



Robert Ferguson Primary School

PROSPECTUS 2018 - 2019



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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.

G Frost

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 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, to provide opportunities for music and dance, games like giant

chess and table tennis, and for growing plants and vegetables. Our school is also noted for the extensive playing fields and

playgrounds which we make very good use of for a broad range of sporting activities.

Nursery and Starting School

From the term after their 3rd birthday children can come to our Nursery (mornings or afternoons). 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. Since 2014 we have a brand new, spacious and well-equipped Nursery extension.

Learning in Different Ways

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

Robert Ferguson Primary School is committed to the idea of Inclusive Education. We take account of children's varied life experiences, likes, preferences and needs. We champion equal opportunities for all children whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment and background. All our staff work together to ensure that inclusion is always high on our school's agenda. They 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.



Learning is fun...



adventurous and...



relevant at RFPS.

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:

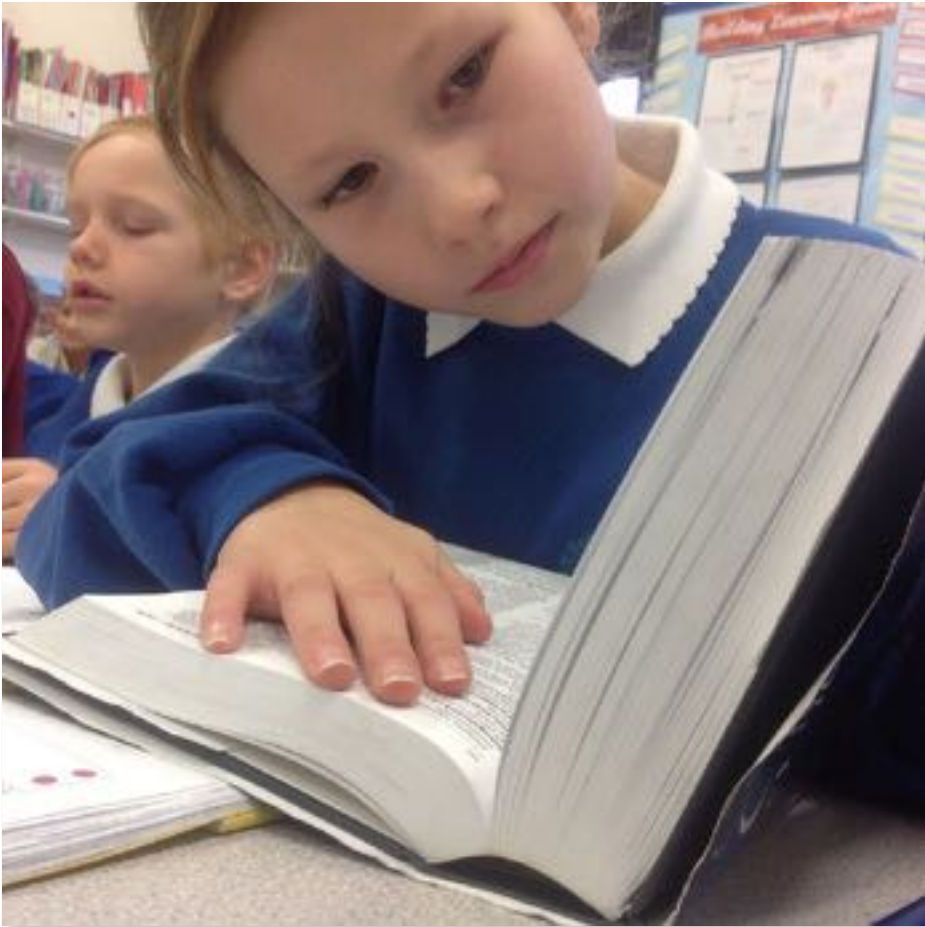
- *Learning about history by dressing up in Edwardian costume to re-enact a school day from 1904.*
- *Learning how to write letters in a cloud of shaving foam.*
- *Learning to multiply decimals by calculating our weights on different planets.*
- *Learning about instructions by brewing a version of "George's 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.*

We make sure STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) feature strongly in our curriculum.

Former RFPS pupil, Michael Martin, is the civil engineer who led the team who built the Queensferry Crossing across the Forth. In 2017 we invited Michael to visit and inspire another generation to get designing and building.



Focusing on the Important Skills



Learning for Life: A visit to University of Cumbria

“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

Essential skills which will always be important and relevant

Effective communication skills (speaking and listening, reading and writing) and a good understanding of mathematics 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 this learning 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- it is part of everyday life. For this reason we make sure our pupils have good access to computers, cameras, video

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

Some of our greatest strengths at Robert Ferguson School are the ways in which we encourage our pupils to learn how to get along, work together and develop their confidence to do things for themselves. These attributes are not measured in tests or exams in schools, but we believe they are just as important, nonetheless. RE and learning about

our cultural heritage are integral parts of our teaching.

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.

Concentration
Managing Distractions
Perseverance
Reasoning
Questioning
Collaboration



Physical Activity and Sport



Playground leaders receiving training in organising playground games.



Our extensive playing fields 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. Recent additions

include a trim-trail, basketball nets, an outdoor stage and seating for those who like to take a quiet break.

We introduce our pupils to a broad range of sports

We have two school halls, 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. In Reception, Years 2, 3 and 4 children have swimming lessons.



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 including cricket, football, gymnastics and athletics. 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 team.



Throughout the school year our pupils have opportunities to try lots of different sports.

Creativity and the Creative Arts



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. 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 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 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.

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



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. Examples of recent educational visits include: Birdoswald Roman Fort, an open farm, an open-air Shakespeare production, The Life Centre (Newcastle), Beamish, Maryport Aquarium, Whinlatter Forest, Lakeland Wildlife Oasis, the Seaside, The Sands Centre and Tullie House.

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.



We encourage our pupils to be ambitious - taking on new challenges is an important part of this.

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



"When we did ghyll scrambling we worked as a team. It was cold but I was determined to get up the waterfall. I felt impressed with what we had achieved."

"Seeing the inside of York Minster was amazing!"

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.



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 Mr Alan Johnston.

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. The group meets most Friday afternoons to help organise and plan activities. 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

The School Day

9:00 – 10:30
10:45 – 12:00
13:00 – 14:30
14:30 – 15:15

The school is open from 8:50 am each morning. We expect all children be in class ready to start lessons at 9:00 am, prompt.

It is your responsibility to inform the school if someone else will be collecting your child at the end of the school day.

The hours spent on teaching during the normal school week, including religious education, but excluding the statutory daily act of collective worship, registration and breaks (including lunch) is:- Junior - 23.5 hours, Infant - 21.75 hours.

Term Dates

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

Absence from School

If your child is absent from school, please contact the school office as soon as possible giving the reason for absence and the likely duration of the 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 an 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.

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



Dress

The school Governors have adopted a school dress code with strong support from parents. 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 in Nelson Street. Plain white polo shirts are also acceptable. Labelling each item of clothing, particularly school sweaters, prevents them being lost or misplaced.

For PE, pupils need a 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.

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.

Toys and Valuables

Children should not bring toys or valuables to school unless they have been asked to by a teacher. This includes expensive watches, items of jewellery and mobile phones. If children need to contact their parents urgently, our office staff will assist.

School Meals

Since September 2014 all pupils in years Reception, 1 and 2 have been entitled to free school meals. For pupils in other year groups, money for school meals will be collected on Monday mornings at the cost (from April 2016) of £10.00 per week. This is collected in by your child's class teacher. The dinner menu is posted on the school website each week.

Free Meals

A form requesting these may be collected from the Local Education

Office at Portland Square or from the school office. Recipients of Free School Meals may qualify for other assistance with school-related costs (e.g. the cost of residential trips).

Packed Lunches

Packed lunches are eaten in the dining hall. For advice on packed lunches, speak to a member of staff.

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.

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 Ferris 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.

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. These include: Football, Netball, Badminton and Cricket, Chess Club, Recorder Club, Choir and Reporters Club. 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 regular visits to the theatre, and other cultural events including visits by artists, dancers, sports coaches, and other experts to enhance learning opportunities. Our 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

Education does not begin and end at school. There is a great deal that parents do to help their children learn. 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

Each term 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 or SATs 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.

For advice or guidance, visit our school office.