‘At Childbase we believe in nurturing, teaching and providing an enabling environment in order to develop children who are confident, independent and unique learners, ready to embrace school life. We work to not only prepare our children but also to prepare our families for school life. Our aim is for all children, families and practitioners to embrace the transition from our nursery preschools to school with excitement and eagerness. We teach our children to reach outstanding outcomes.’
At Childbase we aim to work with families to support children in preschool through our Ready, Steady, Grow programme and our Early Years Foundation Stage pedagogical approach which focuses on the following:

- **Well-being** – it is so important that children have a great sense of well-being and are at ease with themselves, and others. We work to build children’s confidence through positive words and actions so they become well-adjusted individuals who are always ready to learn.

- **Play** – play forms the space and place where children learn, so we give considered and thoughtful effort into ensuring children’s learning and play opportunities are finely tuned within our environments.

- **Social learning** – social learning is the influencing factors of people and the environment around us for children to learn how to ‘live their lives’. Therefore, social learning plays a very big part in ensuring our children have excellent role models and are taught behaviours that benefit not only themselves, but society as a whole.

- **Self-expression** – we want children to feel safe and secure with us, and for that freedom to be expressed in ways that allow children to be comfortable with who they are.

- **Prime Times** – we deliver Prime Times that encourage reflection and critical thinking and are purposeful in content and meaning. Prime Times are implemented throughout the day in various ways and always involve an adult.

- **Real challenge** – we like to encourage risk taking and for children to think about the challenge that lies before them. We provide children with real experiences to solidify and clarify learning, as well as trips and visits to support further learning.

- **Consultation** – consultation forms a large part of what we implement every day. By listening and acting upon children’s thoughts and opinions we build a cohesive place to learn.

- **Co-research** – we actively encourage children to research alongside adults to seek answers. We use tools such as the internet and books, and each other’s personal experiences, to elaborate on the world so it makes sense for young children.

- **Rhythm** – rhythm is very important for children as they learn not only the pattern of language, but the pattern of maths, and the power of music and song. We give our children opportunities to express themselves through music and provide instruments they can use to perform.
AUTUMN TERM

Your child may be joining preschool for the first time or they may have moved up from another class, but in both cases we will ensure your child’s transition into our room is as smooth as possible. We also want to help the families of the children to settle in and get to know us, what we do, and why.

We will always endeavour to have your child’s Key Person available on the first day your child joins us and will create a ‘sense of belonging’ for them with a personalised coat peg, place mat, drawer/tray card and sleep card if required.

You should have already met your Key Person but if you haven’t this will be arranged. Your child’s Key Person is also your family’s Key Person so they will help you with contact information, inform you of your child’s learning and development, and keep you updated with key messages.

Let’s take a look at methods and ways of working that will support your child through Ready, Steady, Grow in the first term in their new preschool environment.
- We introduce a self-registration system that is simple and identifiable for children with their photo and name, or we may gather in small Key Person groups for registration time in the morning.

PARENTS...
We ask that you support your child to self-register, if relevant, when they arrive.

- Children’s name cards are distributed throughout areas of the room to aid reading and recognising their name.

- A helper system may be put in place so the children can help with simple tasks such as laying the table at meal times, being an eco-warrior or safety spy. This gives children a sense of accomplishment and supports their confidence and self-esteem.

PARENTS...
You could think about this for home too. It supports social learning and mathematical skills when laying a table for 2 or more people.

- Prime times can be used to introduce our preschool Children’s Council in a simple and age appropriate way. The concept for children participating in this will become stronger in time.

- Read Write (phonics) is introduced and used throughout the teaching day to embed recognition of sounds. If your child has English as an additional language they will have their own curriculum for support with language acquisition.

- Talking, thinking floor books are a great way of capturing children’s voices and are used in many ways to support groups or individual children.

- Fully stocked literacy equipment is threaded throughout the environment, as well as being deliberately placed in areas to further support the opportunities for mark making.

PARENTS...
Have a range of literacy materials available for your child for making shopping lists, taking notes, keeping a journal etc.

- The promotion of a finger gym in the room supports with fine motor skills.

- Small and large prime times for the children which form part of the pattern of the day on an on-going basis. Prime times have purpose and the Key Person will have planned for this.
Let's also look at methods and ways of working that will support you as parents and caregivers during the first term in preschool.

- We will provide you with information on what to expect in a school setting – what will be different to attending a full day care preschool?

- We will arrange a date and invite you in to discuss the future transition to school and how we will be supporting the children, and your family, in so everyone is ready.

- We will think about what training you as a parent might want from us whilst your children are with us – Read Write, promoting positive behaviour, paediatric first aid etc. Your Key Person can provide lots of information about this.

- We will note down common questions that may arise and create a FAQ sheet so you feel more prepared. Some FAQs can be found on pages 12 & 13 which may help initially.

- We will ensure you know how to apply for a school place, and we will provide an area where we will develop information about local schools, including open days (if known), Ofsted report links and photos of the schools.

- You may make us aware early in the autumn term that you have decided to defer your child’s school place and so we will begin to consider how we will arrange a curriculum for your child to continue their high level learning.

- We will talk to you if your child is still using nappies – this is not a problem for us in any way but may be more of an issue with schools, so we will have sensitive conversations with you about beginning the toilet training process in nursery which can be mirrored at home.

- We will also talk to parents of children who are still napping as schools generally do not offer nap times during the day. Again, this is not a problem for us at all but we will discuss ways and support on how to filter out the daytime naps so that by the spring or summer term they are able to manage with a rest instead.
Your child will have attended for a full term and they will be more confident in the environment and with their peers. Language is developing, friendships are growing, and understanding the world around them is taking shape.

We will continue to build upon the outstanding practice implemented in the autumn term so here is what we will do to support the growth of development during the spring term.

- We may ask you to shop for a pencil case with your child. This can be filled with pencils, pens and rulers etc., that can brought into preschool whenever your child wants to mark make and practice their writing skills. This is a suggestion that is particularly helpful for those children who are confident mark makers, but can also support children who prefer to avoid ‘small’ mark making with pencils and pens.

PARENTS...

A scrapbook can be used to keep ideas, thoughts, feelings and opinions in the lead up to school. You can capture excitement as well as any worries.
• Read stories with school themes and provide 'story bags' about going to school.

• Request information from reception classes about 'The Day in the Life of Reception Class' and share this with you and your child.

• Use the talking thinking floor book with children in prime time groups or with individuals so they can share any worries and we can give directed support.

• Begin to really build on the independence skills found in the autumn term – can your child put on their own coat? Wash their hands when visiting the toilet? Take calculated risks?

PARENTS...
Can your child put on their own coat? Do you know the 'coat flip trick'?
www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wRKDeKbAcl

• We allow children to peel and cut their fruit and vegetables at snack time. They are taught the relevant skills for knife safety.

PARENTS...
We use safety knives intended for children which can be found on Amazon. Children are able to help in many ways and safe safe.

• We will establish a sound book bag system that allows parents and caregivers to choose new reading books with children. Small notebooks may be added in the book bag that will allow you and your child to make comments, draw pictures and generally share information related to communication and language, and literacy.

• Sunscreen will be appearing toward the end of the spring term – we will teach the children about sun safety and how to apply their own sunscreen.

• We will check with local schools on their meal times processes so your child can begin to practice the skills needed. This may mean that we will introduce meal trays for children.

• We will ensure children with SEND continue to be fully supported and have EHC plans in place, if needed, for the new autumn term when they begin reception class.
We will also consider how we can further support you now that you have also experienced a full term with us.

- We will arrange a date and invite you in to discuss the school reception system so you can prepare yourselves. If possible, we will arrange for a reception class teacher to help deliver this with us.
- We will ask the schools for information they can share such as policies, names of reception class teachers and prospectuses and add this growing information to our school display.
- We will endeavour to make arrangements for reception teachers to visit and meet your child in preschool.
- We will support you with the school application process, if necessary.
- We will support you as a family if you appeal against your allocated school place. You may not know this until early in the summer term.
Life in preschool is settled now. The children have been given outstanding learning experiences and are strong in confidence, fluent with language and with a widening vocabulary. They are now ready to begin to feel the experience of a reception class, so how do we do this?

During the final term of preschool we ensure children are given real life experiences to draw from which supports, and embeds, their cultural capital, and really prepares their personal, social and emotional development.
• Provide a role play area about school (uniform, PE clothes, lunch boxes etc).

• Carry out learning experiences that require children to change into a PE kit.

• Provide plenty of supportive books about going to school which include information and images of assembly halls and canteens/cafes.

• Bring information about your child's reception class/schools down to their level to share with them. Keep the talking thinking floor book close by to capture concerns and excitement.

• Ensure that your child has lots of access to mathematical and literacy resources.

• Now that we have clarified with schools about their lunch system we may introduce a ‘tray system’ or find a system that emulates as closely as possible to schools.

• Hold a carefully detailed Children’s Council to arrange their graduation.

PARENTS…
Supporting your child’s ability to dress and undress is vital for physical development. Keep this going and make a daily challenge for how quickly it can be done.
We want to ensure parents and caregivers are feeling supported about their child’s imminent transition to reception class in the last term of preschool.

- We will arrange a preschool graduation (Children’s Council) ceremony and send out invitations to families.
- We will ensure the lending library is fully stocked with books about school and ideas for you to support with home learning.
- We will hold a parents information evening on school.
- We will recommend that you begin to make arrangements for after school clubs/holiday clubs.
- We will remind you to keep your child actively involved in experiences about school by bringing them along on school shopping days for uniform etc., as well as having conversations about their new journey to school and new routines.

**On going**

- We will continue to track individual/groups of children, to identify any gaps in learning and development and ensure that additional support is put in place.
- We will celebrate success when children achieve next steps, show an understanding of our Golden Values and achieve ‘school readiness’ objectives.
- We will arrange coffee mornings/other events where practical so that preschool parents can come together to discuss school transitions and share contact details to arrange play dates over the summer month.
- We will share regular parent memos which, amongst other aspects, detail what the preschool is doing to support transitions and school readiness.
- We will ensure we are covering all 7 areas of learning and start using the Early Learning Goals as relevant for individual children.
- We will use the phonics kit available within the Mantra Lingua resource and Read Write packs.

**PARENTS…**

Should you wish to learn phonics with your child then please visit www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/
1. Should my child be able to write their name before they go to school?

Being able to write their name is one of many developmental milestones a child will reach. They usually reach this milestone by the time they are 5 or when they are 5. As most children start school when they are 4, many children reach this milestone at school although some children will write their name before they go to school. Children are encouraged to firstly meet the milestone of giving meaning to marks they make as they draw, write and paint. They then focus on understanding sounds, for example; hearing and saying the initial sound in words. They then learn to sound out sounds in simple words and blend them together, and then they will learn to link sounds to letters. Alongside a focus on developing their physical fine motor skills, this all needs to happen before a child can name and sound the letters of the alphabet, start to use clearly identifiable letters to communicate meaning and then learn to write their name.

2. Should my child be able to read before they go to school?

No. They should be able to recognise their name and other special words such as ‘mummy’ and ‘daddy’ but they aren’t expected to be able to read full sentences. They will usually be able to read short simple sentences at the age of 5.
3. Should my child be fully toilet trained and able to use the toilet independently before they go to school?

We will work with you to ensure that your child is confident and able to use the toilet independently before they start school.

4. Can my child sleep at school?

No, schools do not provide sleep opportunities within their daily routine and by the age of 5 children do not usually developmentally need to sleep during the day.

5. Will my child be able to have free access to play outside throughout the day in the Reception year at school?

All schools are different and dependent on their facilities and approach some will offer this and others will not. Please check with the school.

6. When do I need to apply for school by?

The date is set each year and is usually mid-January. The nursery, school or Local Authority can provide the exact date each year.

7. How do I apply for a school for my child?

Your Local Authority will outline the process on their website.

8. When do I need to let nursery know my child’s leave date?

There is a 6 week notice period prior to your child’s leave date. When you find out which school your child is going to it is helpful to let the nursery know as soon as possible so that they can start to work with the school on the transition. Please speak to the Nursery Business Administrator in relation to funded places and cut off dates for claiming funding.

9. Can I defer my child from school for another year?

You can ask for your child to have a deferred place if the following apply:

- They were born in the summer (1 April to 31 August)
- You do not think they’re ready to start in the September after they turn 4
- They could start school in the September after they turn 5

Check your Local Authority process for further information on how to apply for a deferred place.

10. What if I’m not happy with my child’s school allocation?

You can appeal this through your Local Authority, please check their website for the appeals process. Academies have a different process to appeal. Please follow their specific guidance.
Recommendations for resources

Exercise books
• Learning logs
• Activity books

These are used to encourage children to take part in learning opportunities in their home environment, very much like taking homework home from school. This also encourages the parents to be a part of their child’s learning and development.

Recommended websites to find reading material

The websites below will assist with finding different reading materials to include in lending libraries and book bags.

• ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/
• www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/
• www.oxfordowl.co.uk/welcome-back/for-home/reading-owl/advice-for-parents/reading-at-home/phonics-made-easy
• www.lovemybooks.co.uk/3-5-years

Additional resources used to support school readiness:
• Handmade alphabet and number flashcards; extending the child’s knowledge of maths and literacy, these can include pictures and words.
• Handmade school specific photo books; these are based on each individual school and aim to introduce the child to their new environment.
• Handmade phonics sheets to assist parents with the correct pronunciation when supporting their child in this area of learning.