



**PRE-SCHOOL
& RECEPTION**

SILCOATES



SUPPORTS



SHINES



SUCCEEDS



SPIRIT



As Head of Junior School, I am delighted to welcome you to Silcoates Pre-School and Reception, where we support your child's very first steps of exploration and discovery.

Designed for children aged two years and eight months up to age five, our Pre-School provides a warm, nurturing setting where young learners grow into healthy, happy and confident individuals. Led by Mrs Escreet (Head of EYFS) our expert team of Early Years practitioners put children at the heart of everything they do. By striking a thoughtful balance between child-led exploration and adult-supported activities, we create a safe, stimulating environment where learning unfolds naturally through play.

We view these early years as a truly special foundation, believing that a child's success relies on a strong, collaborative partnership between home and school. Our dedicated team takes the time to tune into your child's unique needs, guiding them through exciting activities that unlock their personal talents and foster a lifelong love of learning. Grounded in our school ethos, we cultivate a vibrant, supportive community where every child feels valued. Through acts of kindness, teamwork, and tailored guidance, we allow our pupils to build resilience and confidence at their own pace.

As your child grows, our Pre-School staff work closely with our Reception team to ensure a seamless transition into the Junior School. By nurturing their unique strengths, we ensure every child is fully prepared and excited for the next stage of their journey.

Beyond reading about our approach, the true spirit, pride, and sense of belonging at Silcoates can only be felt in person. I warmly invite you to visit us, meet our passionate team and experience our vibrant community first-hand.

ELLEN MOSS

Head of Junior School

A WARM WELCOME FROM OUR HEAD OF EYFS

From the moment you step through our doors, your whole family is welcomed into our close knit Early Years community: a warm, nurturing environment where children are known, cherished and encouraged to be completely themselves. A place that quickly feels like home, where every day brings a new adventure.

We believe these first years of education should be filled with joy, curiosity and wonder. Through a thoughtful balance of child led discovery and expertly guided play, our experienced and passionate Early Years team turns every day into an opportunity to explore, investigate, imagine, create and, sometimes, get wonderfully messy!

There is a great deal of thought and expertise behind what we do, but to our children it simply feels like play. Without even realising it, they are developing the confidence, curiosity, resilience and independence to become so much more than 'school ready'. They are becoming lifelong learners.

At Silcoates, we know that the biggest leaps in learning happen when children feel completely safe, deeply valued and full of joy. We take the time to truly know each child, building the trusting relationships that give them the confidence to explore, take risks, make mistakes and flourish.

That sense of belonging continues as your child grows. Pre School and Reception work hand in hand, creating a familiar and seamless experience so that moving into Reception feels exciting, reassuring and simply the natural next step for both you and your child.

And because you know your child best, we work in genuine partnership with you. We want you to feel just as much a part of our Early Years community as your child does, with warm, open relationships ensuring these precious first steps in education are supported, shared and celebrated together.

These early years are incredibly special, and we cannot wait to welcome you into our Early Years family and share this wonderful journey with you.



TRACY ESCREET

Head of EYFS

“The biggest leaps in learning happen when children feel completely safe, deeply valued, and full of joy.”





FOUNDATIONS FOR FLOURISHING: OUR LEARNING ETHOS

At Silcoates, we believe that academic achievement and personal growth go hand in hand. Our integrated approach gently weaves high-quality, structured learning into a rich, play-based environment, ensuring children excel intellectually while flourishing emotionally and socially.

At the core of everything we do are the EYFS Prime Areas of Learning: Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Development, and Physical Development. By nurturing these essential building blocks first, we create happy, self-assured learners who possess the resilience, independence, and communication skills needed to embrace every academic milestone with confidence.



EARLY READING & PHONICS: LEARNING TO READ, READING TO LEARN

Reading opens the door to the entire curriculum. We place high-quality, systematic phonics at the heart of our early literacy, teaching children how letters and sounds work together so they can decode unfamiliar words independently. By developing fluent, automatic reading early on, our pupils build the confidence and skills to explore new worlds through books and access all future learning.

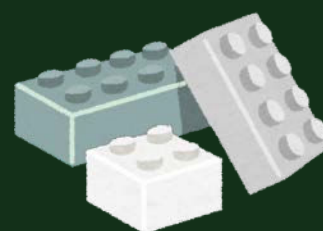


Early Mathematics: Building Deep Understanding

Maths in our Early Years is dynamic, practical, and hands-on. Through play, real-world exploration, and guided discussion, children develop a deep, intuitive understanding of numbers, patterns, and spatial reasoning. We encourage mathematical talk from day one, helping children learn to reason, explain their thinking, and solve problems naturally.

DISCOVERY TIME: THE HEART OF OUR PLAY-BASED ETHOS

Play is fundamental to early childhood development. While other settings may call it provision or choosing time, we call it *Discovery Time* - a name that reflects the curiosity, energy, and excitement driving our days. During *Discovery Time*, children pursue their own passions while developing vital communication, critical thinking, creativity, and motor skills in a safe, inspiring space.



LEARNING WITHOUT BOUNDARIES: OUTDOOR LEARNING

Walk into our Early Years at any time of year, in any weather, and you will find children outside playing, exploring, and deeply engaged. Guided by the philosophy that *“there is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing,”* outdoor learning is a fundamental pillar of how our children make sense of the world.

Using our natural environment, we cultivate growth across every area of early development:

- **Physical Growth:** Navigating uneven terrain builds gross motor skills, core stability, balance, and spatial awareness, setting strong foundations for lifelong physical health.
- **Emotional Wellbeing:** Natural spaces reduce stress and encourage self-regulation. By taking managed, supported risks, children develop resilience, confidence, and independence.
- **Social Connections:** open-ended outdoor spaces naturally foster cooperative play, negotiation, empathy, and joint problem-solving.
- **Cognitive Spark:** Hands-on exploration encourages curiosity and real-time scientific thinking as children observe, test ideas, and connect concepts in the real world.



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: 60 ACRES TO EXPLORE

We are privileged to have dedicated outdoor spaces alongside 60 acres of beautiful grounds. Through our weekly Welly Walks, children observe seasonal changes and physical landscape transformations over time.

In our Forest School sessions, established rituals, from finding Forest Fox to sharing hot chocolate after a collaborative challenge, provide structure, security, and joy. Whether navigating team challenges or playing forest games, children build judgement and coordination in a safe, inspiring space.

Rain, wind, or sunshine, learning outdoors is not an extra at Silcoates, it is core to who we are.





INSPIRING EXCELLENCE: SPECIALIST TEACHERS

In Reception, your child benefits from the expertise of dedicated specialist teachers who ignite curiosity, build confidence, and deepen learning across a variety of disciplines:



Sport: Led by Senior PE teachers, these active sessions build fundamental motor skills, physical confidence, and sportsmanship through dynamic team games and tailored activities.

Music: Guided by our specialist music teacher, children explore rhythm, melody, and expression, sparking a lifelong love for music through singing, instruments, and creative movement.



Forest School: Facilitated by our outdoor education specialist, our forest sessions encourage curiosity, resilience, and collaborative problem-solving through hands-on, nature-based learning.

Swimming: Delivered by expert swimming instructors in our dedicated pool, these lessons build essential water safety, stroke technique, and aquatic confidence in a safe, encouraging environment.



By learning directly from passionate specialists, our Reception children build confidence and a genuine love of learning, while expanding their horizons. Along with their core timetable sessions with senior subject specialists, they also enjoy regular taster sessions throughout the year with experts across various disciplines, igniting excitement for the subjects they will explore as they progress through Silcoates, all while feeling fully supported every step of the way.

WORKING TOGETHER: OUR EARLY YEARS COMMUNITY

At Silcoates, we know that a child's educational journey is happiest and most successful when school and home work as one. You know your child better than anyone, which is why building a close, supportive, and open community around every family is central to everything we do.

Our door is always open. Whether it is a quick morning check-in at the gate, a thoughtful conversation, or a shared moment of celebration, strong relationships are the heartbeat of our Early Years family.



How We Connect and Share:

- **Experiential Parent Sessions:** Step into your child's shoes through hands-on sessions where you can experience our daily learning, play, and routines firsthand.
- **Tapestry Learning Journals:** Follow your child's daily progress, view photos of their discoveries, and share your own family insights using our interactive online platform.
- **Celebrating Successes in 'Tapestry Time':** We love celebrating your child's achievements outside of school. Through dedicated Tapestry Time, children proudly share home news, certificates, and milestones with their friends.
- **Weekly Home-School Connections:** Simple, engaging weekly tasks that allow you to extend learning and explore new ideas at home together.
- **EYFS Instagram Page:** A vibrant, peek-behind-the-scenes look into our daily adventures, outdoor explorations, and classroom discoveries.
- **Fortnightly Newsletter:** Stay fully connected with essential updates, upcoming events, and highlights from across our Pre-School and Reception settings.
- **Parent Consultations and Termly Reports:** Dedicated 1-to-1 time to discuss your child's wellbeing, developmental milestones, and academic progress, complemented by clear termly summaries.

OUR EARLY YEARS PROMISE

At Silcoates, our promise is to nurture every child's potential so that all pupils meet or exceed their expected progress across all areas of learning and development. We achieve this through five core pillars that shape our daily practice:



High-Quality Teaching: Delivered by expert teachers and dedicated Early Years practitioners who nurture every child's individual potential.

Subject Specialist Teachers: Reception pupils benefit from specialist-led sessions in PE, Music, Swimming, and Outdoor Education.



Strong Foundations: High expectations and well-structured daily routines build security, confidence, and independence.

Whole Child Approach: We nurture social, emotional, and physical wellbeing alongside academic curiosity so every child thrives.



Extended Day & Enrichment: A rich variety of teacher-led after-school care, clubs, and themed activities, provided free of charge for children in Reception.

SMOOTH TRANSITIONS: A NATURAL NEXT STEP

Transition is not a one-off event in September; it is a shared journey nurtured gently over time. When children feel secure, confident, and connected, they are ready to learn, build strong relationships, and thrive.



OUR SUPPORTIVE INDUCTION PROCESS

From your very first contact, our welcoming induction process ensures you and your child feel completely supported. Through personalised visit days, stay-and-play sessions, and parent information meetings, we take the time to get to know your child's unique personality and routines before their official start date.

PRE-SCHOOL TO RECEPTION: *OUR FRIENDS OVER THE FENCE*

Throughout the year, our Pre-School children build natural rapport with Reception staff and pupils. Shared welly walks, Forest School adventures, stay-and-play sessions, and joint Christmas Nativities mean Reception is never an abstract concept, it is a familiar, friendly place filled with trusted faces. Parallel daily routines and visual timetables ensure September feels like a natural next step rather than a daunting leap.

RECEPTION TO KEY STAGE 1: CONNECTED ACROSS BOTH STAGES

As the year builds, our Reception pupils naturally expand their horizons into the wider school community. With one foot in both camps, children begin taking part in Junior School assemblies, special celebrations, and core elements of the Key Stage 1 day. By gently weaving these milestones into their routine, our children move into Year 1 with complete familiarity, independence, and pride.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION: SILCOATES EYES AT A GLANCE

KEY AREA	DETAILS & PROVISION
Entry Ages	Pre-School: Welcoming children from 2 years, 8 months
	Reception: Joining from age 4
Standard School Day	8:30 – 15:30
Free Wrap-Around Care for Children in Reception	8:00 – 17:30 (Includes teacher-led after-school care, themed clubs, and engaging activities free of charge)
Extended Evening Option	Additional late care for Reception aged children available up to 18:00 (offered with a small extra charge)
Meals & Nutrition	Nutritious, hot cooked lunches prepared fresh on-site daily by our catering team
Outdoor Access	60 acres of woodland and countryside grounds, dedicated Forest School site
Specialist Subjects	For our Reception Children weekly sessions in PE, Music, Swimming, and Outdoor Education





SILCOATES

silcoates.org.uk