

Ratcliffe College Nursery Handbook

2022-2023



Welcome and Introduction

Welcome to Ratcliffe College Nursery. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you into the Ratcliffe College community and specifically to the Nursery.

We hope your child will thrive in the warm and caring environment that Ratcliffe Nursery offers and we look forward to sharing with you many exciting milestones in your child's development.

Ratcliffe Nursery has an open door policy. Please don't hesitate in speaking to any member of the Nursery team.

Mrs Ravat
Head of EYFS



Ratcliffe College is an Independent Co-educational Catholic Boarding and day School. Our Early Years provision is a stimulating child-centred environment, where your child has the opportunity to flourish within a warm, welcoming, caring and secure environment.

We work hard to build trusting relationships with you and your child and strive to ensure that every child's day is a happy one.

We are housed in our own Early Years building within the picturesque grounds of the College. The youngest children are very much part of the whole School and benefit from our outstanding facilities of the Preparatory School and wider College campus.

Our Aims

We aim to ensure that your child flourishes in our caring and friendly environment where we celebrate the uniqueness of each child and nurture God-given talents and gifts.

Our mission 'To live, love and learn like Jesus' exemplifies how we encourage children to be the very best that they can be. We quickly identify your child's strengths and build their learning around this, creating opportunities for them to succeed. We identify areas that your child may find more difficult and think about how we can support them further to make their next steps in their learning.

We aim to provide your child with endless opportunities that enable them to discover their talents and start to build firm foundations on which to grow. Our learning in the Early Years focuses on practical experiences, discovery and play. Our high staff: children ratios ensures that your child is always at the centre of learning and making excellent progress through the year.



Our Nursery Team



Class	Name	Qualification
Head of EYFS Reception Class teacher	Mrs Rachel Ravat	BSc PGCE
Cygnets	Mrs Katie Williams (Lead Teacher, Part-time)	BA with QTS PGCE EY's
	TBC (Lead teacher, Part-time)	
	Miss Emma Angus (Assistant)	NVQ Level 3
	TBC (Assistant, Part-time)	
Swans	Miss Nikita Langton (Lead Teacher)	BA Level 6
	Miss Emma Lacey (Assistant)	NVQ Level 3

Class	Name	Qualification
Reception	Mrs Nicola Dexter (Teacher)	BA with QTS
	Mrs Amy Keeling (Teacher)	BEd
	Mrs Danielle Grant (Teacher, maternity leave from September)	BEd
	Miss Leah Driver (Assistant)	
	Mrs Rosie Muse (Assistant, currently on maternity leave)	NVQ Level 4
	TBC (Assistant)	

Our School Day

We start each day in the great outdoors. Children can be dropped off from 8am at our Nursery gate where you will be greeted by one of our friendly staff members. Our Cygnets, Swans and Reception children play together in our playground with access to a wide variety of equipment such as bikes and scooters, sand, small world and creative play.

No school day is ever quite the same. The children have access to a wide range of specialist teachers and learning opportunities that are all tailored to your child's stage of development. Our Reception classrooms are made up of different learning areas which the children access independently throughout their day. These include a role-play area, a small world and construction area, a scientific and explorative area and a creative area where children can use a wealth of arts and craft materials. We also have our own outdoor garden where we grow vegetables, explore nature and make 'tasty' creations in our mud kitchen. Large scale construction materials are also available in this space for children to create obstacle courses, pirate ships and anything else that their imagination desires.

Cygnets and Swans are based across 2 classrooms and also have their own outdoor area that is purpose built and filled with exploratory items linked to the different areas of the Early Years Curriculum.

Children in all classes have specialist teachers for Physical Education and Music and in Reception, this also extends to French. The children attend weekly assemblies celebrating our learning. Reception children also attend weekly Chaplaincy and Class Assemblies. Regularly, we come together as a whole school for Mass and other liturgical events in the Catholic calendar in our beautiful college chapel.

	Cygnets and Swans	Reception
Drop off	8.00	8.00
Registration	8.30	8.45
Assembly	8.35 – 8.55	
Morning activities	9.00-10.20	8.45-10.15
Snack and break	10.20-10.55	10.20-10.55
Phonics	11-11.20	11-11.30
Lunch	11.30-12.15	11.40-12.15
Playtime	12.15-13.00	12.15-13.00
Afternoon activities	13.00-15.15	13.00-15.15
Storytime	15.15-15.30	15.15-15.30
Pick up	15.30-16.00	15.30-16.00
Aftercare	16.00-18.00	16.00-18.00

After school care

We offer an 'Aftercare' facility after school from 4-6pm. This is based in the Nursery building and is run by members of the Nursery team. During Aftercare, children are offered a light tea and a variety of activities such as arts and crafts, yoga and board games.

Your child can be collected either between 5:10-5:20pm or between 5:50-6pm. Aftercare is charged at £9 an hour, therefore you will be charged £9 for the first hour or £18 if your child stays until 6pm. This will be added to your termly school bill.

Please complete your pick up collections on a weekly basis using the Parent App.

Please ensure that you have collected your child by 6pm.



Co-curricular Activities

There are a number of afterschool clubs available to children in Cygnets, Swans and Reception. You sign up to these at the beginning of each term, via the Parent App, and they are charged termly on your school bill.

Reception:

LAMDA

Ballet

Swimming

Multisports

Cygnets and Swans:

Swimming

Multisports

Please note parents will need to take their child to swimming lessons. All other clubs are staffed by teachers and/or Nursery staff.

The EYFS Curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development in the EYFS curriculum.

The three prime areas include:

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

The four specific areas of learning include:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Throughout your child's day at Ratcliffe, they will have endless opportunities through teacher and child led activities to develop their skills in all of these different areas. The Nursery staff work hard to ensure inspiring and exciting activities are in the classroom, knowing that this will foster curiosity and engagement, as well as ensure progression of learning and skills.



The EYFS Curriculum

Maths

The first few years of a child's life are especially important for mathematical development and therefore it is fully embedded in our Early Years Curriculum. Teachers have all attended courses run by Karen Wilding, a leading Maths consultant and specialist in Early Years Maths. We deliver maths through the 'White Rose' programme. More details of this can be found here: <https://whiterosemaths.com/>

Alongside the discreet teaching of Maths we put a strong emphasis on empowering children to feel confident in their mathematical capabilities and using their skills in every day life. This is through their ability to problem solve, spot patterns and make links in their learning. All of this forms the basis when we are planning the activities that are available for the children to freely choose in their classroom and outdoor spaces. The children are given a wealth of opportunities to “put into practice” independently, the knowledge, skills and understanding they have been taught throughout play based activities.



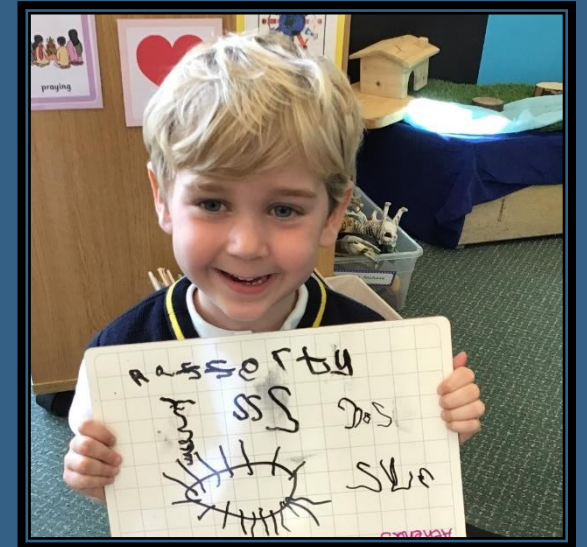
The EYFS Curriculum

Phonics

We teach the children how to read and write in Phonics. We use the phonics programme 'Little Wandle', which provides a complete teaching programme which meets all the expectations of the National Curriculum.

During your child's time with us they will be guided along their phonics journey at a rate that is appropriate for their stage of development. On entry into Cygnets, children will be assessed to gauge their current level of phonics knowledge. This is different for every child and therefore ensures we place your child in the correct phonics group to help them flourish. Within Phase 1 children will learn to distinguish between different sounds in their natural environment and also those that they can create themselves such as instrumental sounds. These skills are vital to master first, in order for children to be able to listen for initial sounds in words as they progress later down the line. Once children have mastered this skill they will progress to learning initial letter phonemes and then finally progress to blending and segmenting (reading and spelling) whole words. In Reception children are taught as a class.

Further details can be found here: <https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/>



The EYFS Curriculum

RE and PSHCE

We follow the 'Come and See' programme to teach all aspects of Religious Education. This is the agreed syllabus for all Catholic schools shared by the Nottingham Diocese. Learning is taught through three themes: Local, Domestic and Universal Church which enables children to learn about a Catholic way of living alongside exploring other world faiths. We enjoy celebrating many different festivals through the school year including Diwali, Eid and Sukkot alongside Christmas and Easter.

In Reception we start to use the programme 'Life to the Full'. It has been specifically designed for Catholic primary schools and has become an increasingly important part of the curriculum. The programme includes teaching about personal health, physical and emotional wellbeing, emotions, parts of the body and relationships.



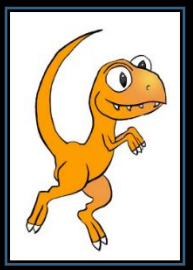
Characteristics of Learning

The way in which children engage with other people and their environment underpins the learning that takes place. We want the children and those around them to have more understanding of the many different ways that we learn and thus we have created our own dinosaurs, each of which represents a different way of learning.

Playing and Exploring

Exploraptor

The Exploraptor likes to explore and is curious about the world, often using their senses to find out more. They enjoy having interests.



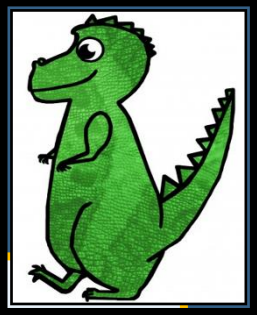
Pretendosaur

The Pretendosaur likes acting and pretending to be someone else. The Pretendosaur is often found in the role play area!



Challenge Rex

The Challenge-Rex loves a challenge and is always ready to give anything a go. They have a 'can-do' attitude and enjoy taking risks and learning from new experiences.



Active Learning

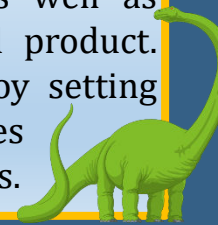
Stickosaurus

The Stickosaurus pays attention to detail, is able to focus for a long time and is not easily distracted from their task.



Proudodocus

The Proudodocus is proud of *how* they have achieved a task as well as their end product. They enjoy setting themselves challenges.



Tryceratops

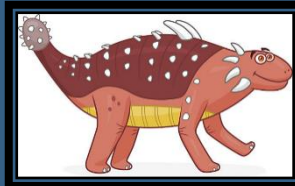
The Tryceratops continually tries, even when something is difficult. They are very good at attempting something in a different way, if the first way didn't solve the problem.



Creating and Thinking Critically

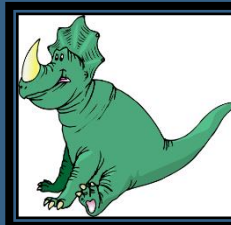
Thinkosaurus

The Thinkosaurus finds ways to solve problems. They like to think of their own ideas and often find new ways to do something.



Solveatops

The Solveatops plans how to solve a problem. They review how their work is going and are able to change their strategy if need be.



Linkodactyl

The Linkodactyl is able to make links between different things they have learnt. They like to make predictions about what might happen next and enjoy testing ideas.



School Uniform

Additional information about uniform can be found in the Ratcliffe College whole school handbook.

All school uniform can be brought from:

<https://www.schoolblazer.com/>

PE uniform can be bought from Playerlayer:

<https://playerlayer.com/>

Waterproof trousers and coats used for Outdoor Learning and book bags are bought from Nursery and will be charged to your school bill.

Please supply a water bottle and wellies. These can be any colour.



Catering

Nursery children enjoy a nutritional hot lunch in the Gentili Room, above the Sports Hall. Year 1 and 2 also eat in this area. Coming together as a school for these occasions means Ratcliffe College maintains a 'family feel'.

Children view three different trays of food: a meat dish, a vegetarian dish and a pasta/jacket potato option. Having selected their meal they sit at the lunch table and are served their dinner on a tray. Dessert is brought to them separately. There is a main pudding or fruit alternative. By encouraging children to choose their meal from a selection of well balanced options, it helps to give them independence over their own eating habits from an early age.

Our food is locally sourced wherever possible.

Three wonderful Nursery lunchtime supervisors assist the children in cutting up their food and providing them with the support they need to enjoy their lunch. Their names are Mrs Garner, Mrs Laverie and Mrs Canham. At least one member of nursery staff is also on duty.

Children with allergies or medical needs that have specific dietary requirements are catered for and should speak to Mrs Ravat or Mr Studd (Catering Manager) gstudd@ratcliffecollege.com



Communication with school

Information

The following can be used to obtain up-to-date information about Ratcliffe Nursery:

Prep School Weekly Newsletter - This is emailed to parents every Friday. It contains information about events that have happened during the week, both in the PS and the Nursery.

Ratcliffe College App - Please ensure you are signed up to the App. All letters and messages are sent home via the app.

School Calendar - Important dates for the upcoming term.

School website - General information

Social Media (Instagram/Facebook/Twitter)
- Celebratory news

Reports and Parent's Evenings

All children will receive a full report at the end of every academic year. Children in Swans receive a short report at the end of the Autumn Term and Cygnets receive a Progress Tracker. The reports are always sent online via SIMS. Please ensure you keep hold of your username and password when you are sent these details from the Administration Team when your child begins Nursery.

There is a Parent's Evening in the Autumn Term. A second Parent's Evening is held in the Spring Term.

Tapestry

Children all have their own personal online learning journal on Tapestry. Parents can access this via the website or App.

We regularly upload photographs of your child's learning. Some of this is individual learning and some of this will be group or class learning.

We also invite you to share activities or learning that your child has completed at home. These can become helpful discussion aids in communicating with your child about their home experiences.

Procedures

Sickness

If your child is absent from school due to sickness, please inform Mrs Ravat or Mrs Thorley at PS Reception.

Medication

Please complete a form at the Nursery gate, if your child needs medication through the day. Nursery staff are able to give medication and always do so with two members of staff present.

Holidays

If your child is in Cygnets and Swans, please let Mrs Ravat know of any term-time holidays. If your child is in Reception, your child must attend school full time and therefore any holidays must be authorised by Mrs Minford, Head of the Prep School.

Collection

At the beginning of the year, an authorisation form needs to be completed on the Parent App, detailing anyone you authorise to collect your child. They must be aged 16 or over. On the initial collection, if Nursery staff have not already been introduced to the new family member or friend, please could they bring ID to show a member of the Nursery staff.

School readiness

It is helpful for your child to have a degree of independence with the following skills in preparation for their new start at Nursery.

Cygnets

- I can go to the toilet by myself. I might need help wiping my bottom or fastening my clothing.
- I can put on my coat.
- I am beginning to recognise the first letter in my name.
- I can count to 5 and know some counting nursery rhymes.
- I can feed myself.
- I can walk up and down stairs using a handrail.
- I know how to ask for help.

Swans

- I can get undressed and dressed by myself for PE. I might need support with fastenings.
- I can put on and zip up my coat.
- I can recognise my name.
- I can count to 10.
- I am beginning to cut up my own food.
- I can start to make healthy food choices.

Reception

- I can go to the toilet by myself.
- I can put on and zip up my coat
- I recognise and am beginning to write my name.
- I can count to 10 and am beginning to recognise some numerals.
- I can cut up my own food.
- I can try new foods.

Ratcliffe Nursery Parent Association

A warm welcome to Ratcliffe College from the Parents' Association!

We are a group of parent volunteers who aim to add to the pupil and parent experience through socials, fundraising and relevant year group communications. Please contact PA@ratcliffecollege.com for more information.

We also run the second hand uniform shop.

This is based on site and is a great source of stock and advice. Please contact PAshop@ratcliffecollege.com to book a shopping slot.

Key dates in the school calendar

Autumn term

- Parent's evenings
- Phonics and Numeracy workshops for parent's
- Services – Harvest Assembly and Christingle
- Nativity plays

Spring Term

- Reception class assemblies
- Parent's Evenings
- Services – Mother's Day and Easter

Summer Term

- Sport's Day
- Celebration Afternoon

Additionally, each term do look out for PS and Nursery Mass, which parents are welcome to join. In Reception, parents are also able to join Year Group Liturgies which takes place with KS1.

All holiday dates for the academic year ahead are available on our school website.

Helpful contacts

Who do I contact about...?	Name	Contact details
My child's learning	Your child's classs teacher: Cygnets – Mrs Williams Swans – Miss Langton Reception – Mrs Ravat/Mrs Dexter or Mrs Keeling	kwilliams@ratcliffecollege.com nlanton@ratcliffecollege.com rravat@ratcliffecollege.com ndexter@ratcliffecollege.com akeeling@ratcliffecollege.com
Changes to pick up times	Mrs Thorley / Mrs Curtis (Prep School Receptionists) Nursery answer phone	prepadmin@ratcliffecollege.com 01509 817010 01509 817088
Changes to sessions (Cygnets and Swans)	Helen Brady (Nursery Admissions) Mrs Ravat	hbrady@ratcliffecollege.com rravat@ratcliffecollege.com
Billing enquiries	Gabriela Stefanik	gstefanik@ratcliffecollege.com
	Mrs Minford Head of Preparatory School	sminford@ratcliffecollege.com