that enables everyone in our school to meet their full potential.

We believe our school is happy and secure and we hope to work with you, both parents and children, to maintain high standards of education. We are very proud of our school and seek to do our best at all times. We hope the children will develop into motivated, independent life long learners and enjoy the opportunities the school offers.

We hope you find the following information helpful and we look forward to developing our partnership in the years to come.



## A role for parents

We aim to work in partnership with parents in the education of our children.

Parents are encouraged to come and talk to teachers or to the Head teacher. Staff may be available after school to speak to parents but this is often a very busy time and should a more private word be required we suggest an appointment is made. Occasionally teachers will be unavailable after school due to meetings or prior commitments, so it is always advisable to make an appointment even for less formal meetings. We will always do what ever we can to solve any problems and would much rather you came in to talk to us than worry. Any concerns parents may have regarding their child in the class should be dealt with via the class teacher in the first instance. If you would also like to meet with the Head teacher please make an appointment via the school office.

Alongside this arrangement formal Parent Evenings are held every year. This gives every parent an opportunity to discuss their child's progress with their class teacher. There will often be an opportunity to look at the children's work. We hope all parents will take advantage of this meeting as we feel it is an important part of our partnership. Parents are also invited to various shows and events throughout the year as well as to assemblies.

Parents are very welcome in the school to work alongside teachers with any activities where they can share their expertise or provide extra adult support. Currently parents help in the library, with cooking, computers, art and craft and gardening. We are always very pleased and grateful to welcome any parent into school who can help in this way. If you are unable to come into school but would like to offer some help at home - covering work cards, making visual aids, repairing damaged books etc. - please see your child's teacher who will be only to pleased to accept your help.

Parents are kept in touch with school life by our regular newsletter. The newsletter is written by the head teacher. We hope this will keep you up to date with school events and developments at Maple Tree

Parents are automatically members of the ***Friends of Maple Tree Association***. A charitable organisation set up by parents and friends to support the school not only in its fund raising but in its development and involvement of the community. Events are held throughout the year, including fund raising, social and educational functions. Parents are encouraged to join the committee of this Association.

# Maple Tree Lower School



## **Admission and Transfer**

### **Admission to the Nursery:**

At Maple Tree Lower School we admit children of nursery age to our Foundation Stage the term after their third birthday. We admit three times each year but allocate places at a single point – during the first half term in the Autumn for admissions in the following January, April and September. Children remain in the foundation stage until the end of their Reception year group.

- Children whose birthdays occur after 1<sup>st</sup> April will be admitted at the start of the Autumn term
- Children whose birthdays occur after 1<sup>st</sup> September will be admitted at the start of the Spring term
- Children whose birthdays occur after the 1<sup>st</sup> January will be admitted at the start of the Summer term.

The children are admitted on a part time basis into the nursery and attend either mornings or afternoons depending on the term they are admitted. Parents are given our 'Stepping Out' booklet giving information about early years education at Maple Tree.

Application to be included on the waiting list for a nursery placement can be made at any time following birth.

All new parents are invited to the school in the term prior to their child starting school. This is a meeting for parents only where there will be an opportunity to look around the nursery and hear a little more about school life. The children are then invited for an activity afternoon where they will meet their teacher and see their classrooms.



## Admission into the Reception Year (First Admissions)

The standard admission number for our school is 45 pupils.

Application for a statutory reception place is dealt with by the Local Authority. Applications for a place from the September of the academic year in which your child becomes five must be made in writing or on line by 15<sup>th</sup> January of the same year. Places will be allocated by the Local Authority according to the admission criteria (see below) and anyone not successful will be informed of the appeals procedure by them. Admission Criteria:

- 'Looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after';
- Children living within the school's catchment area with siblings at the school;
- Other children living within the catchment area;
- 'Very Exceptional' medical conditions (supported by the Authority's Medical Officer);
- Other siblings;
- Children attending Maple Tree Lower School Nursery;
- Any other children;
- On the shortest distance, measured in a straight line, between the school and the child's home address, with those living closer to the school being accorded higher priority.

Application forms and further guidance will be available from all pre-school settings and the Local Authority from the October of the year before entry.

***Parents are advised that we cannot guarantee a place will be offered for the Reception year of the Foundation Stage to those children who have attended during their 'Nursery' year.*** Please ask to see our admission policies for further details.

Parents of children entering the Reception year will be invited to join their child for lunch on the first day.

At the end of the Foundation Stage, parents are invited to a meeting to inform them about the transfer into year 1.

## Middle/Upper School Transfer

In Bedfordshire children currently transfer from Lower to Middle School at nine years of age and from Middle to Upper School at the age of thirteen. The transfer takes place in the September following their ninth and thirteenth birthday. In the Autumn term of the year of transfer the Local Authority will write to the parents of children due to transfer giving details of transfer arrangements. Each child is allocated to a place at a particular school, but parents may request an alternative placing if they wish. A copy of the Local Authority's Admission Policy Document is available at school for inspection.



## **Class structure, the school day, attendance and health**

### **Class Structure:**

The standard number for admissions into our school is 45 children. Currently the Government has a class size initiative for classes in reception and key stage one (years one and two) to be no larger than 30 children.

Our Foundation Stage for children of nursery and reception age is staffed with 2 or 3 teacher depending on the number of children on role at the time. These teachers are supported by appropriately qualified learning support assistants to ensure the correct ratios set out in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum.

When children transfer into key stage one, we have to place a maximum of 90 children into 3 classes of 30. This means that we have to have at least one mixed age class. This is not an unusual situation in schools across the country and we have managed this successfully since the school opened.

When deciding how the children are to be allocated to classes, staff use their professional judgement. To make the differentiation of work appropriate for the children and more manageable for staff, we try to group children by their developmental stage. This will mean that we will have some younger children who are working at a higher level for their age with children who are older than them.

At our school we generally have children who are working at around or above age expectation and it is often difficult to decide purely on skill as to which class children will be placed. Often staff will look at a child's maturity, self esteem, friendship groups and general confidence to make a final decision.

No matter which class the children are in, they all receive the same learning experiences which are differentiated according to need. Staff plan together to ensure that all children get the same opportunities no matter which class they are in. As a school, we have a rolling programme of themes in order to ensure that children in the same key stage do not repeat work from year to year but build on their previous experiences.

The same processes and principles are followed when children move into key stage 2 (years 3 and 4) as once again we have the same scenario to resolve of having 90 children to place in 3 classes.

## The School Day:

The school hours are as follows:

<b><u>Foundation Stage</u></b>	<b><u>Key Stage 1</u></b>	<b><u>Key Stage 2</u></b>
Nursery and Reception	Years 1 & 2	Years 3 and 4
<b><i>doors open 8.55</i></b>	<b><i>doors open 8.55</i></b>	<b><i>doors open 8.55</i></b>
9.00 – 12.00 Part time or 12.30 - 3.30 Part time	9.00 - 12.15  Lunch 12.15 – 1.15  1.30 to 3.30	9.00 - 12.30  Lunch 12.30 – 1.30  1.30 to 3.30
8.55 – 3.30 Full time Lunch 11.45 – 1.15		

## Attendance:

Children should arrive at school in plenty of time for registration at 9.00am. The main doors are open from 8.55am when staff will meet the children on the playground and escort them into class. If parents need to see the class teacher they should try to do so after school when possible or leave a message with the staff in the school office. Children arriving after the doors have closed should report to the office. Children who miss the morning (or afternoon) register will receive a late mark. We do encourage the children to be punctual to ensure a happy start to the day. A child who is late will miss this important start and this can often affect their behaviour for the rest of the day. Absence and lateness are reviewed on a regular basis by the Education Welfare Officer, who may visit families where attendance is poor.

If your child is ill or absent for any reason, please advise the school by telephone before 10.00 am. If no reason for absence is received by this time, staff in the office will make contact with you to enquire about your child's absence. It would be appreciated if when your child returns to school, you could also send in a letter confirming the reason for absence.

Parents may request leave of absence for their child(ren) for up to ten school days in any one academic year; however we do encourage our families to arrange any holidays during the school vacations. Holiday forms are available in the school office and must be completed in advance. We cannot guarantee that permission will be granted – this decision will be made on individual circumstances by the headteacher. Only one holiday application is allowable each year and only under exceptional circumstances will absences be authorised. Any unauthorised absence will appear on your child's report. We would particularly ask the parents of children in Year 2 and 4 to avoid taking their child out of school during the month of May, as this is the period in which the children will take national tests. There is a full copy of the school attendance policy in school for parents to read.



## Health

On our admission form (included in this pack) we ask parents to provide us with at least two names for emergency contact who would be willing to take responsibility for their child in the event of our not being able to contact home.

For children who, for any reason, have to take prescribed medicine during school hours, a "Form of Indemnity" must be completed by the parents. This delegates the responsibility for administering the medicines to the staff according to instruction, and indemnifies them from any claim against the school arising from effects related to the administration of the medicine. Please see a member of the office staff if your child needs medicine at school.



The school nurse routinely sees all the children in Year one, providing parents have no objection, for growth assessment, vision and hearing checks. Parents will normally be informed of these checks, and will of course be informed should any problems that may be identified.

The school nurse has regular contact with the school and can assist should parents have any concern for their child's health. Her telephone number is 01234 224902.

Please also see the leaflet enclosed on "The Prevention and Treatment of Head Lice"

## School Dinners:

School lunches are provided through Sandye Place Academy. There is a choice of main courses with a variety of vegetables and desserts. The menu is displayed on the parents' notice board and is also available on the web site so that you can see the options available.

Lunchtime is part of the whole school experience and children are taught to behave with consideration and good manners at all times. Our senior midday supervisor and her staff supervise the children during the lunch period.

Parents of our new reception children are invited to join their child for lunch during their first week in the school. There will be further information for parents of children entering the reception class which will include an order form for lunch which will need to be returned to school before the school breaks up in July.





## **Promoting Positive Behaviour – *this is an extract from our ‘Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy’***

At Maple Tree Lower School we expect high standards of behaviour.

- We want our school to be a caring and happy place for all who work in it.
- We believe that a secure place to work will help all children reach their individual potential.
- We believe that we all have the right to feel safe, to learn and to respect and be respected.
- We believe that children with high self-esteem, respect and value, not only themselves but also those they work and play with.
- We believe in positive behaviour management encouraging self-discipline and control.

To this end we have established a policy to develop positive behaviour.

All classes will establish a code of conduct at the beginning of each year. This will be reviewed at the start of each term.

We believe that children who behave well and try to do their best should receive a reward. This may vary from a verbal reward to a physical one - such as a sticker. In giving such rewards we believe that the children will be motivated to continue such good work and eventually feel the intrinsic pleasure of having done their best. Class teachers will reward their children for good work and behaviour. The children may also be sent to the head teacher for praise and encouragement as determined by the class teachers

Although we believe in positive behaviour management, there will be a need for sanctions where behaviour is inappropriate. Thus the following sanctions are in place and will be implemented in this order:

- Verbal reprimand from class teacher - encouraging a return to appropriate behaviour.
- Time out - child is directed to take time out either in a different part of the classroom or hall, or alternatively may be sent to a colleague's class for a short period to encourage appropriate behaviour.



- Loss of privilege - e.g. a treat, a special event or playtime. (Children missing playtime must be supervised by their teacher)
- Child is sent to head teacher - with details of misbehaviour. Head teacher will record children's names and misbehaviour in the Behaviour book. Subsequent action may involve the class teacher and/or head teacher meeting with parents to discuss the issues involved.

At all times every attempt will be made to encourage the child in appropriate behaviour.



In the event of a serious breakdown in behaviour that is unacceptable to the schools behaviour policy a fixed term or permanent exclusion may be the only option. This would only result if all other options had been considered and tried, or if the offence were so serious as to warrant immediate exclusion.

## **Bullying**

Often parents are anxious about bullying at school. At Maple Tree we take any suspected bullying incidents very seriously. As part of our school ethos children are expected to care for each other and report to an adult where they notice or feel this is not the case. Adults dealing with suspected bullying incidents will act immediately. We will do our best to find out the circumstances that have led to the report and advise children and/or parents as appropriate. All cases of confirmed bullying will be logged by the head teacher and parents informed.

Parents should also be reassured that in many cases a suspected bullying incident often turns out to be 'friends' falling out, or a general disagreement with peers. Children who are genuinely being bullied often will not talk about it, and their behaviour may change gradually (either becoming withdrawn or attention seeking). Where parents suspect this may be the case they must report this to the school as soon as possible. We will do all we can to support both your child and yourself in resolving the problem. Equally those children accused of being a bully will be supported towards appropriate behaviour in partnership with parents.



## Health and Safety

The Governors and Headteacher of Maple Tree Lower School are committed to ensuring a safe and healthy environment and for providing safe equipment and procedures for all staff, pupils and visitors involved in school activities. They recognise also their responsibility to consider the health and safety of contractors or any other person whose health or safety may be affected by school activities.

The school has a rigorous health and safety policy that is available at school.

**We have a health and safety officer who is one of our Governors. There are members of staff who are fully qualified first aiders and in addition we also have some appointed people who can administer first aid.**

### First Aid Treatment

Non-serious injury, e.g. lacerations/abrasions, will be treated by a member of staff with relevant training.

More serious injury will be dealt with by a trained First Aider, supported by other nominated members of staff and where appropriate further medical assistance will be sought and parents advised.

All cases of suspected **illness** will be referred to parents/guardians and/or the relevant General Practitioner or, in an emergency, to the hospital.

If the illness is non-serious, the parents will be advised to refer to a GP.

All injuries to the head will be advised to parents in writing at home time.

If the illness or injury is serious and Emergency Services are called, a member of staff will accompany a child to hospital in the absence of parent or nominated representative.

### Provision of Medication

The Regulations specifically *exclude* first aid treatment involving medicines. However, teachers stand "in loco parentis", which means that they are permitted to administer prescribed medicines and certain pain relieving medicines to children, in accordance with strict guidelines.



Staff will only be required to administer medicines if they feel confident to do so and permission has been given by a parent/guardian on a School Medicine Indemnity form which is available from the school office or from the school's web site.

A Record of Administration of Medicine will be maintained on the relevant School Medicine Record. The School Secretary, and in her absence the First Aiders, will be responsible for the safekeeping of prescribed medication, in school.

Medicines will be kept in a secure place, out of the reach of children. If they are stored in a refrigerator they will be kept in a labelled container.

### **School Security**

Incidents of violence and aggression which have occurred nationally towards pupils and staff perpetrated by members of the public or isolated parents, make it necessary to put stringent security policies into place. The school has a rigorous security policy that is available at school.

All staff of the school are issued security badges which they must wear at all times when on the school premises. All visitors are recorded in reception and given a visitors sticker. This includes parent helpers, governors and contractors including ground staff.

The main doors into cloakroom areas are opened at 8.55 am to enable children to enter their classroom. At 9.00am the school's site agent will lock all outside doors. Any parents who may be in school at that time must leave the building via the front door. Parents remaining in school for any purpose must sign the visitors book and receive a visitors badge.



# Maple Tree Lower School



## **School policy for charging for additional activities**

The Education Reform Act confirms that education during school hours should be free of charge. This policy, however, does not prohibit the school from seeking voluntary contributions to pay for school outings etc. Children will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made a contribution. However, if insufficient voluntary contributions are forthcoming, it is likely that an outing would have to be cancelled. We recognise the enormous value, both educational and socially to the children of these occasions, but also consider the costs. Therefore, outings/events which incur a cost are generally limited to one per term.

The school also facilitates a number of 'after school' clubs run both by school staff and outside agencies. Availability of places at the club depends very much on the nature of the club and the ratio of adults to children (i.e. health and safety).

All outside agencies running clubs at the school have their own public indemnity insurance and are police checked for working with children. They will also have their own scale of charges.



## The Governors

Governors are like a Board of Directors and make decisions about how the school is run. They meet at least twice a term at school.

### **Governors are appointed to help:**

- Decide what is taught
- Set standards of behaviour
- Interview and select staff
- Decide on how the school budget is spent
- Support the Head Teacher and staff.

School governors have legal duties, powers and responsibilities. They can only act together; they cannot act individually:

## **School governors are**

- Parents
- Teachers at the School
- Staff who are not teachers at the school
- Local Authority representatives
- Community representatives, businessmen and women.- (co-opted governors)
- Trust Governor
- Associate Governors (these Governors do not have any voting rights)

## **Parent governors**

- Have a child in the school
- Are elected by parents of the school
- Serve for four years, as do other governors.

Parent governors are on the Governing Body as they bring the views of parents, but they speak and act as individuals. They have equal status on the Governing Body and have voting rights.

Parent governors are expected to make sure that all communications with parents are both informative and jargon-free. Parent governors should be aware of ways to encourage parent interest and should become actively involved in drawing parents into the school

You, as a parent elect five parent governors to stand for a period of four years.

The minutes of the Governing Body meetings are available in the office or on the web site for anyone to read.



## Legal Requirements

### Procedure for complaints

As required under the Education Reform Act (1988) the local authority has a procedure whereby complaints about the curriculum and collective worship may be dealt with. Should parents find it necessary to consider making a formal complaint, they should bring the matter to the attention of the Head Teacher. If parents find that they must embark upon the complaints procedure, then the Head Teacher, on request, will provide them with the relevant details.

### Child Protection Procedures

It may be helpful to know that the Authority requires the appointed person to report any obvious or suspected case of child abuse - which includes non-accidental injury, severe physical neglect, emotional abuse and/or sexual abuse. This procedure is intended to protect children at risk and schools are encouraged to take the attitude that where there are grounds for suspicion it is better to be safe than sorry. This does mean that the appointed person may risk upsetting some parents by reporting a case which, on investigation, proves unfounded. In such circumstances it is hoped that parents, appreciating how difficult it is for the appointed person to carry out this delicate responsibility, would accept that he / she was acting in what were believed to be the child's best interests.

### Availability of Public Documents

As required under the Education Reform Act (1988) there are a number of documents relating to the school that must be made available to parents should they wish to see them.

Currently the list includes:

- The School's last Curriculum Policy Statement
- The School Development Plan
- All policy documents related to the curriculum
- The LA curriculum statement
- The LA complaints procedure
- The LA agreed syllabus for RE
- The Governors' Profile report
- Any DCSF Circulars on the Curriculum
- Any Statutory Orders about the Curriculum,
- Minutes of Governors' Meetings

All documents are available via the school office and some are also on the school's web site.

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# Curriculum Information

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# Maple Tree Lower School



## Learning and Teaching – an extract from our learning and teaching policy

“At Maple Tree Lower School learning and teaching is our primary purpose. We believe that it is important that both teachers and pupils are involved in the learning process. We want for the children and ourselves:

- An environment that is fun and creative in which the children enjoy learning and the teachers enjoy teaching
- To use a variety of teaching and learning styles to suit all individuals
- To provide an enriched curriculum that is stimulating and engaging for all
- A vibrant and ‘atmospheric’ learning environment
- Opportunities to work collaboratively in pairs, groups and teams
- To provide learning that is relevant and in context
- An environment where everyone is valued
- Learners that are involved practically and interactively in making their own discoveries
- Planning that is appropriate and manageable and supports quality teaching and learning
- Good speaking and listening skills which support learning in other areas
- Engagement in learning that encourages children to want to continue their learning outside the classroom and school

### **As Teachers we will:**

- ❖ make lessons interesting and exciting
- ❖ plan carefully for different types and levels/abilities of learners
- ❖ deliver creative lessons linking them to real life situations and problems
- ❖ Link our subjects through the creative curriculum
- ❖ include open-ended questions and challenges in our lessons
- ❖ continually monitor your learning and use this to help you move on to the next stage
- ❖ check on what you already know and help you to learn more
- ❖ deliver your lessons with pace and encouragement
- ❖ share the next steps for learning with you
- ❖ share with you what you are going to learn and how you will know if you’re successful
- ❖ expect you to work hard and do your best
- ❖ make sure that in our lessons we use different methods to help you learn
- ❖ work closely with other adults to help you in your learning

- ❖ encourage you to discover and absorb new information about your topic
- ❖ help you to share your learning with others
- ❖ act as positive role models

### **As Pupils we will:**

- ❖ listen when the teacher is talking
- ❖ do as we are asked
- ❖ try to do our best
- ❖ be good listeners and not shout out
- ❖ listen to and talk to our talk partners
- ❖ help to keep the classroom tidy
- ❖ try hard with our homework and get it in on time
- ❖ be sensitive to others
- ❖ tell the teacher if we are unsure
- ❖ do our work properly"

### **Class Organisation**

Children in the Foundation Stage are admitted at either nursery or reception age. The children are assigned a key worker and have access to the early years accommodation. Children in their reception year will experience extended periods of whole class work in preparation for transfer to Key Stage 1.

After the Foundation Stage there are three classes in Key Stage 1 and three in Key Stage 2. We endeavour not to organise classes that cross the Key Stages although children may be in a mixed year group class within their Key Stage, (e.g. Year 1/2 and Year 3/4). Class sizes will be limited to 30.

### **Teaching Styles and Approaches**

Staff endeavour to provide a stimulating, caring environment in which each child may develop to his or her potential emotionally, intellectually, morally, socially, spiritually, physically and aesthetically.

The children are taught using a careful balance of individual, group and whole class activities. These activities are devised to enable each child to progress at their own pace and within their own capabilities and incorporate a blend of oral, practical and written work. Attention is paid to the preferred learning style of each individual. The children are required to bring a water bottle (available at the school) to class every day to ensure appropriate hydration.

Feedback to the children about their own progress is achieved through verbal interaction and the marking and assessment of work. The assessment of children's work is a positive, sensitive and sympathetic process. Whilst assessing the child's work emphasis will be on identifying methods used and questioning results. Part of this process will also be used to give children support and guidance for development. Not only will adults give feedback to children, but so will their peers. Children will also engage in self assessing their own work.

In the Foundation stage there will be a carefully planned programme of observations and discussion. In Key Stage 1 and 2, whenever possible, marking is undertaken as a partnership

between child and teacher. Where this is not always possible, teachers are expected to provide verbal and/or written comments that will help the child in preparation for their next assignment. Targets will be set by the child or the teacher for improvement.

Children have opportunity to take books home to read with their families every night. From time to time children may be asked to gather information or materials or undertake a task for a class theme or project. Children in Key Stage 1 and 2 will also have other activities to do at home as appropriate to their age and abilities as well as to support their learning.

At Maple Tree Lower School, we use display to enhance and celebrate the children's learning. We aim to create a stimulating environment and encourage children to take a pride in their own work and a keen interest in the work of others. Children will be involved in preparing their work for display and will be encouraged to use display as part of their learning.

The curriculum of Maple Tree Lower School is the whole learning experience offered by the school. It is not only the activities and experiences which are planned, organised and provided while the children are at school, but also the tone, standards, quality and discipline of the school, alongside the attitudes and values the school puts forward.

In this school the following criteria are taken into account in the planning and delivery of the curriculum:

- the Foundation Stage Curriculum and Early Learning Goals,
- the National Curriculum programmes of study and attainment targets.
- an emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy skills
- the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of the children
- the Bedfordshire agreed syllabus for Religious Education
- providing learning in a suitable context for the children by using appropriate themes

In the Foundation stage, the team plans daily experiences that cover the six strands of learning. There will be a selection of self selected activities, as well as focused sessions led by a member of staff and more sustained periods of learning for the Reception year as they become 5.

Teachers in Key Stage 1 and 2 plan for all national curriculum subjects in a thematic approach linking subject areas where appropriate.

Some curriculum subjects are taught in weekly sessions eg PE, RE, Other subjects are taught in thematic blocks.

Parents receive an over view of each termly topic so they have an appreciation of what their child will be experiencing during the term.

During each child's time at Maple Tree Lower School the ultimate aim is that they will become an independent learner who is a happy, confident, well behaved, tolerant and caring individual well prepared for their next step in life.

# Maple Tree Lower School



## The National Curriculum

The National Curriculum came into force in September 1989. It is a framework used by all maintained schools to ensure that teaching and learning is balanced and consistent.

It sets out:

- the subjects taught
- the knowledge, skills and understanding required in each subject
- standards or attainment targets in each subject - teachers can use these to measure your child's progress and plan the next steps in their learning
- how your child's progress is assessed and reported

Within the framework of the National Curriculum, schools are free to plan and organise teaching and learning in the way that best meets the needs of their pupils. The four key purposes of the curriculum (to establish an entitlement; to establish standards; to promote continuity and coherence and to promote public understanding) do not change over time, however, the curriculum itself cannot remain static. It must be responsive to changes in society and the economy, and changes in the nature of schooling itself. Teachers, individually and collectively, have to reappraise their teaching in response to the changing needs of their pupils and the impact of economic, social and cultural change. Education only flourishes if it successfully adapts to the demands and needs of the time.

The National Curriculum, taught to all pupils in state or maintained schools, is made up of blocks of years, known as key stages:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • | Year 1 and<br>Year 2 are<br>known as Key<br>Stage 1 |
| • | Years 3 to 6<br>are known as<br>Key Stage 2         |
| • | Years 7 to 9<br>are known as<br>Key Stage 3         |
| • | Years 10 to 11<br>are known as<br>Key Stage 4       |

Compulsory National Curriculum subjects are the same for Key Stages 1 and 2:

- English
- Maths



- Science
- Design and technology
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- History
- Geography
- Art and design
- Music
- Physical education

Schools also have to teach religious education, though parents have the right to withdraw children for all or part of the religious education curriculum. In addition, schools are advised to teach personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship, together with at least one modern foreign language (from key stage 2).

The National curriculum sets out a programme of study for each subject and provides guidance as to what must be taught, attainment targets and expected standards for each key stage. Schools may cover these subjects under different names, and may teach more than one subject together under the same name. This is left up to individual schools, as long as they are covering the National Curriculum. Please see the section on the school's creative curriculum for more information.

Children in each of the Key Stages 1 to 4 must cover the appropriate programmes of study for all subjects. At the end of each Key Stage, the children are assessed nationally in the core subjects. Details of these assessments are sent to parents with the child's annual report and school results are forwarded to the Local Authority.

An attainment target sets out the 'knowledge, skills and understanding which pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to have by the end of each key stage'. The attainment targets are split into 8 levels. The majority of children at the end of key stage 1 are expected to reach level 2, at key stage 2 level 4 and at key stage 3 level 5/6. Children develop at different rates, but National Curriculum levels can give you an idea of how your child's progress compares to what is typical for their age.

Parents can obtain further information about the National Curriculum in public libraries and can obtain a leaflet entitled 'The School Curriculum - A Brief Guide' by ringing 0845 60222 60. The leaflet is produced in a range of languages.

Parents with access to the Internet can view this guide on:

<http://www.parentcentre.gov.uk>

## –The Core Subjects –

### English

There are three elements to the English Curriculum:

- i) speaking and listening
- ii) reading
- iii) writing.

Children's future learning depends on their ability to communicate orally and in writing, to read fluently and with understanding.

Where appropriate, Literacy teaching is linked to work in other areas of the curriculum through our thematic approach.

The school follows the scheme of work set down by the Primary Literacy Framework.

#### **Speaking and listening.**

Through discussion, children learn to express themselves clearly and listen to other people's views. We encourage the children to express and explain themselves clearly and confidently.

Children will be expected to listen to stories, poems and other verbal activities, concentrating on instruction and direction and will develop improving listening skills.

Drama and games are used to support direct teaching and learning activities.

#### **Reading.**

We believe that reading is one of the most important skills the children have to acquire.

From the beginning, we encourage parents to become fully involved in helping their child to learn to read. The teaching of reading is supported by a wide range of reading material, both factual and fictional.

The children will bring home a book to share with you. The children also have a reading diary which informs parents and teachers on the individual's progress.

Teachers keep detailed records of reading groups and progress is monitored regularly.

We are fortunate to have a well stocked library which the children can visit regularly. They also learn to use the library as a resource, developing more advanced study skills. The children are encouraged to read a variety of material.

#### **Writing.**

The children will learn to express themselves in writing through reporting things that have happened to them and by using their imagination.

The children are encouraged to write from the very beginning and are taught handwriting and spelling skills. As progress with spelling, punctuation, drafting and re-drafting increases, their skills improve and writing becomes more mature. All children's writing is valued and teachers will provide a structured programme of writing work to allow them to develop as writers.

Presentation, handwriting and spelling skills are vital to this development.





## Mathematics

We believe that maths is uniquely powerful in helping us to make sense of, and describe, our world and in enabling us to solve problems. The children will experience activities in number, space, pattern and relationships.

The children follow a scheme of work as identified by the Primary Frameworks for Mathematics, appropriate to their needs. This ensures continuity and progression across the key stages.

We take advantage of other published resources to provide opportunities for reinforcement and extension.

The children are assessed in Maths at regular intervals and those in Year 2 will take the National Tests during May of each year. Children in Years 3 and 4 will be assessed by their teacher and this will be based on children's work

through the year, and this will inform our end of year judgements

We aim to ensure that the children have a firm grounding in Maths, so that they are ready to meet the challenges set at Middle School.

## Science



We believe that all pupils must have regular access to science appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Learning opportunities will build upon the National Curriculum guidelines. Programmes of work are planned to enable pupils to develop concepts through a wide range of experiences.

We will endeavour to ensure a broad and balanced programme which enables all our pupils to develop.

Children will develop their knowledge and understanding through observing and exploring the world around them. They will develop the practical skills required to make investigations. Through understanding investigations, they will develop their skills of predicting, asking questions, inferring and evaluating evidence.

Science is a very practical subject which will enable children to develop the ability to work together and come to a greater appreciation of the world around them.

# Information & Communication Technology

We believe that the children must be able to recognise and adapt to a society which is served by an ever-increasing use of Information Technology and processes.

To enable pupils to prepare for this, we believe that all pupils must have access to IT, which allows them to develop the ability to operate effectively and creatively with IT. This enables them to develop the required knowledge, skills and values

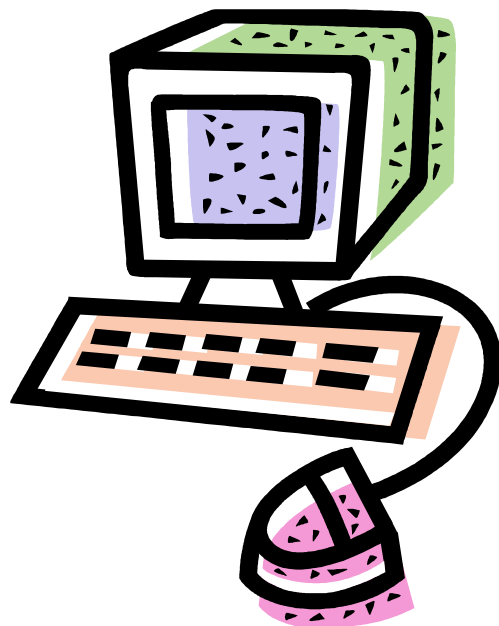
that will allow them to demonstrate an autonomous use of IT processes across the whole range of curriculum experiences.

The children are taught a progression of skills aiming for independence and confidence.

They also have supervised access to the internet.

The school has an ICT facilities in each classroom and further provision with a trolley of laptops. All children will experience ICT to both expand their knowledge and skills in this area as well as to support learning in other curriculum areas.

All classes have an interactive whiteboard to support whole class teaching.



# - The Foundation Subjects -

## History

We believe that history is an active subject through which children make sense of the past and begin to see the effect historical events have on their world today.

We aim to help the children develop a sense of identity, by considering their family, community and country.

We teach them to respect others through knowledge and understanding of cultural roots and shared inheritance.



The children may visit museums and visitors may come into school. They have access to a variety of historical artefacts and resources.

We have developed a programme of study that is laid down by the National Curriculum. This is taught through our termly topics in a creative and cross curricular fashion.

## Geography

Geography helps children make sense of the world in which they live. They learn about people, places and natural phenomena throughout the world.

We encourage the children to develop their inquiry skills, and to establish a sense of identity within their own community and the UK.

We help them to gain insight into their interdependence on people and places.

Much of the children's work will be practical and embrace other curriculum subjects. The use of multimedia resources will be used to enhance the children's learning in this area of learning.

The children will be involved in local field work; sometimes requiring short journeys into the community surrounding the school.

We teach the children to compare and contrast different communities in the UK and abroad.

The children are encouraged to record their findings and explore and question new experiences.

We aim to ensure that all children develop an open and inquiring mind.



## Art

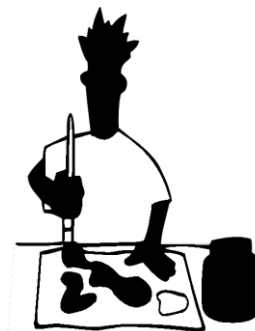
Art is an important part of a child's experience at school. Much of their work is cross-curricular, but the children will also be taught to look at the work of artists and consider techniques.

This will lead to the children often practising in the style of an artist, creating their own art works.

They will use art to explore the environment and community, developing a visual awareness of the world we live in.

The children are also encouraged to use their imagination to create ideas and visual pieces to support

work in other areas of the curriculum.



## Music

We encourage the children to perform and compose, using a variety of instruments.

The children have weekly singing practise during which they learn new songs and

practice favourites. Singing is an important part of our school assemblies and children are encouraged to sing with enjoyment and enthusiasm.

The children also listen to a variety of musical pieces that require them to form some opinion and appreciation of musical styles.

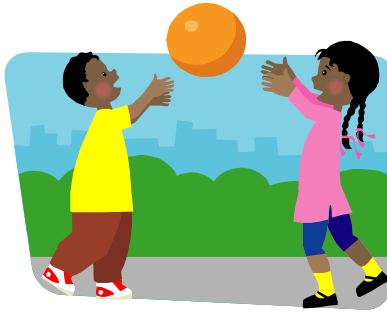
Children may also have small group tuition for particular instruments via the County Music Service. Details regarding tuition are available at the school.



## Physical Education

Our PE programme includes games, gym and dance for children in all age phases. In addition, key stage two children experience athletics, outdoor education and swimming.

Activities in the programme are designed to promote physical fitness, develop motor skills, instil knowledge and



understanding of rules, concepts and strategies. They also teach children about teamwork, sportsmanship and fairness.

The PE curriculum is enriched by many opportunities for children to join and take part in clubs and sporting activities beyond the time tabled curriculum hours.

## Design Technology

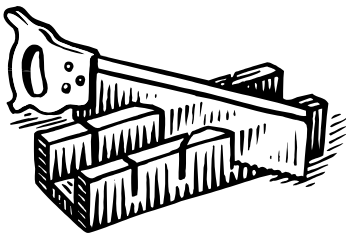
Technology is taught to all children throughout the school. Children participate in a range of practical activities and schemes of work are carefully monitored to ensure progression and continuity from one year to the next.

Children's skills are assessed and programmes of study designed to improve skills and learning.

The children use and care for a variety of tools and equipment under supervision. They are encouraged to adapt and alter their designs, taking account of suitable materials and opportunities. The children are

usually involved in one design and making activity each term.

Much of the work covered in Technology supports work in other areas of the curriculum, particularly Maths and Science



## Religious Education

Religious Education is not part of the National Curriculum, but schools are still required to provide a programme of study. We plan our RE experiences in accordance with the County's agreed syllabus. This is broadly Christian, but does take into account our multi-faith and multicultural society.

Many faiths are discussed at some time during the year either through assembly themes or class activities. We endeavour to inform children about festivals and celebrations of other faiths so that they may develop an

informed understanding of our pluralistic society. We invite parents to take part in assemblies throughout the year.

Each week the local Churches 'story tellers' group take an assembly with the children. The children may also visit places of worship to enhance their understanding of different faiths.



Schools are required to ensure there is a daily act of collective worship. We allow time for personal reflection and offer experiences that enhance a sense of awe and wonder in the world. We also say our school prayer together.

Occasionally, there are parents who may wish to withdraw their child from collective worship and this is allowed under the Education Reform Act. Parents wishing to do this should consult with the head teacher to agree appropriate supervision.

## The School Prayer

May the Lord keep us all in his care  
May he watch over those whom we love and those who love us.

## *Personal, Social, Citizenship and Health Education*

*PSCHE encompasses everything we do at Maple Tree to promote our pupils' good health and well-being. Within lessons we deal with real life issues that children face. In doing this we provide*

*them with the knowledge and skills to lead a healthy and responsible life as both confident individuals and members of our society.*



## **The Creative Curriculum**

Children do not learn in individual subject blocks. Learning is more effective and engaging if it is applied to a context that the children are familiar with and excited by. The children will be experiencing teaching and learning through a thematic approach where all areas of learning are connected when ever this is appropriate. In addition to learning in this way, children will also be taught basic skills in all subject areas which can then be applied, practised and consolidated through the thematic activities they will experience. For example, children will be taught the skill of report writing in a literacy lesson which will then be put into context and practiced as part of the thematic learning time. Similarly, the skills for colour mixing will be taught in art and then practiced by painting pictures relevant to the theme. Teachers will aim to start each topic in a stimulating way to capture the children's imagination and engage them from the very beginning. Throughout the term's topic, children will be working towards specific outcomes which may culminate in a finishing event / activity or presentation.

By working in this way, we are confident that children will come to school feeling excited about the learning they will encounter. Through the creative approach to teaching and learning, we will be developing children's skills as:

- independent learners;
- effective users of information;
- problem solvers;
- collaborative and team workers;
- clear and confident communicators of their ideas and findings.

We want the children in our school to be motivated, inspired and excited by the activities they encounter every day. We want their learning to be memorable, deep and dynamic and we believe the creative approach will enable us to achieve this.



# Maple Tree Lower School



## Special Educational Needs (SEN)

All children may have a special need of one kind or another at some time during their school career and here at Maple Tree, we try to ensure that each individual's needs are met. We are an inclusive school and know that in all but exceptional cases children's special needs can be met in a mainstream school.

Throughout their educational experience, all children will receive differentiated activities or work which addresses their particular needs within the lesson. Occasionally a child may need support beyond this in order to ensure the development of their learning.

The revised code of practice for SEN offers a three stage model of intervention as part of what is a graduated response to special educational needs. The three stages are:

- School action / early years action (for children in the foundation stage) ~ at this stage children will be supported by an individual education plan (IEP) which will target specific activities and support mechanisms put in place by the class teacher.
- School action or early years action plus ~ this stage may involve outside agencies who would work with us to ensure that the IEP and specific activities address the child's individual needs and support progress
- Statutory assessment ~ this stage is appropriate for those children with very specific needs who have not made progress at the previous two stages. If a child is assessed by the County LA panel as meeting the criteria for this stage, then additional funding will be made to the school which will enable further one to one support to be allocated.

The school has a policy for special educational needs which is reviewed regularly. A member of the teaching staff is responsible for co-ordinating special needs and we have a designated Governor for special needs.

The SEN policy has supported staff in the early identification of children with special needs. In turn this has enabled children to have specifically targeted learning programmes and work to enable them to progress towards their targets.

We have close links with other agencies and LA departments who support us with meeting the needs of specific children.

Our learning support advisory teacher provided in service training for staff. This enabled staff to better understand the new code of practice as well as help them to write and use IEPs effectively. In addition, the SEN co-ordinator provides staff with support and also links with outside agencies to ensure the best service is provided for all.

No major changes have been made to the policy for special needs during the past academic year.



## **Health Education**

Health education is an important part of the curriculum as it not only informs children how their bodies work, but promotes care of the body and good health. The children will learn about healthy eating, hygiene and cleanliness as part of their work in the classroom.

The school nurse visits the school regularly and may be contacted by parents if they have a concern. The nurse is used as a valuable resource to the school and is often invited into the classrooms to talk with the children - for example, if the children were working on a topic of 'teeth' she might be asked to talk about dental hygiene.

Sex education is not taught explicitly, but children's questions will be considered carefully and sensitively by the teacher should they arise and appropriate honest answers given. Teachers will always liaise with parents if they feel a question or enquiry warrants it.



## Home Activities

Children in the Foundation stage would not normally be set homework. A small amount of home activity is set for the children in Year 1 and above. This might include regular weekly spellings and/or times-tables. However, all children are expected to read regularly at home and they will bring their books home to read – there will be an opportunity to change these on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We suggest a short period (5 or 10 minutes) as often as possible. Practise at home is very important in helping your child learn to read and greatly improves not only their reading skill but their self confidence.

Children in Key Stage 2 may also bring other activities to complete at home and this could include some maths or topic work.

Each term the children will bring home the term's 'Parent Information' leaflet. This will give children and parents' information about what staff anticipate will be covered through the term's topic. It can be very helpful if parents look at the focus for the term and then offer opportunities to support their child's learning by possibly visiting museums, places of interest or by research either in the library or via the internet etc. These can be very valuable home activities which equip the children with a wider knowledge that they can then bring and share at school.

All children and their families will be encouraged to participate in the termly 'take away task'. This will involve an activity based around the topic and it will be up to you and your child how you go about this and present it. The idea is to develop your child's skills and knowledge about the topic and at the same time work with you, their siblings and any other member of the family and have some fun. The outcomes will be shared and displayed in school on completion.

Staff at school are also very grateful for any contributions (either on loan or donation) that enhance the term's themes as this can enrich the children's experiences.

## Safeguarding Children

- We work within the Legal Framework: Section 175 of the Children's Act 2002 – which gives the Local Authority a duty to investigate when it is suspected, or found, that a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. We also have due regard to the guidance for safer recruitment when interviewing and appointing prospective employees.

The process of how we work with other organisations and individuals to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children can also be found in the:

- National Document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006'.
- 'Every Child Matters' Children Act 2004.

At Maple Tree Lower School we follow the agreed policies and procedures laid down by the Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board.

As a school, we have a statutory duty to assist social services departments acting on behalf of pupils in need or enquiring into allegations of child abuse. As well as this statutory duty we have a pastoral responsibility towards our pupils and we recognise that pupils have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. Pupils cannot learn effectively unless they feel safe and secure. We, therefore, have a Safeguarding Policy, which reflects both our statutory duty and our pastoral responsibilities. If we have concerns that a child has been abused or is at risk of being abused, we have a duty to refer this to Social Services. In making any referral, the school is not making any judgement, for example, about individual parents or carers. We anticipate that should a referral need to be made that this will be viewed as the school taking its duties seriously and with due regard for the child concerned. In all cases it is for social services to decide whether or not there should be an investigation.

### Child in need referral

There may be other circumstances (which are not to do with child protection, but more related to meeting pupil's needs) when it is felt that a family may benefit from support from other agencies. Before we can do this we will need to seek your permission. In such cases, we will then complete the necessary form in consultation with you.



## **RACISM, SEXISM, HOMOPHOBIA**

This school does not tolerate racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour. Rather, our purpose is to create a learning community characterised by empathy, understanding and harmony across boundaries of race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, where difference is recognised and respected. To this end we have policies in place to enable us to deal with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents.

We recognise that acts of racist, sexist or homophobic bullying are against the law. We seek to make children and young people, staff, parents and visitors aware that racial and sexual harassment, bullying, abuse, graffiti and other racist, sexist and homophobic behaviour will be challenged.

We involve children, young people and parents in agreeing principles and procedure for dealing with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents, including bullying and harassment, and in playing their part in dealing with such incidents. We ensure that all areas within the school environment are safe for children and young people and that tolerant and respectful relationships are promoted within the school community.

We follow a curriculum that enables children and young people to:

- Understand racial differences and human sexuality.
- Learn to respect themselves and others.
- Challenge racist, sexist and homophobic behaviour.

Racist, sexist and homophobic incidents are recorded. Records are examined on a regular basis to provide a picture of the frequency and nature of such incidents and give some indication as to how effectively the school is combating this behaviour.

Aggregated data is provided annually to the Governing Body to enable governors to review the school's policy and practice on dealing with racist, sexist and homophobic incidents in its annual report to parents. If no incidents are recorded for the year, this outcome will still be included in the annual report.

Aggregated data on racism is provided to the LA in accordance with the requirements of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000.

**Dear Parent,**

### **Notice of Fair Processing**

Schools, local education authorities and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (the government department which deals with education) all hold information on pupils in order to run the education system, and in doing so have to follow the Data Protection Act 1998. This means, among other things, that the data held about pupils must only be used for specific purposes allowed by law. This letter provides you with information about the types of data held, why that data is held, and to whom it may be passed on.

The **school** holds information on pupils in order to support their teaching and learning, to monitor and report on their progress, to provide appropriate pastoral care, and to assess how well the school as a whole is doing. This information includes contact details, characteristics such as ethnic group and any relevant medical information provided by parents, National Curriculum assessment results and non-statutory assessments, attendance information and special educational needs.

From time to time we are required to pass some of this data to the Local Authority (LA), to another school to which the pupil is transferring, to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCFS), and to the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) which is responsible for the National Curriculum and associated assessment arrangements.

The **Local Authority** uses information about pupils to carry out specific functions for which it is responsible, such as the assessment of any special education needs the pupil may have. It also uses the information to derive statistics to inform decisions on (for example) the funding of schools, and to assess the performance of schools and set targets for them. The statistics are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them.

The **Qualifications and Curriculum Authority** uses information about pupils to administer the National Curriculum Tests and assessments for Key Stages 1 to 3. The results of these are passed on to DCFS in order for it to compile statistics on trends and patterns in levels of achievement. The QCA uses the information to evaluate the effectiveness of the National Curriculum and the associated assessment arrangements, and to ensure that these are continually improved.

The **Department for Children, Schools and Families** uses information about pupils for statistical purposes, to evaluate and develop education policy and to monitor the performance of the education service as a whole. The statistics (including those based on information provided by the QCA) are used in such a way that individual pupils cannot be identified from them. The DCSF will feed back to the LAs and schools information about their pupils where they are lacking this information because it was not passed on by a former school. On occasion information may be shared with other Government departments or agencies strictly for statistical or research purposes only.

Pupils, as data subjects, have certain rights under the Data Protection Act, including a general right of access to personal data held on them, with parents exercising this right on

their behalf if they are too young to do so themselves. If you wish to access the personal data held about your child, then please contact the relevant organisation in writing:

- the Headteacher at the school address above
- the LA's Data Protection Officer – Martin Patterson at LA, County Hall, Bedford
- the QCA's Data Protection Officer at QCA, 83 Piccadilly, London W1J 8QA
- the DCSF's Data Protection Officer at DCSF, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA

Separately from the Data Protection Act, DCFS regulations provide a pupil's parent (regardless of the age of the pupil) with the right to view, or to have a copy of, their child's educational record at the school. If you wish to exercise this right, you should write to me, the Headteacher, at the school address above.

Please note that all rights under the Data Protection Act to do with information about your child rest with them as soon as they are old enough to understand these rights. This will vary from one child to another and you will wish to consider the position for your child, but, as a broad guide, it is reckoned that most children will have sufficient understanding by the age of 12. We would therefore encourage you to share this note with your child when they are aged 12 or over.



## **Snack Time**

Here at Maple Tree Lower School, through the free fruit and veg scheme for schools we provide a nutritious healthy snack for the children in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage one.

Children in the Foundation stage may choose to have a drink of milk or water. Those in Key Stages one and two will have water.

Children in Key Stage two may bring a healthy snack to school each day. This should be either a piece of fruit (fresh or dried) or vegetable – as part of our healthy eating policy, anything else will not be allowed and will be returned home at the end of the day. Snacks should be brought to school in a named bag or small box and will be kept in the classroom for children to have at break time.





## Acronyms!

Below are some of the common acronyms used in the Education sector and which you may come across in reading the school's brochure. We hope this is helpful to you.

LA	Local Authority
DCSF	Department for Children Schools and Families
DfE	Department for Education
SATs	Standard Assessment Tests
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
ELG	Early Learning Goals
NC	National Curriculum
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
IEP	Individual Education Plan
PE	Physical Education
RE	Religious Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KS	Key Stage