

Starting Tiny Steps At Robert Wilkinson



Introduction

Welcome to Tiny Steps!

Tiny Steps is our Class for our 2- and 3-year-old children who are at the very beginning of their time in school. They will have 2 years of pre-school (1 year in Tiny Steps and 1 year in Nursery) before they start school in our Reception class.

The class is led by Mrs Sarah Smith and our team of Tiny Steps Assistant Teachers. The provision is carefully designed and delivered to ensure that the children have a positive and happy start to school life, and, at the end of the year, the children are ready to progress into our Nursery Class.

What does learning look like in Nursery?

We believe that children learn best through direct experiences, positive interactions between trusted adults and through a stimulating and engaging environment where they feel secure and valued. Established routines also help children to feel safe and ready to play and learn. Each day there will be a predictable routine in place to help the children feel secure in their environment and know what to expect each day. This familiarity will ensure that they quickly become settled and enjoy coming to Tiny Steps.

The focus of the Tiny Steps curriculum is “The 3Ts” – Talking, Toileting and Tantrums.

We place great emphasis for the Tiny Steps year on teaching the children to talk using a wide range of vocabulary, to talk in sentences and to talk with confidence to their friends and adults alike.

We also focus on toileting – encouraging them to move from nappies/pull ups to being independent toilet users with a good sense of personal hygiene. We will, of course, work in close partnership with parents and carers around toileting and support each child when they are ready. It is our aim, however, to have all children using the toilet by the time they leave Tiny Steps and move into Nursery.

Our third focus is on tantrums – or having less of them! We teach the children, supportively and sensitively, how to be aware of their feelings and emotions, to identify them and to self-regulate. We teach them how to share, how to be friends and how to be a member of the wider Tiny Steps and whole school community.



Teaching and learning in Tiny Steps is very much age appropriate and play based. The children will have access to a variety of Areas of Continuous Provision with a range of familiar resources that will be available each day. In addition to this, there will be opportunities to enhance these areas by adding extra resources to reflect children's interests and/or needs. Adults play alongside children in these areas to enhance and extend their knowledge, skills and vocabulary as well as questioning them to deepen their understanding. Adults also model social and emotional skills as well as encouraging the development of personal skills such as self-confidence, independence and resilience.

Alongside the play-based learning, there are opportunities during the day for very short, whole class learning activities such as story sessions. These are age appropriate and are carefully planned to encourage a love of books and encourage the children to begin to listen to and talk about the books. They will join in with familiar stories, rhymes and songs – all of which are essential for them to be successful readers in the future. Again, adults work alongside the children ensuring that all children participate and whatever level they are able. These sessions are always fun and engaging for the children with lots of opportunities for talking, listening and joining in! During this learning time, the children also begin to develop good learning habits and skills to prepare them for their future learning.

Activities in Tiny Steps take place indoors and outdoors to provide a range of learning experiences. The children will also take part in a weekly Forest School session as well as having opportunities to learn with the wider school, such as visiting and baking in Cook School.

The Tiny Steps Team will make regular assessments of the children's learning and development. This information is used to ensure future planning and teaching reflects the children's interests and identified needs as well as inform the Nursery teachers at the end of the year.

Our Tiny Steps children also go through to the Brown Hall in the main school building for their lunches. This has proved to be hugely successful in the children making smooth transitions to Nursery and Reception and beyond. The children can enjoy a hot dinner (this will need to be paid for) or a packed lunch from home. The Tiny Steps staff go with the children and sit and help them as they eat.



What if I am worried about my child?

We highly value the partnership between home and Tiny Steps and look forward to working closely with you, as parents and carers. If you have any questions or concerns, or if you have any information that will be helpful for us to know about and will enable us to support your child, please speak to a member of the Tiny Steps Team. We will be happy to meet with you.

The Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage was created to ensure that a child's first five years are enjoyable and fun as well as supporting their developmental and educational needs. This is the stage that provides strong and secure foundations for their future learning and success.

There are **7 Areas of Learning and Development** that shape the experiences that a child has in their early years setting. There are **3 Prime Areas** that are particularly important in igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive.

These **3 Prime Areas** are:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The **4 Specific Areas** are:

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design.



In Tiny Steps, we focus on the **Prime Areas**.

Some ways that you could prepare your child include:

- Talk, talk and more talk! Talk to your child about anything and everything – when you are out and about, shopping, the weather, what you are doing, where you are going, when sharing books...talk at any time!
- Encourage them to begin to say “please” and “thank you”
- Help your child to understand their basic feelings – happy and sad, cross or excited. Value how they feel and encourage them to say the words associated with their emotions.
- Encourage your child to understand the word “no” and to accept the reasons why they might not be able to do something or have something when they want.
- Let your child explore early writing and mark making with pens and pencils – let them enjoy the experience of making different marks with different pens/pencils/chalk/paints – let them get messy and enjoy the sensory experiences too!
- Take your child out for walks and encourage them to run, jump, walk, crouch down, go on swings and slides – anything physical! These movements are so important for good overall strength as well as eventually for writing skills and being able to sit and listen well in class.

The Early Years Foundation Stage continues until the end of the Reception year.

How do I find out how well my child is doing in Tiny Steps?

Members of the Tiny Steps team will be making regular assessments of the children's development, including the Statutory Progress Checks between the ages of 2 and 3 years old. Parents and Carers will be provided with a short, written summary of their child's progress. It may also highlight any concerns and what support can be put into place. This Progress Check is very much completed in partnership with Parents and Carers.

Parents and Carers also receive a school report for their child at the end of the school year as well as parents evening appointments in February.

However, staff are always happy to talk to you about your child, whenever you wish. They are available at drop off or collection for a quick chat or will make an appointment with you if you would prefer.

How can I help my child prepare for Tiny Steps?

Starting Tiny Steps is an exciting milestone in your child's life. It's a time of growth and development in so many areas. As parents and carers, you have a crucial role in preparing your child for this new chapter. You and your child might be feeling excited about this new adventure, but maybe a little anxious and nervous too!

Below are some key areas that you can help your child prepare; this way they can have a positive and smooth transition into Tiny Steps.



Talk to your child positively about Tiny Steps

Tell your child what Tiny Steps looks like and what they might be learning there and all the new friends that they will make, who their teachers are and how exciting it will be.

Visit the classroom and meet the staff

There will be transition visits arranged with parents and carers before your child starts to attend Tiny Steps. These are arranged by Mrs Smith and are bespoke for each child. It is a lovely opportunity for you to drop off your child for a short stay and play session.

Meet Our Tiny Steps Team



Mrs Smith



Mrs Cairney



Mrs Burgess



Mrs McClaren



What will my child need for Tiny Steps?

Your child will need the following:

- *A small backpack containing a change of clothes in case of toilet accidents or when playing with water, sand, glue, outdoors etc.
- *Extra nappies/pull ups, wipes and nappy bags. Tiny Steps staff will be happy to help you with toilet training – please see them when your child is ready to begin toilet training
- * A packed lunch box if your child will be having packed lunches.
- * A pair of named wellies to leave at school – we go outside every day and encourage the children to wear wellies to save their school shoes becoming scuffed and scraped.
- *A Forest School suit – an all in one is best – to be kept in a drawstring bag. This will stay at school.
- *An extra fleece for the cold days in Forest School. This can be kept in their Forest School kit bag.
- * Children wear black jogging bottoms/leggings and a white/blue polo shirt and a red sweatshirt or Cardigan. These can be from the school uniform supplier or a plain red sweatshirt or Cardigan.



We understand that starting Nursery can be unsettling for some children as they will come into a new setting with new adults. We know that some children have “comforters”, such as special teddies or blankets which help them in times of uncertainty.

We do allow these comforters to be brought into Tiny Steps but parents and carers need to do this at their own risk. Comforters might become dirty or lost – if something is very special to your child, we encourage that you leave it at home or maybe have a specific comforter that is just for Tiny Steps. Our Tiny Steps Team are also very good at distraction techniques which might mean your child doesn’t need their usual comforter!

We value highly the partnership between home and Tiny Steps and look forward to working closely with our children’s parents and carers. Please do come and see us if you have any questions or concerns or information that will be helpful for us to know and support your child as best we can.



Proud to work, learn and grow together
At
Robert Wilkinson Primary Academy

If you have any questions about the information shared in this booklet, please contact your child's current setting or speak to a member of the Tiny Steps Team when you visit us.