



# Robert Ferguson Primary School

PROSPECTUS 2022-2023



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*We hope you enjoy reading  
our prospectus.*

*If you have any questions  
at all, please do not hesitate  
to contact us.*

Graham Frost  
Headteacher





# A Happy Place of Learning

## **A Very Warm Welcome**

If you haven't yet visited the school and had a look around, you must! That way you will see for yourself how friendly and welcoming a place Robert Ferguson Primary School is. We pride ourselves in being a happy place of learning where children feel safe, grow in confidence and quickly become totally immersed in the adventure we call learning.

## **Our Commitment to Your Child**

Every child is a person in his or her own right. We work tirelessly to ensure that every child receives an education which matches their interests as well as their readiness to learn at a suitable pace. Our pupils are taught that every one can make a difference. We reward effort and hard-work, making sure pupils have opportunities to fully participate in our busy and well-run school during their time with us. For example, pupils can join school council, run a healthy tuck shop, organise playground games or be a librarian.

## **Working Together for the Good of All**

Pupils are expected to have a high standard of behaviour, courtesy and politeness, showing respect to each other. Children are helped to understand others' feelings and take responsibility for their own words and actions. Bullying of any kind is never tolerated and always challenged - so long as children learn to tell someone about it and choose to act. For this reason we encourage our pupils to be confident and

assertive and to know that the teachers are here to help.

## **Working Together with You**

Children make most progress when parents and teachers communicate well and work together, making good use of any opportunity for learning at home as well as at school. If you ever need advice or want to know how you can help your child with their learning - we are here to help.

## **A Place of Inspiration**

We have invested a great deal of time, energy and resources to make the spacious classrooms and other facilities homely, modern and well-equipped to a high standard. Visitors frequently comment on the bright and well organised interior of the school. Our school grounds and garden have been re-landscaped and partially re-wilded over several years, to provide an increasing range of opportunities for sport, music and dance, games, nature studies and for growing plants and vegetables. Our school is also noted for the extensive playing fields and playgrounds which we make excellent use of for a broad range of lessons, sporting and forest school activities.


## **Nursery and Starting School**

From the term after their 3rd birthday children can come to our Nursery (mornings, afternoons or full days). Your child can then start school at the beginning of the Autumn term of the year (September to August) in which they will have their 5th Birthday. If you are coming to look around the

school, we would love to meet your child, too, so bring him or her along. The building was extended in 2014 to provide a purpose-built, spacious and well-equipped Nursery unit.



# Focusing on the Important Skills



*"Knowledge is changing so fast that we cannot give young people what they will need to know, because we do not know what it will be. Instead we should be helping them to develop supple and nimble minds, so that they will be able to learn whatever they need to. If we can achieve that, we will have a world-class workforce comprising people who are innovative and resourceful."*

- Professor Guy Claxton

*Forest School sessions provide opportunities to connect with nature, develop curiosity, solve problems, and much more.*





### **Essential skills which will always be important and relevant**

Effective communication skills (speaking and listening, reading and writing) a good understanding of mathematics, science and technology will always be central to our pupils' learning. We make sure that they are taught with urgency and rigour as well as providing a great many opportunities for our pupils to apply their core learning and skills in other lessons.

### **The ways in which we communicate and the use of technology are constantly changing**

We all need to be able to use technology effectively and safely - it is part of everyday life. For this reason we make sure our pupils have good access to computers, iPads, cameras, and other technologies which will enable them to explore the possibilities these tools present. The use of computers and other technologies are learned through their use in lots of different lessons, including computing.

### **Learning to be part of a strong community**

Our greatest strengths at Robert Ferguson School include the ways in which we encourage our pupils to learn how to get along, work together and develop their confidence. These attributes are not measured in tests or exams in schools, but we believe they are just as important, nonetheless, and provide the foundations for personal and academic achievement. RE and learning about our cultural heritage are integral parts of our teaching, too.

### **Learning to be good at learning**

Our teaching staff work hard to help all our pupils become very effective learners. There is a famous proverb - "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; show him how to catch fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." We make sure that our teaching encourages skills which will benefit our pupils long into the future. Our curriculum includes opportunities to develop skills which will prepare them for life beyond school and into the world of work.



***Above: Year 6 Business Enterprise Week and Year 6 drama performance***



# Learning in Different Ways



***Our teachers know that children enjoy learning in lots of different ways.***

Robert Ferguson Primary School is committed to inclusive education. We take account of children's varied life experiences, likes, preferences and needs. We champion equal opportunities for all children whatever their unique characteristics, age, gender, ethnicity, attainment or background. All

our staff work together to ensure that inclusion is always high on our school's agenda. We support parents and pupils to meet our pupils' needs.

We provide extra support for children experiencing difficulties, or who are finding an aspect of learning particularly challenging. By spotting problems early we are able to act quickly to tackle them, making sure that children can make progress with confidence.

Pupils set challenging targets for their own learning and are encouraged to be ambitious.



***When children enjoy what they do, they learn better.***

We make sure that lessons are fun and taught in lots of different and exciting ways. That way our pupils are highly motivated and learn quickly.

Here are just a few examples:

- Learning about history by dressing up in Edwardian costume to re-enact a school day from 1904.
- Learning how to write letters in a cloud of shaving foam.
- Learning to multiply decimals by calculating our weights on different planets.
- Learning about instructions by brewing a version of "George's Marvellous Medicine".
- Learning about living things by growing plants.
- Learning about worms by making a wormery (having charmed the worms out of the ground, first).
- Learning about measurement by drawing full-size dinosaurs on the school playground.

# Physical Activity and Sport



*Our extensive playing fields and playgrounds are perfect for a broad range of sports.*

## **Playtimes are an important part of the school day**

We make good use of the spacious school playgrounds and playing field at Robert Ferguson Primary School. We employ Playground Activity Organisers and train pupils to become Playground Leaders to help all the pupils to get the most from playtimes. Games available include a wide range of ball games, team games, sports skills practice and traditional playground games. Every year we add more to the growing lists of playground activities.

## **We introduce our pupils to a broad range of sports**

We have two school halls, multiple playgrounds and an extensive playing field, so the list of indoor and outdoor sports pupils can participate in during their time with us is extensive. They include: athletics, gymnastics, football,

tennis, cricket, badminton, netball, hockey, mini-golf and rounders. Children in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have swimming lessons nearby at The Pools Swimming and Health Centre.

## **We value competitive sports**

Competitive sports help pupils to grow in confidence, learning how to respond to disappointments with perseverance, and success with good grace. We enter inter-

school competitions when these are available. Pupils have also participated in local dance events. At the end of the year we have a sports day in which all children can celebrate by competing both individually and as part of a house team.



*Above: Mrs Carrie Cannon, Deputy Headteacher teaching hockey. Throughout the school year our pupils have opportunities to try lots of different sports.*



# Creativity and the Creative Arts

Whether it is a painting - framed and on the wall - a written story, newspaper or poem, a video presentation in the school hall, podcast on iTunes, song, tune, clay pot, sculpture or model - whatever masterpieces our hard-working pupils produce needs and deserves an audience.





### **Creativity isn't just getting the paints out**

Creativity at Robert Ferguson School is about an openness to new ideas and being prepared to have a go. We promote a "can do" attitude where it is OK to make a mistake, so long as you learn something from it and are prepared to try again or try something different. We help pupils to review the outcomes of their work and consider how they could improve it the next time.

### **Our pupils love to put on a show**

Drama, dance and music are important parts of our school culture and allow our pupils to develop in confidence. They often provide a chance for pupils to discover and demonstrate their hidden talents. We have an excellent track record at Robert Ferguson Primary School for giving pupils the courage to stand in front of an audience to speak or sing. This is a testament to the culture of positivity and mutual encouragement among our pupils.

### **Good work needs an audience**

Whether it is a painting - framed and on the wall - a written story, newspaper or poem, a video presentation in the school hall, podcast on iTunes, song, tune, sculpture or model - whatever masterpieces our hard-working pupils produce needs and deserves an audience. That is why a walk around our school can be like visiting a gallery. There are times when you could even be ushered into a classroom which has been transformed into a museum. The pupils will guide you



around and show you the artefacts, present you with an information leaflet they have made complete with a quiz to check that you have paid attention.

Having recently

### **There's lots to do on our website**

When our pupils go home they can continue to use their creativity by logging on to our website:

[www.rferguson.org](http://www.rferguson.org) which also signposts a wealth of online activities including those we subscribe to as a school.

### **A note on remote learning**

In the event of prolonged, forced school closure (eg. due to a pandemic) in addition to signposting relevant online learning activities, we would post instructional video lessons on our website in the mornings and video conferencing tutorials would be scheduled to take place in the late morning or afternoon once the children have had time to carry out the learning tasks set. Meanwhile, Early Years (Nursery and Reception) staff use Tapestry website to communicate with parents and children ordinarily and would continue to do so during forced school closure. Of course, we hope that contingency arrangements such as these will not be necessary, but do know that we are prepared!



# A Spirit of Adventure



***Our pupils learn so much more by getting out of the classroom.***

Every term the pupils venture out into the wider world for field trips, visits to museums, galleries, theatres and other places of special interest connected with a topic they are studying.

In addition to these special visits, teachers seize the moment and use the local area and school grounds to enhance the

children's learning, e.g. local history and geography studies and field studies with expert assistance from Eden Rivers Trust. Our pupils are encouraged to see their learning as continuous, whether they are at school, home or out and about.

***Our residential trips are exciting and memorable.***

In Year 5 the children have the opportunity of a 3 day residential trip for

outdoor adventure in the Lake District. Activities include rock climbing, ghyll scrambling, canoe rafting, a fell walk and night walk. For Year 6 children the residential trip takes them to the historic city of York to visit the Minster and some of York's many fantastic museums and attractions. Standing on top of a mountain peak, gazing up at the lofty ceiling of York Minster or stepping onto the footplate

of an enormous steam engine are awesome experiences. A few days away from home gives them the chance to become even more confident, independent and better at working together. This prepares them for some of the exciting challenges of secondary education and beyond. These trips are often considered by our pupils to be major highlights of their time with us.



# Healthy, Sustainable Living

***Our pupils learn to care for themselves, others and for the world they live in.***

The children have lots of opportunities to learn about healthy living, including growing and harvesting vegetables in the school garden for use in the school kitchen, learning about nutrition and a balanced diet, helping to look after our school grounds and the natural environment.



We have also taken a lead on environmental issues, organising and contributing to local and national events. We believe in preparing our children for the future, but also take seriously our responsibility to safeguard that future for them. This has included rewilding part of the school grounds by planting trees and wildflowers, installing solar panels and reducing waste.



# Meet our Dedicated Team



## **All working together for the good of the children**

The staff at Robert Ferguson Primary School are renowned for being a very strong team. While teachers have responsibility to pay special attention to the needs of their own class, they work together closely to support the interests of all the children in the school. This way, the children learn that they can turn to any of the teaching or support staff for assistance and understand who will most likely be able to answer a particular question.

## **A strong sense of community**

The team extends beyond the staff to include governors, parents, and most importantly the pupils themselves. Increasingly, pupils play a key role in organising such things as the school library, healthy tuck shop, playground games, enterprise week and communicating about the school and their learning through the

written word and recorded media (e.g. video recordings and podcasts).

## **The Governing Body**

The Governors are often in school attending celebration assemblies, fundraising events, meetings with parents, curriculum evenings and training sessions. This involvement enhances their knowledge of the work of the school and helps in their decision making. If you are interested in finding out more about being a governor, please visit the school office.

There are twelve governors in all, made up of the following:-

*One representative governor appointed by the Local Education Authority;*

*Three parent governors to be elected;*

*One Staff governor;*

*The Headteacher, having the right to elect not to be a governor.*

*Six co-opted governors;*

*The Chair of Governors is Mrs Esther Blake.*

## **Office Administrators**

*Lesley Skelton - School Business Manager*

*Lesley Lowe - Office Administrator*

*Wendy Downey - Office Assistant*

## **Friends of Robert Ferguson School**

The Friends of RFPS is our parents' association who raise funds for a range of additional school equipment and special events. Membership is open to all parents and is a great way to meet other parents and make a positive contribution to your child's school. Visit the school office for further information.

## **Our Pastoral Support Mentor**

The class teachers and teaching assistants are on hand to help when parents have a question about learning and pastoral issues. There are occasions when children or their parents need a little bit of help beyond this. In these instances, Christine Morris, our Pastoral Support Worker is on hand to help. Christine also provides drop-in sessions for parents and can advise about other services which parents can benefit from. Call at the school office if you need to make an appointment to see Christine.



# Other Things You Need to Know

## Arrival Times and Entrances

	Denton Street	East Dale Street
<b>08:40</b>	Classes 11, 13 and 15	Classes 10, 12 and 14
<b>08:50</b>	Classes 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9	Classes 2, 4, 6 and 8

Please aim to arrive within the 10 minute time periods for your child's year group. This avoids congestion and also helps with anti-covid measures.

As in the previous school year, if siblings are in more than one year group, both/all can be dropped-off at the earliest time.

Parents deliver children to the gate and, except for Nursery and Reception, do not enter the premises. Nursery and Reception parents do not enter the school building; children will be met at the door. Please do not hold the teaching staff in a long conversation which might delay lessons for the whole class. If you need to speak at length you can:

- leave a message with the school office;
- make an arrangement for a call back later in the day;
- ask to speak to a member of the senior leadership team (usually on the school gate) or pastoral support worker if you need an urgent conversation.

## Collecting at the end of the day

<b>15:00</b>	Nursery & Reception (Classes 1, 2 and 3)
<b>15:10</b>	Years 4, 5 and 6 (Classes 10 to 15)
<b>15:15</b>	Years 1, 2 and 3 (Classes 4 to 9)

Our collection times are designed to be a compromise between anti-congestion and anti-covid measures, and the needs of parents collecting from multiple year groups. The hope is that many of our Nursery and Reception pupils can be collected and away before the playground becomes busier, followed by our eldest pupils who are usually out and away in a short space of time.

## Keep us informed so we can keep your child safe at all times

It is your responsibility to:

- inform us if someone else will be collecting your child at the end of the school day;
- inform us immediately if your contact details have changed;
- provide us with your contact details, and the contact details for emergency contacts so that we can always contact someone in an emergency;
- inform us of any medical needs, allergies or dietary requirements for your child;
- inform us of any changes to permissions (e.g. photo permissions, visits, etc.).



## Classes

Class 1 - Nursery

Class 2 - Reception

Class 3 - Reception

Class 4 - Year 1

Class 5 - Year 1

Class 6 - Year 2

Class 7 - Year 2

Class 8 - Year 3

Class 9 - Year 3

Class 10 - Year 4

Class 11 - Year 4

Class 12 - Year 5

Class 13 - Year 5

Class 14 - Year 6

Class 15 - Year 6



***Educational visits & special events enhance the children's learning and experience. We take advantage of the outstanding, natural beauty and opportunities for adventure nearby.***

## Term Dates

Term dates can be obtained via the school website, Cumbria County Council website ([www.cumbriacc.gov.uk](http://www.cumbriacc.gov.uk)), or a printed copy from the school office.

## Absence from School

If your child is absent from school, you must contact the school office no later than 09:30 am on each day of absence, as soon as possible giving the reason for absence.

Headteachers are no longer able to authorise holidays in term time. If you need to request absence during term time, which can only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances, you should make a telephone appointment to speak to Mr Frost, the Headteacher. Unauthorised absences are extremely rare at Robert Ferguson Primary School, and the school relies on the co-operation of parents to inform us early of pupil absences. If a child has a long term absence due to sickness the class teacher will make provision for work to be sent home if necessary.

## Change of Circumstances

Please inform the school as soon as possible of any change to your address or emergency contact numbers as it is important to maintain accurate information for every child.

## School Uniform

Please ensure your child is appropriately dressed for school. Children wear blue sweatshirts, white polo shirts, grey or black trousers or skirts, and black shoes. Blue gingham dresses are another option. School sweatshirts, jackets and polo shirts (including optional, jade PE polo shirts) can be purchased from The School Uniform Shop, 11 West Tower Street, CA3 8QT. Plain white polo shirts are also acceptable.

Please send children to school in school uniform, with all items of clothing name-labelled. Please re-label them if the name fades in the wash. If items are misplaced or lost we will do our best to return them to your child, but if the item is not labelled it may prevent us from doing this.

For PE, pupils need a PE bag with t-shirt, sports footwear and shorts. Earrings (studs only) have to be removed before any PE lessons. Other jewellery must not be worn in school. PE bags should be collected on a Friday and returned to school on a Monday.



### Book Bags

Pupils need a book bag to carry their books between home and school. These are available from the school office for £3.50.

### Valuables & Personal Belongings

Children will be provided with the equipment they need while at school. Children should not bring personal belongings such as toys or valuables to school except when they have been asked to bring items to school by a teacher for a specific reason. This includes expensive watches, items of jewellery and mobile phones. For children in Year 6 only, mobile phones may be brought to school, but must be handed in at the start of the day and collected at home time.

### School Meals

Pupils in years Reception, 1 and 2 are entitled to free school meals. For pupils in other year groups, except for those entitled to free school meals, money for school meals will be collected online via School Money ([www.eduspot.co.uk](http://www.eduspot.co.uk)), a week in advance, at the cost of £2.00 per day/ £10 per week. It can be paid in advance for more than one week. The dinner menu is posted on the school website each week. All our meals are cooked onsite by our own staff who pay close attention to the children's preferences, but also encourage them to try new things.

### Free Meals

An online form to apply for free school meals is available at [cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/freeschoolmeals.asp](http://cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices/schoolsandlearning/freeschoolmeals.asp). Recipients of Free School Meals qualify for other assistance with school-related costs (e.g. the cost of residential trips or uniform).

### Packed Lunches

Packed lunches will be eaten in the dining hall. Packed lunches must be nut free with no traces of nuts.

Please work with us to reduce plastic waste, and to ensure lunches are balanced and healthy. For advice on packed lunches, speak to a member of staff.

### Snacks

On advice from dentists and health professionals, as well as to reduce plastic waste and avoid attracting pests (such as gulls) we do not allow mid-morning snacks except for a piece of fruit. If you provide fruit, it can only be sent either without a wrapping (e.g. an apple) or for fruit such as grapes or chopped fruit in a reusable container (no plastic bags).

The only other exception is in early years classes where the children are taught independent skills which often involves helping themselves to a light snack such as fruit or cereal. Please make sure the children have breakfast before they come to school to make sure they have energy throughout the morning.

### Milk and Fruit

Daily milk is optional. Milk is free up to the age of 5; from then on the cost is 20p per day, £1 per week, and paid for online via [www.coolmilk.com](http://www.coolmilk.com). All our parents are registered to use the online payment system.

Children also receive a free piece of fruit each day from Reception through to Year 2.

### Child Protection

Because of day to day contact with children, schools are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse, neglect, changes in behaviour, or failure to develop. Parents should be aware therefore that where it appears to a member of school staff that a child may have been abused or neglected, the school is required as part of Cumbria Child Protection Procedures, to report their concern to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The designated

teachers for child protection are Mrs Batchelor, Mrs Morris and Mr Frost.

### Medical

Please ensure that the school is aware of any medical condition affecting your child. No medicines other than medicines prescribed by a doctor will be administered. Parents are asked to complete the relevant forms for this.

### First Aid

A large majority of our staff are first aid trained. If we have to administer first aid or your child has had an injury we will inform you during the school day, at the end of the school day, or phone you at the earliest opportunity after the school day, according to our assessment of the seriousness of the injury.

### Sex and Relationships Education

Sex and Relationships Education within our school aims to provide opportunities for pupils to develop the knowledge and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and become active and informed citizens. Age-appropriate information is delivered honestly and sensitively, enabling young people to contribute to discussion. Parents will be fully informed of policy and practice. They have the right to withdraw their children from any Sex and Relationships Education that falls outside of the statutory curriculum. Parents then have an obligation to provide the information at home using material available from the DfE. Further advice is available from the school office.

### Transfer to Secondary School

The children have the opportunity to visit their future secondary school during the term prior to their transfer. The staff of Robert Ferguson School and the secondary schools liaise with regard to the transfer of pupils.



### **Complaints Procedure**

If you become concerned in any way about your child's education or personal welfare, it is important that you tell us about this. As a first step you should discuss your concerns with your child's teacher. If you are still concerned after talking with the teacher, you should arrange to meet with the Headteacher. As a staff, we will do all we can to resolve your concerns and to ensure you are happy.

There may be some occasions when parents wish to complain about matters relating to the curriculum and collective worship. These are the responsibility of the governing body and/or the Local Education Authority. Special formal arrangements exist for dealing with complaints of this kind. Copies of a leaflet which outlines these procedures are available from the school. Advice on how to pursue a formal complaint is also available from:- Cumbria Education Department, School Places Team 5 Portland Square, Carlisle, CA1 1PU. (Tel:- Carlisle (01228) 606888/606999).

### **Modern Foreign Languages and Multicultural Awareness**

French lessons give our pupils a head-start in learning a modern foreign language. The children also learn about ethnic and cultural diversity within the UK and overseas. We engage in projects with partner schools in other countries, exchanging information and helping our pupils to respect other cultures.

### **Extra Curricular Activities**

In the course of a school year we provide a broad range of extra curricular opportunities that help every child meet his or her aspirations and develop new interests. In order to provide as broad a range of opportunities to

cater for the pupils' interests, clubs often run for one or two terms only. We also provide educational visits, and additional cultural events including visits by artists, dancers, sports coaches, and other experts to enhance learning opportunities. Under normal circumstances children in Year 5 have the opportunity to take part in a residential outdoor adventure visit and in Year 6 a residential visit to York.

### **Homework**

The most important homework involves discovering an enjoyment of reading. Frequently reading with or to your child has more value and impact than you may realise, as do trips to the local library to choose books. Help with topic homework may involve, for example, a visit to the library, a museum, or finding information on the internet. Homework not only reinforces classroom learning, it also helps children to develop skills and attitudes they need for successful lifelong learning. Reading work, learning maths facts (including tables) and spellings form the basis of most homework set. Topic related work and revision activities are also set periodically.

Many children continue their learning at home with our online activities. For example, these include several popular maths games which are proving to have a significant impact on pupils' speed in calculations.

There is a great deal parents can do to help pupils in their learning. Teaching them to calculate and count change at the shops, telling the time, reading labels and signs, extending vocabulary are good examples of areas where parents have a significant impact on their own

children's learning, sometimes without realising it.

### **School Reports**

Twice a year you will receive a printed report detailing the progress your child is making in class, next steps or points for improvement and results of any national assessments your child has taken in that term. You are always welcome to discuss any issues with your child's teacher throughout the year.

### **Nursery Age Children**

We accept children into our nursery group in September each year. Your child may also start nursery the term after their 3rd birthday if spaces are available. An admission form and school prospectus are available from the previous October. There will be opportunities to meet our friendly Early Years team and find out all about our school.

### **Reception Age Children**

Your child can then start school at the beginning of the Autumn term of the year (September to August) in which they will have their 5th Birthday.

### **General Admissions**

You will find all you need to know about school admission on the Cumbria County Council website. A link to the page you need can be found on the front page of our school website - [www.rferguson.org](http://www.rferguson.org).

For advice or guidance, visit our school office.