

Welcome

to Swalecliffe Community Primary School





Ben Cooper
Executive Headteacher

Welcome...

to Swalecliffe Primary School and our happy, welcoming and inclusive school. We are so glad you have chosen us and are really looking forward to meeting you and your child.

At Swalecliffe we believe in a **child first, pupil second philosophy**. Put simply, we understand that unhappy children will not learn effectively and that taking a genuine interest in them is vital.

I can promise you that Swalecliffe is a place where your child will be **cared for and cared about**. It is a place where progress in any field is celebrated in a culture which is **caring and tolerant** whilst demanding **the highest standards of learning, achievement and behaviour**.


We offer a broad, child-centered curriculum which offers children learning that is relevant and exciting, whilst ensuring they develop essential skills in reading, writing and maths.


We believe that Early Years and the start of school is the most important thing to get right and this prospectus and the 'Information for Parent's Guide' is designed to address some of your queries.

If there is anything you are still unsure about please, don't hesitate to contact us to ask questions or gather the information you need to help you and your family settle into our school.

Mr Cooper

 Swalecliffe Community
Primary School,
Bridgefield Road, Whitstable
CT5 2PH

 01227 272 101

 office@swalecliffe.kent.sch.uk

 www.swalecliffeschool.org

Starting School

We do all we can to welcome children to our school and settle them in. Before school starts, we will meet with their parents, visit their nursery and organise story times as well as stay and play sessions to help them familiarise themselves with our school.

The school day begins at 8.40am and all gates close at 8.45am. Because we understand that starting a new school can be daunting, there is always a friendly face on the gate to greet our children and their families.

Uniform is simple and smart. It helps the children to feel a sense of belonging to our school community. Your child will be assigned to one of our three school houses (Gulls, Herons or Puffins) for sports days and learning house points from week to week.

We encourage all parents to take advantage of our 'Pre-Loved Uniform' initiative as it cuts down waste and expense. If you wish to buy new then you can order it from the [Coastal Uniform Company](#) or [Barnums School Wear](#).

All equipment is provided by the school and when the children start in the reception classes they are given a school book bag from the PFA.



A Day in Reception

The children are met at the classroom door by their teacher every morning and they soon learn the routines of the day. After registration, they put away their book bag and start their Early Morning Work, practising key skills and chatting with their friends.

After a short session of maths teaching, the children are busy with games and activities that use objects to develop their number sense before moving on to **free choice activities** (Discovery Time) set up indoors and out.



Lunch is served in the dinner hall, **cooked fresh daily by our own kitchen staff**. Staff are always on hand to help the children tuck in.

During the day the Early Years classes will attempt the **Daily Mile** - many of them using the balance bikes to cover the distance!

Stories, Book Talk and songs are used throughout the day and we always finish with these as the classes enjoy a quiet time before they prepare for home.

Snack time is always enjoyed! The school receive **fresh fruit or vegetables** every day for the children to snack on and milk is delivered for those who wish to have it.

After a **play outside**, running and climbing and seeing their friends, they return to class to learn new sounds in phonics and practise blending and segmenting words, using Twinkl Phonics.



Our Curriculum

Reception is a careful balance of directed tasks and child-initiated activities to ensure that the children progress in all areas of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. This includes:

Physical Development

Children develop physical control and co-ordination through the **use of climbing equipment and small apparatus** such as balls, bean bags and hoops. They develop their **fine motor skills** by using scissors. They learn to be healthy and safe.

Communication, Language and Literacy

Children develop their communication skills through **speaking and listening, phonics, reading** and writing. They are provided with opportunities to develop these skills through play where their progress is closely tracked.

Mathematical Development

Early mathematical experiences are taught through practical activities, **rhymes, stories, number games** and songs. These include aspects such as weight, length, position, shape as well as number and calculation

Understanding the World

Children are encouraged to explore their immediate environment and find out about the world around them. They have opportunities to use **scientific apparatus such as magnets**, magnifying glasses, and technology such as programmable toys. Children learn about **other cultures and beliefs** by celebrating a range of festivals such as the Chinese New Year.

Personal, Social and Emotional

The children **learn to co-operate with others**, to share and take turns. They develop their self-confidence and independence, whilst developing personal values through an understanding of right and wrong and an awareness of the needs of others.

Literacy

The children begin their journey to literacy, **learning to match sounds** and blend and segment letters before using these skills in their reading and writing.

Expressive Arts and Design

Children learn to express their **thoughts and feelings** in a creative way. They explore the different role play areas, respond imaginatively to music and create things in 2 and 3 dimensions.



Outdoor Learning

Forest School

Science Garden

Our **dedicated science garden** is complete with a pond area which we use to learn about living things in a beautiful setting. The separate science classroom located there is equipped with interactive resources and all the equipment we need for pond dipping or tending to our vegetable garden.



All students use our Forest School weekly and it is an extremely popular way of improving, resilience, independence, collaboration and reflection.

The school has a **vast outdoor wooded area** at the back of our sports pitches where children are allowed to take reasonable risks and learn new skills in an outdoor natural space.

These sessions are also intended to build self-esteem and confidence.

Daily Mile

All children participate in a Daily Mile. We have invested in an **all-weather track** (helped by our brilliant PFA) to run on and whether they are running or using the balance bikes, the children benefit from daily exercise in the fresh air

Sports Facilities

Our stunning grounds give plenty of opportunity for sports and we make the most of our **field pitches, playground courts and practice areas.**

During the day and after school, they are in use for our children to develop their skills and compete.



OPAL



Science Garden

OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) is a whole-school approach that aims to improve children's wellbeing, social skills, physical activity, and ability to manage risk through enhanced play opportunities during school playtimes. This means our children will experience more active, imaginative, and sociable play, leading to better behaviour, increased happiness, and a richer understanding of the world, often involving donations of loose parts and more messy, challenging play outdoors.

Our Play Charter - Created by our Children

SWALECLIFFE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL PLAY CHARTER

Every child has the right to play safely and happily. So we agree that:

We **RESPECT** each other – everyone is welcome and we share.

We **RESPECT** the equipment and environment. We tidy everything away.

We keep our friends and ourselves **SAFE**.

We are **READY** to play and wear the clothes we need.

We are **CREATIVE** in our play.

We are **COURAGEOUS** to try new things and take positive risks.

We are **KIND**.



Our Local Area

We are committed to using the local area to support and enhance the curriculum. **Visits to the local beach and library** are common and a great venue for orienteering, art and photography projects.

As a founding member of the Coastal Alliance Co-Operative Trust (CACOT), our students benefit from sharing activities with 16 other local schools. This has opportunities for a Children's Forum made up of all of the school councils as well as poetry competitions.

Our co-operative values see us plan for the children to undertake three **Life Skills Challenges** every year. Challenges see them developing their Entrepreneurial Skills, Serve the Community (for example collecting supplies for the Food Bank, or taking part in the Whitstable Carnival) and Making a Positive Contribution to the School.

“

Independence, collaboration, reflection and resilience are the four qualities and skills we want all children to have





Wider Opportunities

Trips and Visits

The curriculum is enhanced by **carefully planned school trips** which the children always look forward to. We explore the Ramsgate Tunnels as part of the World War Two connector work in Year 6; we have visited the Marlowe Theatre to bring stories to life and to the Beaney in Canterbury, as well a trips to London to the British Museum and the Science Museum. Trips are designed to give that sense of awe and wonder and funding is available to ensure no one misses out.

Closer to home, we welcome visitors able to help students experience life as a stone age settler or medieval knight, puppet a giant Chinese dragon or marvel at the stars in a pop-up astrodome.



After School Clubs

After school clubs are run each term and we try to strike a balance between sports and other activities. Options include football and dodgeball but we also run a Chess Club, Lego Coding Club and have a group making friendship bracelets too! Our Lego Club often participate in national competitions.

Music

Music is an important part of our school life, and all the children will take part in **school productions**. Children will learn to play instruments such as ocarinas, ukelele, recorder and djembe drums whilst with us. **Music tutors visit the school** to teach anyone who would like to learn other specific instruments and our Rock Steady programme sees them able to learn to perform in a small band.



Language Teaching

Although the teaching of modern foreign languages isn't compulsory at primary school, we teach French informally from Year 1 and formally from Year 3. **Our students are pen pals** with Dainville, the town Whitstable is twinned with in Northern France.

School Council

Each **class elects their own representative on the School Council**. They meet regularly with the support of our School Council Lead Teacher to discuss ideas for improving the school and often become involved with joint projects with other local schools.

Subject Champions

In the later years, students are encouraged to apply to be subject champions and work with staff to **develop activities and events which share their love of their favourite subjects**. Our English subject champions run a Book Swap and competitions; our Geography champions have run an Earth Day assembly.

Sport

Children are encouraged to participate in a wide range of sporting opportunities and we make sure that we give **everyone the chance to represent the school** in competitions before they leave us. Last year, over 200 children represented the school in an interschool competition with our students awarded medals in district competitions for netball, athletics, football, hockey and cross country. Our girls team won the district football league!

Our children are **taught to swim** by instructors at Whitstable Swimming Pool and supported to gain their Cycling Proficiency Test with Bikeability in Year 5

I loved the The Kent School Games because everyone worked as a team. My favourite events were the vertical jump and the soft javelin.

ALFIE, YEAR 6 PUPIL



Reading at Swalecliffe



Swalecliffe Community Primary School is passionate about reading!

We value reading as a lifelong skill and are dedicated in our aim to ensure that our children become readers for life who read for pleasure.

Reading permeates our day: from the moment our pupils come through the door as part of Early Morning Work, through story time, class assemblies or time spent in our library. We lend children books to read with you and run a Book Club in Years 1-6.

We teach whole class reading with 'Book Talk' and have guided reading sessions in Year R and 1. As a school we currently have two **adopted authors** (Lucy Strange and Anne Fine) and encourage our students to read their books and meet with them as a way to encourage their love for reading and stories. Lucy has visited school for three years in a row! World Book Day is always hugely celebrated and a rip-roaring success.

By the time children leave Swalecliffe Community Primary School, they are competent readers who can recommend books to their peers, have a thirst for reading a range of genres including poetry, and participate in discussions about books, including evaluating an author's use of language and the impact this can have on the reader.



“

I'm a literacy specialist and visit schools all over Kent but rarely do I find somewhere where the love of reading is so strong as is it at Swalecliffe.

BONNIE, GOVERNOR

Ready, Respectful, Safe



Children at Swalecliffe are expected to be “Ready, Respectful and Safe” at all times. Staff aim to build positive relationships with the children in their care, set expectations and recognise and praise when they see behaviour which impacts positively on others. Rewards including house points, Star Learning badges and celebrating Shining Stars are a regular part of the **Celebration Assembly for each key stage**.

Where children struggle to follow our behaviour expectations we have bespoke positive behaviour plans in place to reinforce positive decisions. The school has our **‘Hub’ which is a room** outside the classroom which children can use to self regulate, talk, access support and reset in difficult situations. We have a full time senior Mental Health Lead on the staff.

We believe dealing with children’s behaviour requires consistent, calm adult behaviour at home and in school. **We support parents** in this through a programme called ‘When the Adult’s Change’ by Paul Dix so that conduct, routines and difficult discussions can be consistent.

Swalecliffe Community Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Regular training sessions are held for staff and adults working in school to maintain this awareness and our Child Protection Policy and procedures in place and all staff, volunteers and governors are aware of these procedures.

[Our policies are available for parents to read on our website.](#)



The annual Positive Noticing Day sees pupils, staff and parents take time to highlight pupils positive traits. It was very powerful for my son and a great example of the ethos at Swalecliffe

CHARLOTTE, YEAR 4 PARENT

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Ben Cooper
Executive
Headteacher



Leah Garton
Head of School



Kate Roy
Acting Deputy Head

Our Community

We are proud to have a dedicated team of teachers, TAs and support staff looking after your children. Staff retention is high and our community is well supported by parents and grandparents.

The governing body of Swalecliffe is made up of staff, parents and members of the local community who provide strategic oversight of the school. We aim to be a critical friend to our staff in order that we can ensure a safe school with the best outcomes for our children.

The current governing body is Chris Cornell (Chair), Ben McPhee (Vice Chair), Helen Taylor, Michael Fairs, Tracey Saunders, Sarah Roberts, Jo Beck and Bonnie Amos. You can contact us by emailing governor@swalecliffe.kent.sch.uk.



Carly Ramsey
Chair of PFA

Chris Cornell
Chair of Governors



The Parent and Families Association (PFA) enjoy organising activities and events for our children and families and raise money whilst doing so.

Most recently, the PFA have agreed to fund the **OPAL approach to playtimes** which will increase engagement and enjoyment for all children at playtimes and lunchtimes.

They make regular annual contributions towards items or events, such as providing the funding for book bags and water bottles for the new reception children, some school trips, and treats for the children throughout the year. You can get involved by emailing pfa@swalecliffe.kent.sch.uk

Useful Information

Nursery

We are delighted to have the ABC Nursery on our school site and work closely with them to ensure a smooth transition into school for all children transferring to us. They also provide an excellent **Breakfast Club** and **After School Club** for children from our school- dropping off and picking up to and from the classroom door. For more details, you can ring ABC on 07723-546472 or email enquiries@abcpreschoolswalecliffe.co.uk



Admissions

Year R September 2026

Choosing a school for your child is one of the biggest decisions you will make for them, and we know you will be desperate to choose the right one. We are here to help you every step of the way and to answer your questions. We would love to welcome you on a tour of the school and show you all our lovely school has to offer your child. For further details, please contact our school office on 01227 272101 and ask to speak to Mrs Rowe or email on office@swalecliffe.kent.sch.uk

Details about joining the Reception year group in September 2026 can be found on our website.

Year 3 September 2026

If your child is looking for a junior place in September 2026, we can admit children at that point in their school career where space allows. Once again, do book a tour and take the opportunity to ask any questions you have.

In Year Admissions

For those of you who have children wishing to join our school in other year groups, please contact the school office if you have any queries regarding places, would like to join our waiting list, or would like a tour of the school.

Once you have decided that you would like a place at our school, please complete the In-Year Admission Form on our website to add your child to our list of enquiries.



UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD



SOLIHULL APPROACH

