



HAMILTON
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Prospectus 2016/17

Hamilton Primary School
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Vision Statement

Our vision is for a school that provides a quality education in a caring, creative environment conducive to learning. Our school motivates each child in a positive way and helps them to find interest, satisfaction, enjoyment and a sense of achievement in their schoolwork and a sense of wonder in the world around them.

We value:

- Compassion
- Integrity
- Courage
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Fairness
- Wisdom
- Hope

Code of Conduct

Hamilton School's Code of Conduct is:

Be Kind. Be Safe. Be Responsible.

Introduction

This prospectus, compiled by Governors and Staff, is a formal statement of the school's policies, aims and philosophy. It also sets out the aspirations of the school, which reflect not only the concerns of the parents, carers, staff and governors, but also the steer given to us by central government. It is further intended to give general guidance on particular issues to parents/carers and other interested people.

Hamilton's Governing Body is representative of parents, staff, the Local Authority (LA) and local community. The school has an experienced staff, a wide range of skills amongst the governors and benefits from strong parental/carer support, both in the classroom and in fundraising through the committed and hardworking PSA.

The school was judged outstanding by Ofsted in July 2008 and again in November 2014. We are proud of these achievements, however not complacent and we continue to strive to support and challenge the school's excellent staff and leadership team to move ever forwards. I would encourage you to come and look around; talk to our staff and children and see for yourself!

Lyndsay Fildes
Acting Chair of Governors

A letter of welcome from the Headteacher

This prospectus is designed to give you a flavour of the school. We recognise that choosing the right school for your child is a very important decision. You are therefore welcome to visit the school during the day where you will be able to experience the happy and hardworking atmosphere in all of our classrooms and learning spaces.

Hamilton is a large primary school with approximately 420 children on roll. These children are split across 14 classes with the infants learning on the ground floor and the juniors learning on the first floor.

The school was built in 1914 and as such has its own sense of history; having been a military hospital, a secondary school and also having survived local bombing in the Second World War. We are very proud of our place within the local community and try to encourage links with the local church, the Salvation Army, Colchester Food Bank and our local residential care homes.

As a school we understand that the relationship we have with parents is crucial to ensure that our pupils progress as well as possible. We therefore have an expectation that parents will engage with the school through Learning Conferences (Parents' Evenings) so that we can inform them of recent progress and to help refine and set appropriate targets for their child. Parents are most welcome to attend and support events in the school calendar such as sports days, assemblies, special services, and other extra-curricular activities. A termly 'parents' forum' is run so that

information on up and coming activities and initiatives can be shared and feedback sought. We also encourage feedback from our parents via regular questionnaires, email and through chatting to me on the school playground in the mornings or after school.

We aim to provide a learning environment that supports children of all abilities and teaches them how to be a citizen in the 21st century.

I am proud to lead a team of committed professionals at Hamilton. You can make an appointment to see the school in action by telephoning the school office.

We look forward to meeting you.

Nick Hutchings
Headteacher

Starting School

Starting school is the first big step on the road to independence for all children. It can be an emotional time for children and parents/carers alike, so at Hamilton we try to make this transfer as pleasant and trouble free as possible. New parents/carers of Foundation Stage children are invited to a meeting prior to admission and “trial” visits are arranged for their child. For older children who start part of the way through the School, it can be similarly worrying and we try to provide arrangements that help to ensure they settle into the School as quickly and happily as possible.

Admissions Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the booklet ‘Primary Education in Essex’ produced annually by Essex County Council and available from LA, Planning and Admissions Department, Tel: 0345 603 2200. The ‘Primary Education in Essex’ document is available online at <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Admissions/Pages/Admissions.aspx> Essex has introduced a coordinated admissions scheme and you must apply on the Common Application Form for Essex Schools.

Admission of Pupils

- The maximum number of pupils admitted to each Year Group will be:
60 children in Key Stage 1 (Reception to Year 2)
60 children in Key Stage 2 (Year 3 to Year 6)
- For entry into Reception an application should be made to the LA in the previous academic year. The closing date for applications is published in the ‘Primary Education in Essex’ booklet available every October from Planning and Admissions. Applications after that date will only be considered after those that were made by the closing date.
- For entry into other year groups an application should be made to the Local Authority. If there are more applications than places available the over-subscription criteria, below, will be applied to decide between applications. If the appropriate year group is at or above the admission number of 60 then the application will be refused.

Over –Subscription

In the event of over-subscription, places will be allocated using the following criteria in the order given:-

1. Looked After Children and previously looked after children (as defined in Primary Education in Essex booklet).

2. Children with a sibling* attending the School.
3. Children living in the priority admission area.
4. Remaining applications.

In the event of over subscription within any of the above criteria, priority will be determined by straight-line distance from home to school, those living closest being given the highest priority.

Admission into the Foundation Stage

As required by law, primary schools provide full-time admission for all children offered a place in the reception year group from the September following their fourth birthday. This means that you have the right to a full time place at the school your child is offered from September. Research has shown that outcomes are better for reception children who start school in September.

Parents/carers are encouraged to consult the Local Authority publication 'Primary Education in Essex' for full details.

Address Checking

The Local Authority may ask a random sample of applicants to provide proof of their home address. This must be a copy of one of the following:

- UK driving licence
- Council tax notification
- Two utility bills dated within the last six months (gas, electricity, water or landline phone).

Administration of Admissions and Appeals

The Local Authority has approved this policy. If a child is refused a place at the School, their parents/carer have the right to appeal to an independent panel against the decision. Information on how to appeal will be sent with a refusal.

N.B. There is no guarantee of a place in the School even for pupils whose parents live in the priority admission area.

*'Sibling' – this is defined in the 'Primary Education in Essex Booklet'.

The Curriculum

We follow the Government guidelines regarding the teaching of the basic subjects such as English and Maths but also fully support teaching across the curriculum in a thematic way to make learning more interesting and meaningful. Teachers also

provide additional work in “mini” topics to ensure balance and continuity. Children are taught the fundamental knowledge and skills necessary to complement understanding. Teachers meet several times a week to plan their day-to-day work, record their pupil assessments and develop their teaching strategies to ensure we provide a varied and balanced syllabus in which all abilities are catered for. They also meet at the end of each term on several occasions to formulate long term plans to guarantee continuity and progression, both within a year group and throughout the school.

There are two parallel classes for each particular age group and they are arranged as mixed ability groups. Each class in the school will pursue a range of activities and have a variety of books and resources to cater for individual needs. Teaching methods will vary according to what is appropriate. On occasions children will receive individual and/or group support, while at other times the class will be taught as one unit. Such methods help to ensure that all children receive more individual help from the teacher, who will be able to leave other groups within the classroom to work on their own while they concentrate on individual children requiring their expert guidance. We try wherever possible to pursue children’s learning through first-hand experience and practical, purposeful activities, to help to sustain motivation and enhance understanding.

The school actively promotes the Creative Arts, for example, Music and Art, in order to provide the broader opportunities to the children in our school.

Expectations are also a significant factor influencing children’s performance and we will encourage all children to develop the highest standards of which they are individually capable, in all aspects of their education.

Class visits to places of interest are made to enrich the children’s language and experience, and sometimes theatre groups or visitors come to the school for the same purpose.

All pupils are expected to undertake homework as set and our Homework Policy, which can be seen at the school office or on the school website (www.hamiltonprimary.com) provides details of the requirements for each year group. Generally, Homework in Key Stage 1 is more informal and ranges from reading to some fun, “find out” type activities. Gradually, in Key Stage 2 the Homework becomes a little more demanding and formal, but we try to ensure it is not boring and sterile and is set to help develop pupils’ skills and understanding.

Through this child centred approach to learning we endeavour to provide equal opportunities for all children whatever their ability, sex / ethnic / cultural / faith / situational background.

Details of the School’s Policy for each curriculum area can be seen in the School Policy Documents. These and all other Policy Documents are available at the school or on the school’s website.

Religious Education

R.E. is not part of the National Curriculum but it is still a legal requirement. We try and integrate Religious Education into other areas of the curriculum but where this is not possible, or appropriate, additional R.E. will take place. An act of Collective Worship will take place daily either as a large group in the Hall or in smaller groups in a classroom. This will take place in a variety of forms. Ministers of local churches and others are invited to take part from time to time. The R.E. programme will not be distinctive of any particular denomination but will be broadly Christian in character. All parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from R.E. and Collective Worship.

P.S.H.E. (Personal, Social and Health Education)

This is an intrinsic part of every aspect of School life, but in addition we provide a more focused approach where it is deemed necessary. For example, classes use "Circle Time" to air mutual concerns and there is an active Pupil Council, which ensures pupils can be involved in decisions made. We teach the following Core Values to the children: Compassion, Integrity, Courage, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Wisdom and Hope.

Sex Education in the School is part of this programme. Wherever possible we incorporate this in an informal way as part of ongoing work. If however, due to particular circumstances which arise from time to time, we feel there is a need for special input, whether in an individual class or the School as a whole, then Sex Education is also taught in this way. Specific, more formal sex education lessons occur in Years 2, 5 and 6. Parents/Carers are invited to attend a preview of these formal sessions. All parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education provided.

Sporting Activities

Although we do not have a school field, we try to include a range of sporting activities in the curriculum, using the Abby Fields for Junior pupils. The activities include, hockey, rounders, football, mini rugby, netball, athletics and cricket. The Infant pupils generally undertake all their sporting activities at the school and they tend to focus on skill development.

In addition during one term Year 5 pupils have swimming lessons instead of their usual games lesson. Various members of staff and professional coaches also run after school clubs for sport and these pupils have the opportunity to compete against other schools.

We have links with local sports centres and try to take advantage of the facilities they provide from time to time. In addition we invite sports specialists for demonstrations whenever it is possible. For example representatives from Essex County Cricket Club came to demonstrate cricket skills. Also 'Short Tennis' Coaching has been given to the Juniors and Colchester United in the Community have a regular input

into school sports activities. There is an annual Sports Afternoon for Key Stage 1/Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 children

Extracurricular and Additional Activities

We pride ourselves on the variety of additional opportunities within the School. These vary according to the particular expertise of the staff available.

There are a variety of clubs which take place before School, during the mid-day break or after School, according to the availability of volunteer teachers, the age of the children and the type of activity. All cost incurred by these clubs have to be met by the participants. We would, however, be sympathetic in cases of particular difficulty.

Attendance

Reasons for all absence needs to be reported to the school as soon as possible by note, telephone or in person, as new legislation requires us to publish all unauthorised absence (truancy) and authorised absence (absence not due to sickness, but for which the school has given its approval). Other than for illness, the school can only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances and these are listed in the school's attendance policy.

If a child doesn't arrive at school by a predetermined time and we have not been informed about this, the school will endeavour to locate a parent in order to ensure the child is safe.

If unauthorised absence (truancy) becomes a concern then the school can ask the LA's Education Welfare Service to issue a Penalty Notice to parents/carers.

All lateness of pupils has to be recorded and this information together with details of all absences have to be shown to a LA representative. We do however, encourage parents/carers to limit all absence and lateness but contact parents/carers if there is a concern.

Accident Insurance of Pupils

Parents/Carers should be aware that their children at school are not covered by personal accident insurance providing automatic compensation in the event of injury. The onus is upon parents to arrange cover if they consider it necessary. The school is insured in respect of legal liability to pupils, but for a claim to succeed, negligence and/or a breach of some statutory duty has to be established.

Administration of Prescribed Medication – School Policy

Whenever possible parents/carers should ask their GP to prescribe medication in dose frequencies which enable it to be taken outside school hours. However, if parents/carers wish the school to administer the medication (*in loco parentis*) they

should give the Headteacher a written request (using the appropriate form) detailing the medication to be given along with the frequency, dosage and any other relevant information (e.g. interaction with other medicines such as paracetamol). Oral information from the pupil or parent/carer will not be acted upon. (A copy of the form required from parents can be obtained from the Office).

If required, the parents/carers will be able to visit the school during the day to administer medication in person.

The parent/carer must supply the medication in a suitable container clearly labelled with:

- the child's name
- the name of the medicine
- the method, dosage and timing of administration
- the date of issue
- the expiry date

Details of possible side effects should also be given.

The medicines should preferably be packed and labelled professionally. Where possible not more than one week's supply should be sent at one time.

It is important that an up to date record of the parent's/carer's home and work telephone numbers be kept so that they can be contacted at any time.

Medicines will be kept in a safe place, separate from the first aid box. Bronchodilators and medications needed in an emergency will be readily accessible. A designated member of staff will be made responsible for administering medication.

Medicines no longer required will be handed back to the parent/carer. If parents/carers do not collect medicines after a reasonable period of time they will be given to a pharmacist for disposal.

Behaviour

The School is a community in which we try to encourage the values of courtesy, speech and dress, through discussion and example linked to our school's Core Values. Although the behaviour of the majority of the children in the school is very good, there are a few children who sometimes need a greater degree of support and control. Experience shows that poor behaviour improves most readily when school and home act in partnership to try and find solutions. Therefore, whenever a child presents particular discipline problems the parents/carers are informed and suitable strategies for improvement are discussed. In order to give structure to the process, children who are demonstrating behavioural problems, are supported through a more formal assessment process. We regularly review our policy on behaviour to ensure standards remain high. A copy of the school policy can be found on the school website.

Bullying incidents are very rare at the school, but we are constantly vigilant so that the present situation prevails. If there is a concern we try to involve all parties in a positive, constructive way to ensure that we establish a long term solution. A copy of the school's policy can be found on our website.

Child Protection

The School has a policy on Child Protection and the documentation is available for inspection from the Office or can be downloaded from our website. Parents/Carers should be aware that it is the duty of the school to report suspected child abuse to Social Care. We do however, try to discuss our concerns with parents/carers whenever possible. DBS checks at an appropriate level are undertaken for all adults who have close contact with children in accordance with regulations.

Communication and Consultation

At the beginning of each school year all parents/carers are invited to meet their child's new teacher and learn about the year ahead. We have an annual Celebration Evening for all parents/carers and children to visit and view the whole school.

For our part we try to keep parents/carers informed about school activities through the regular "Friday Newsletter" which is published via Parent Mail and is a free service for parents/carers. The school also keeps parents/carers informed via the ParentMail texting service. Parents/Carers are strongly encouraged to register with ParentMail to ensure they receive all relevant communications. We like to encourage parents/carers to make regular contact with their child's teacher through Learning Conferences to talk about their progress and to communicate any worries, ideas and/or personal problems they feel might be relevant. To avoid disappointment, as teachers could have other commitments, an appointment is usually recommended. It is always better initially, in most cases, to see your child's class teacher if there are problems, but if problems remain unresolved or there is a more general concern an appointment can be made to see the Headteacher.

As part of our keenness to promote a partnership with parents/carers we ask all new parents to sign a Home/School Agreement, which will be countersigned by the pupils' proposed teacher. This is not compulsory but most parents/carers feel able to make this commitment. Furthermore, we sincerely hope you will make every effort to attend and support any meetings, functions, etc. and accept our invitation to regularly visit the school.

Emergency Information

It is essential that you keep us informed of any changes of address or telephone numbers both at home and at your place of work so we are able to contact you in cases of emergency.

Health and Safety

We try to ensure the health and safety of pupils at all times. The Governors regularly monitor Health and Safety to make certain that the School complies with all statutory requirements. We also try to involve pupils in Health and Safety policies, by educating them about the way they can contribute to their own health and safety. In addition, there is a “No Smoking” policy in the School and all employees and visitors are expected to refrain from smoking on the premises in accordance with Government requirements.

Security

Our aim at all times is to ensure the protection and security of pupils, employees, helpers and other resources at the school, while at the same time trying to ensure the school remains a caring and welcoming place, to which parents/carers can have easy access. The school is fully alarmed and has a range of other security devices. We also have various systems in place to ensure the well being and safety of pupils during the day, including the requirement for all visitors to wear “visitor” badges. Security in the school is reviewed annually to ensure maximum standards are maintained.

Supervision of Pupils Before and After School

The school is not supervised before 8.35 a.m. in the Junior Playground and 8.45 a.m. in the Infant Playground in the morning as teachers have to finalise the preparation of their lessons. There are various Health and Safety matters which arise if pupils are left on their own either before or after school and parents/carers are asked to ensure that they do not leave children in the playground in the mornings prior to the times stated or after school.

The school cannot take responsibility for pupils outside these times, although of course in an emergency we would do our utmost to ensure the health and safety of a child.

Parent/Carer Helpers

At Hamilton we are very lucky to have the support of Parents/Carers who help in a variety of ways, including accompanying classes on visits and assisting teachers in the classroom. We welcome all offers of assistance whether on a regular or irregular basis.

Equal Opportunities

We will constantly strive to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all members of the school community but particularly the pupils. We will be vigilant about implied messages and meanings that mitigate against this, whether it be in resources, school policies, the terminology we use, our assumptions or any other way. Further details of the Single Equalities Scheme can be found on the school website.

Children with Special Educational Needs

We try to include children with special needs and disabilities within the classroom situation wherever possible, by giving them tasks linked to the class work but adjusted to a child's particular level of ability.

Learning Assistants assist teachers in their own classrooms and liaise with them to ensure that suitable support is given. In addition, where appropriate, children are taken out of the classroom for specific activities.

If either a parent/carer or teacher is concerned about a particular child, they will be monitored and supported through the Essex County Council's assessment process. This provides a useful structure for diagnosing, developing strategies, monitoring children with Special Needs and providing additional support where required.

Gifted and Talented Pupils

Several of our children have special needs because they are exceptionally able. Sometimes the teacher provides separate programmes of work but often the more able child is also given extension work. In the juniors some classes are set into ability groups for maths, which means that children are catered for more specifically as a class, according to ability.

Adverse weather Conditions

Occasionally the weather can become so bad that it is necessary to close the school. This rarely happens, but if for this or any other reason the school has to be closed, we would put a notice on the school website and a message sent electronically to all parents/carers registered with ParentMail. Additionally, details will be placed on Essex County Council's school closure webpage.

Complaints Procedures

Parents/Carers are encouraged to communicate any concerns to the school as soon as possible so that attempts can be made to resolve them quickly. If this is not possible, then the school does have a formal complaints leaflet and policy. These can be access from the school office or downloaded from our website.

Charges and Remissions

- a) School visits, or visits to the School by theatre groups, lectures, etc. will depend upon the willingness of parents/carers to make genuinely voluntary contributions. We reserve the right to cancel any visit that is underfunded.
- b) No charge will be made to parents/carers for materials used during the school day, but a donation will be required if children wish to keep an item and take it home (the amount to be decided by the teacher, according to costs).

- c] Teachers running school clubs do so voluntarily, but the cost of tests, certificates or special expenses of the club will be charged to parents/carers with their prior knowledge.
- d] Parents/Carers will be asked to provide their children with appropriate footwear and clothing for games, pottery etc.
- e] Annual photographs of all children will be offered to parents/carers with no obligation to purchase.

Lost Property

Clothing and other items (such as toys) lost and/or damaged at school are not the responsibility of the County Council or the school. It is possible to extend a household insurance policy to cover “all risks” on personal effects but children are advised not to bring valuable items to school. Lost property is taken to the school office and stored in Lost Property boxes in the Junior and Infant part of the School. Unmarked clothing is disposed of. It is essential that ALL articles of clothing are marked. Inappropriate items might have to be confiscated for later collection by parents/carers. We regret the school cannot be responsible for loss of such items before being collected.

Parent Staff Association

The principal aim of the P.S.A. is to raise funds to buy equipment supplementary to the basic requirements of the school. There are many different activities organised and whilst it is hoped to raise funds, we do like to enjoy ourselves. For example, we have an Annual Summer Fair and various dances and entertainments.

All parents/carers are automatically members of the P.S.A. and are welcome to take an active part on the working committee. Volunteers are always very welcome and it is an ideal way to meet other parents/carers.

Open meetings of the P.S.A. are held once a term if possible and we hope that you will be able to attend these meetings and support our activities.

Records and Documents

Parents/Carers may have access to their child’s achievements by contacting their child’s teacher. The following documents are also available to be read at the school and arrangements can be made to see them by contacting the office. A selection of documents are available on the school website

- a] A full copy of the complaints procedure.
- b] Minutes of Governor Meetings

- c] A copy of the L.A.'s agreed syllabus for Religious Education.
- d] OFSTED Inspection Report.
- e] School Policy Documents:- Single equalities scheme and Equality objectives, Learners with medical needs, Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Child protection.

Session Times

9.00 – 12.10 (p.m.)	1.20 – 3.10 (p.m.)	Infants
8.50 – 12.10 (p.m.)	1.15 – 3.15 (p.m.)	Juniors

Length of School Year: 190 “Pupil Days”

Total weekly Pupil Session Time	Infants	25 hours
	Juniors	26 hours 40 minutes

Total weekly Lesson Time	Infants	21 hours
	Juniors	23 hours 30 minutes

[Mid-morning Break – 15 minutes, afternoon Break (Infants only) 10 minutes]

A teacher will be on duty in the Junior playground from 8.35 a.m. and in the Infant playground from 8.45 a.m. For your child’s safety, we would appreciate it if you ensure your child does not arrive before that time unless specifically requested by his/her teacher, or they are accompanied by a responsible adult. This is in accordance with regulations laid down by Essex County Council that teaching staff cannot be held responsible for the supervision of children who arrive on School premises, including playgrounds, before that time.

If they belong to an after school club, they will require a signed permission slip from you.

School Lunches

The school provides a hot meal service for children and the menus are nutritionally balanced. Arrangements can be made for children with special dietary needs. Alternatively, children can bring a packed lunch. Children going home for lunch will need a letter confirming this. Universal Infant Free School Meals are available for children in Foundation stage, Year 1 and Year 2.

Uniform

The School expects that all children will wear the school uniform. This can be purchased from a variety of shops to enable parents to shop economically. Sales of good quality second hand uniform items are held from time to time at the School (organised by the P.S.A). For full details of the uniform – see Appendix A.

Appendix A

HAMILTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Boys

Light blue cotton shirt or blue aertex shirts; grey trousers.

Short grey trousers optional in summer

Navy, long sleeved pullover or navy School sweatshirt**

Grey socks; black or brown outdoor shoes.

Girls

Light blue cotton blouse or blue aertex shirts.

Navy pinafore, navy skirt, navy culottes or smart navy trousers.

(Jeans are not permitted).

Navy, long sleeved cardigan or navy School sweatshirt**

White socks or navy tights; black, brown or navy outdoor shoes.

Blue and white check or striped dress for summer.

Shoes

Ordinary outdoor shoes with as flat a heel as possible should be worn during the day.

Sandals should not be strapless or open-toed for safety reasons. Trainers, plimsolls or other sporting footwear should only be worn for PE or other sporting type activities.

Special Arrangements for Infants

Laces should only be worn if children can manage them without help.

P.E. Clothing

Black plimsolls in a large marked shoebag.

White T-shirt; navy shorts.

Games kit (Juniors only) – plain shorts, socks, plain long sleeved shirt and football/hockey boots (when notified), shin pads, plus and old sweater or tracksuit.

All items need to be marked

N.B.

We stress the need for sensible shoes, both girls and boys. For safety reasons the wearing of jewellery or earrings is not allowed in school. If ears have been pierced then sleepers, (studs) must be as small as possible so there is the least possible risk of their catching upon anything. During P.E. lessons all earrings have to be removed or taped over by the child. If at all possible it would be helpful if earrings are not worn at all on P.E. days. Any damage or injury resulting from the wearing of any of these items cannot be regarded as the responsibility of either the School, the School Governors or the Education Authority. We would also urge you to tie back all long hair while children are at School, for health and safety reasons.

