



## Coalway Community Infant School





Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to Coalway Community Infant School. On behalf of the staff, governors and children may we extend a warm welcome to you and your child.

I am extremely proud to introduce you to our school, which is a happy, thriving and successful Infant School located in the beautiful surroundings of the Forest of Dean. Our school has a warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere, and is a popular, well-established school with high expectations and standards of achievement. We have committed, caring and experienced staff, supportive parents and governors, and fantastic children!

At Coalway we have created a happy, caring, family atmosphere where the children feel secure and valued and are motivated to acquire attitudes to learning that will stay with them throughout their lives. We are all dedicated to doing the very best for your child. By working together we are able to provide the best possible start to the children's education.

We have designed our Prospectus to be as informative as possible, whilst also giving parents a flavour of our school. If there is anything at all that you are unsure about please do not hesitate to contact the school for further information.

Yours sincerely,

*F. Hamilton*

Mrs Fiona Hamilton  
Head Teacher



CONTENTS	Page
Class organisation	1
The school itself	1-2
School hours	2
Teaching	3-4
Our aims	5
The curriculum: an overview	6
The National Curriculum subjects - English	7
- Mathematics	8
- Science	8
- Computing	9
- Religious Education	9-10
- Design and Technology	10
- History	11
- Geography	11
- Art and Design	12
- Music	12
- Physical Education	13
- PSHE	13
Extra-curricular activities	14
Educational visits & visitors	15
Special weeks or events	15
OFSTED inspection	16
Assessment & Reporting to Parents	17
Behaviour	18
Special Educational Needs	18
Governors & School Council	19
Parental involvement & the 'Friends of Coalway Infant School'	20
Admissions	21
Starting School	21
Junior School Admission	21
Prospective Parents	21
Uniform	22
Jewellery & personal property	22
Book bags	22
Snack time, Milk & Water bottles	23
Dinner time, ParentPay	24
Absence & Emergencies	25
Medical Information	26
Security & Safety	27
School Crossing Patrol	28
Liaison between Key Stages	29-30
Coalway Kids' Club	30
And finally...	31

The information contained in this document is correct at the time of going to press, but may change during the year. Please see any attachments for additional information.

## CLASS ORGANISATION

We are a popular school, with a maximum possible number on role of 180 children. We have six classes in total, there being two classes per year group. We can accept up to 60 children in each year group, enabling us to have two classes of 30 children per year group at the very most.

Children attend the Infant School between the ages of four to seven years. The classes are arranged in three year groups as follows:

Reception year group	Pupils aged 4 years old at the start of the academic year
Year 1	Pupils aged 5 years old at the start of the academic year
Year 2	Pupils aged 6 years old at the start of the academic year

Children transfer to the Junior School at the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of 7.

## THE SCHOOL ITSELF

The school was built in 1967 and shares an attractive site with Coalway Junior School, Coalway Early Years and Coalway Kids' Club. Close links and good liaison exist between all providers, ensuring continuity of education for the children from pre-school to eleven years of age.

The building and classroom environments are bright, welcoming and well maintained. The school is constantly being improved, with the addition of two new classrooms in January 2004 significantly enhancing our facilities. There are six classrooms in the main building, with adjoining cloakroom and toilet areas, a large purpose-built hall fitted with fixed and portable PE equipment, a library, group teaching rooms, staffroom and offices. Two additional mobile classrooms provide dining and cookery facilities, a Family Support Worker room, an intervention room and resource storage. The school is all on one level, providing access for children and parents with disabilities.





The school grounds have been considerably enhanced for the benefit of the children. We have a landscaped playground at the rear of the school marked with a number of games and activities for the children, with an adjoining 'trim trail' and grassed play area, an 'outdoor classroom' to support curriculum work and an enclosed Early Years outdoor learning area. All of these provide an excellent learning environment for the children.

## SCHOOL HOURS

The times of the school day are as follows:

(Doors open at	8.50 a.m.)
Morning session begins at	9.00 a.m.
Morning break	10.30-10.45 a.m.
Lunch	12.00-12.55 p.m.
Afternoon session begins at	12.55 p.m.
Afternoon break	2.10-2.20 p.m.
School ends at	3.00 p.m.

Please note that children may enter school at 8.50 a.m. when their teachers open the classroom entrance doors, so that they are ready to start their lessons at 9.00 a.m.

The total teaching time each week is 21 hours 25 minutes. This time excludes registration and assemblies, and is in excess of the minimum statutory teaching time of 21 hours per week.



## TEACHING

Teaching is organised in many different ways. Sometimes the children are taught as a whole class and at other times in groups, in pairs and individually. Groups may be organised by similar ability, mixed ability or by friendship group. The children may also be taught by another teacher for particular subjects. Each child is an individual and will develop and learn at different rates. The staff use a variety of teaching styles in the classroom to support individual children with their learning.



The children benefit from a significant amount of adult support across the school. Teaching Assistants are employed in all classes to support individuals and small groups, and emphasis is placed on differentiation to support children of all abilities. Each class has a full time Teaching Assistant, meaning that there are at least two adults in all classrooms at all times.

At Coalway we teach through a cross-curricular approach. Each term the children are taught the different subject areas of the curriculum through a particular topic theme - for example, 'All About Me', 'Growing and Making', 'Hot and Cold'. This links together the subject areas in a meaningful way for the children. Some subjects may be taught as separate areas of learning, for example, P.E and R.E. Children are encouraged to question, explore and experiment as part of the learning process. The children learn through a variety of contexts across the curriculum, for example using writing to explain problems in science, or the use of mathematics in technology.



Each term the teachers produce topic planners for parents which describe the range of activities that have been planned for the children for that term in each of the areas of learning. Parents find these informative and helpful, and they prove a popular point of discussion between parents and their children.

The staff work hard to create a bright, stimulating environment for the children and one in which the children's work is celebrated.

The classrooms are well resourced with a variety of quality, age appropriate equipment. Learning is extended to the outdoors as much as possible, to enhance curriculum opportunities even further. The Reception classes also benefit from the use of an attached secure outdoor learning area.



## OUR AIMS

- To enable each child to achieve their full potential
- To treat each child as an individual and recognise their unique needs and abilities
- To help children develop an enthusiasm for learning
- To provide a happy, supportive and secure environment that encourages self-confidence and positive self-esteem, where children can flourish
- To develop independence and self-discipline
- To develop a respect for others
- To provide a stimulating, broad and balanced curriculum tailored to meet each child's needs
- To place particular emphasis on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills, thus enabling full access to the curriculum
- To develop a good basis of knowledge in all National Curriculum subjects including religious education
- To enable children to make choices through the promotion of a happy, healthy lifestyle
- To provide a stimulating environment to develop and broaden the children's experiences



## THE CURRICULUM: AN OVERVIEW

Our curriculum is creative, balanced and broadly based. It is planned according to the National Curriculum and Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum guidelines with the aim of providing a wide variety of experiences and opportunities for each child and to support and encourage their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development.

We aim to make our curriculum exciting and challenging. Subjects are taught through a topic approach wherever possible, making learning meaningful and enjoyable for the children. Great care is taken to ensure that subject-specific objectives are adhered to within this broader topic-based curriculum.

Children in the **Reception** classes follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This Curriculum has seven areas of learning covering children's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development as follows:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design



Teachers plan to provide a stimulating and enabling environment in which the children can achieve their developmental goals.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum guidelines are strongly linked to the National Curriculum guidelines. As children transfer into Key Stage One (**Years 1 and 2**) they are taught according to these guidelines, aiming to reach particular objectives within each subject during Year 1 and Year 2. (On transfer to the Junior School the children continue to be taught according to the National Curriculum guidelines).

The National Curriculum consists of three 'Core Subjects':

English

Mathematics

Science

The remaining subjects are known as 'Foundation Subjects':

Computing

Design and Technology

Art and Design

Geography

History

Music

P.E. (Physical Education)



R.E. (Religious Education) is also taught as a statutory requirement, in addition to P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education), which remains an integral part of our curriculum.

## NATIONAL CURRICULUM SUBJECTS

### ENGLISH

Literacy is taught daily as part of our topic work wherever possible, with handwriting and phonics taught as specific skills. Our aim is to promote high standards of literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the written and spoken word and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

#### **Spoken Language**

The children are taught to speak clearly and confidently, thinking about the needs of their audience. They work in small groups and as a class, each child contributing to our discussions and listening carefully to each other. They learn to use language in imaginative ways and express their ideas and feelings in role play and through discussing books and poems. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear are key factors in developing their vocabulary, grammar and understanding for reading and writing and as such we strive to provide stimulating opportunities for this.



**Reading:** The teaching of reading is based on a strong foundation of phonic knowledge, which begins early in the Reception Year and develops throughout the school. The school provides a rich, well-resourced environment where children discover the pleasure of reading in a wide variety of situations, supported by a wide range of interesting and attractive books, both in the classrooms and in our well-stocked central library. As part of our literacy work the children explore texts by sharing and reciting them as a class in addition to guided group work and individual reading to adults. Reading books are taken home daily and we value the support of parents in teaching and learning to read - this partnership significantly enhances the children's progress.

**Writing:** The school values every child as a 'writer' and their confidence is nurtured by using a variety of strategies and providing a 'reason for writing' through our topic work. Children take a pride in the presentation of their work and handwriting is taught in order that they gain the skills to write fluently, legibly and speedily. They are encouraged to vocalise their sentences before writing and check for correct punctuation and spelling. Our systematic approach to teaching phonics includes spelling lists, which the children take home, in addition to a range of activities which enable the children to hear, blend and segment sounds and apply these essential skills when writing.

## MATHEMATICS



Mathematics is taught daily, according to the National Curriculum guidelines. Emphasis is placed on the teaching of mental maths skills and the development of a range of strategies for solving problems, based on a solid foundation and understanding of number. Teaching incorporates meaningful, practical activities, with the children taught to apply mathematical skills to 'real-life' situations and develop their knowledge and understanding of mathematics through practical activity, exploration and discussion. The children are encouraged to work systematically, as independent workers and co-operatively. Cross-curricular work further reinforces skills and deepens understanding.

Planned experiences enable the children to form a firm basis of mathematical concepts and knowledge, with the children encouraged to apply their learning to all aspects of their work. Children become confident in their use of numbers in a variety of situations, apply their knowledge of strategies to solve problems and record their work accurately. The children develop a range of mental calculation skills and use these confidently in different settings. They learn about shape and space through practical activity which builds on their understanding of their immediate environment. They begin to grasp mathematical language, using it to talk about their methods and explain their reasoning when solving problems.



## SCIENCE

Science is taught largely through topic work. The children's skills and understanding of scientific concepts are promoted through first hand enquiry and investigation, and exploration of their world. The children are encouraged to observe, question, make and test ideas about living things and materials. They are taught to design and carry out investigations, predict the outcomes, communicate their findings and formulate conclusions based on evidence. They are given opportunities to work independently and co-operatively, to collect evidence to help them answer questions and to link this to scientific ideas. The children learn to evaluate evidence and consider whether tests or comparisons are fair. They share their ideas and communicate them using scientific language, drawings, charts and tables. A variety of resources are used to support their scientific learning, including the use of the 'outdoor classroom' and school grounds. Wherever possible, reference materials are used to find out more about scientific ideas.



## COMPUTING

Computing is used to support the children's learning throughout the curriculum. Each class has an HD Interactive Whiteboard which is used on a daily basis to enhance teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum. The school is well resourced, with all classes having access to tablets and a dedicated computer workstation with additional networked computers and printers. All children have supervised and protected access to the Internet and are taught about e-safety. Their learning is enhanced through instant access to educational websites and they also use the Internet for research and information.



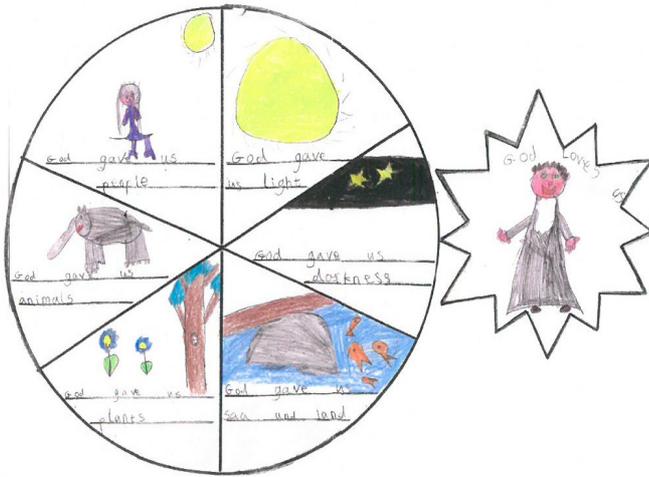
The children develop their computing skills through the use of a wide range of software linked to the whole curriculum; this includes painting and word processing programs, database and animation software. Other skills are developed through the use of remote controlled toys, programmable robots, class listening centres, voice recorders, digital microscopes, tablets and digital cameras. From the Foundation Stage, children are encouraged to become independent and confident in using technology and to develop their keyboard and mouse control skills. Pupils explore a range of technology and learn to use it confidently and with purpose to achieve specific outcomes. They start to develop their ideas and record their creative work, and become familiar with a range of hardware and software. Through the use of programs which allow the children themselves to take control, computing becomes a valuable tool that motivates and stimulates the children's learning.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

The Coalway schools follow the Gloucestershire agreed syllabus for the teaching of RE. The children develop knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices from a Christian perspective whilst taking into account the beliefs and practices of other religions in our multi-cultural society.

Topics are taught which relate to the children's every day experiences, for example, themes of caring, families and belonging to groups, linking these to key religious stories and events in the Bible where appropriate. Attitudes of wonder, compassion, self-respect and respect for others are developed. Through religious education children are helped to know, understand and respect the traditions and beliefs of Christianity and other faiths in the community and to explore moral values.

## The story of the Creation



A daily act of worship takes place through assembly time, which also fosters the development of a sense of community and belonging. Our assemblies are based within the Christian faith and cover a wide range of religious, spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes (linked to our RE curriculum), which provide the children with the opportunity to consider everyday issues and situations.

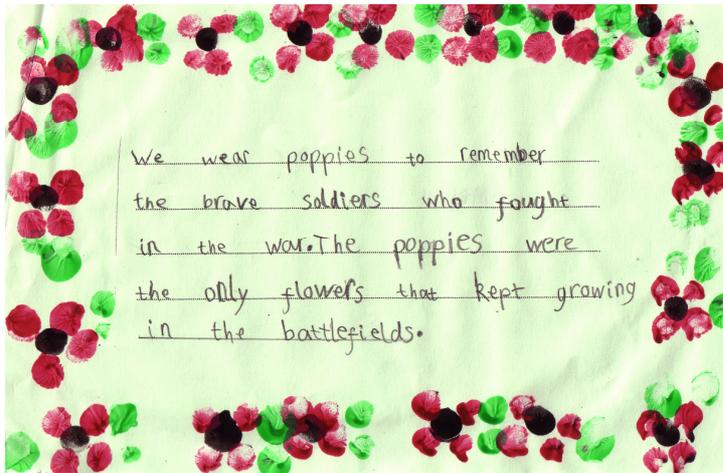
Parents have the right to withdraw their child from RE or collective worship, but would need to discuss this with the Head Teacher first.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Activities are planned to develop designing and making skills as well as an appreciation of materials and their uses. The children explore how familiar things work and talk about, draw and model their ideas. They learn how to design and construct, using tools safely. The children are encouraged to develop their inventiveness by designing practical solutions to problems and so bring about change and improvements in existing situations. Throughout their time at the Infant School, the children will be given the opportunity to design and make a variety of working models and artefacts from a range of materials, components and construction kits, using appropriate tools. They will be taught to use a systematic, problem solving approach when designing, constructing, evaluating and improving models. Specific tools and materials will be introduced and explored, and correct use taught.



## HISTORY



History is taught through a topic based approach following the National Curriculum guidelines. The children learn about people's lives and lifestyles, as well as learning how the past is different from the present. Their sense of time is promoted through the development of an awareness of the past and comparison with life today. The children investigate and find out about significant people and events during their own lives and that of their

parents and grandparents, as well as being introduced to famous historical events and achievements of famous people from other times. They listen and respond to stories and use sources of information to help them ask and answer questions. The children are taught to compare and contrast with their own experiences, as well as learn about the past from historical sources such as real life objects, written documents, artefacts, photographs, music, art and stories. Visits to places of historical interest, within and beyond the immediate local area are incorporated into our topic work.

## GEOGRAPHY

Geography is taught through a topic based approach following the National Curriculum guidelines. The children learn to compare and contrast their own locality with different places within the UK and around the world. They begin by observing and developing an awareness of their immediate environment i.e. their school, home and locality. They explore the local area, making observations and simple comparisons between Coalway and other places in the UK and the wider world. They find out about the environment in these areas and the people who live there. To develop their awareness of the wider world even further, we encourage the children to take a 'Coalway Bear' on holiday with them and to share their experiences with others upon their return.

The children carry out geographical enquiry inside and outside the classroom. They will develop and use an increasing range of geographical terms and skills such as map making, map reading and gathering and interpreting information. The children learn to understand their relationship to the natural world and how to care for their environment.



## ART AND DESIGN



The children develop their creativity and imagination by exploring the visual, tactile and sensory qualities of materials and processes. Opportunities are given to develop and explore a range of creative skills and artistic techniques through drawing, painting, printing, collage, and two and three-dimensional work. They begin to understand colour, shape, space, pattern and texture and use them to represent their ideas and feelings. The children are introduced to the work of different artists and encouraged to evaluate this, developing their knowledge and understanding and a sense of art appreciation.

## MUSIC

Through active experience and involvement in listening to, composing and performing music, the children's understanding and enjoyment of music is fostered. The emphasis is very much on the children being creative and having lots of opportunity to sing and make music. The children listen carefully and respond physically to a wide range of music. They play musical instruments and sing a variety of songs from memory, adding accompaniments and creating short compositions, with increasing confidence, imagination and control. The children enjoy exploring how sounds and silence can create different moods and effects. A growing awareness of musical appreciation and sensitivity is developed by using the children's own compositions and performances, and through listening to and accompanying visiting musicians and a wide variety of recorded music of different styles. Music is always an essential part of our whole school assemblies and productions, and the children all enjoy taking part in performances for their parents throughout the year.

Instrumental tuition is available on an individual basis once the children reach the Junior School, for which there is a charge - details within the Junior School brochure.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

During their time with us the children are taught three main areas of activity - games, gymnastics and dance. A progressive programme of activities is taught by staff to develop the children's agility and physical co-ordination, to give them confidence, control and enjoyment through all types of physical activity. They develop their skills in movement and co-ordination, enjoying expressing and testing themselves in a variety of situations. The values of fair play, co-operation, healthy competition and team work are encouraged. A sports day is held annually and other events are promoted such as physical activity days, walk-to-school week, dance presentations and specialist coaching days. During the Summer, all Year 2 children undertake a 10-week swimming course. This develops water confidence in preparation for the Key Stage Two (Junior) Curriculum.

The school is committed to encouraging our children to improve their fitness and be active every day and all children have 2 hours of PE each week. We have a purpose-built Hall with wall-mounted equipment, a large playground (with markings) and playing field which we use for sporting activities. In addition, we have a 'trim-trail' of play apparatus on the field. The school is proud to hold National Healthy Schools Plus Status and is committed to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle.



## PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH and ECONOMIC EDUCATION (PSHE)

The school is committed to the development of the individual child. We aim to enable all of our children to gain a range of skills and knowledge which allow them to make a valuable contribution to any group within society. The children are treated fairly, are valued as individuals and are given a range of opportunities to participate in school life. Through play and classroom teaching they learn about their homes, families, healthy eating and hygiene. They also learn about themselves and their feelings, and how to care for their bodies. A positive attitude in accepting the differences between people and their views and cultures is promoted through a cross-curricular approach to teaching. A range of activities and experiences are planned to support and promote self-esteem, confidence, independence and a sense of responsibility, both with regard to themselves and others.

By the time a pupil leaves the school we hope that they will:

- have a sense of belonging and purpose
- feel confident and good about themselves
- feel in control and be able to take responsibility for themselves and others
- feel informed and be able to make decisions
- be able to relate to and work with others
- be able to act independently
- be able to express their needs and emotions
- understand the importance of keeping healthy
- understand different ways in which they can keep safe





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