Manchester High School for Girls

Parent Handbook 2026-27
Reception

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you and your daughter into our School community. We aim to make starting school an incredibly happy, positive experience for girls and their families. We are really looking forward to getting to know you all and to the many exciting, busy times ahead.

The aim of this handbook is to help you, and your daughter prepare for starting school as well as to give you a little bit of information about the Reception year. Please refer to the 'Preparatory School Parent Handbook' for more general information about starting MHSG.
We really value the relationship between school and parents and would like to take this opportunity to say that if you (or your daughter) ever have any questions or worries, no matter how small, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Head of Preparatory School:	**Mrs Samantha Gibbons**
and Designated Safeguarding	sgibbons@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk
Lead (DSL):	
Assistant Head of Preparatory School	**Mrs Ruth Anderson**
with responsibility for EYFS and KS1 and	randerson@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk
Deputy DSL and Class Teacher:	
School Nurses:	**Sister Janet Bamford**
	nurses@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk
Prep Receptionist / Heads PA:	**Miss Alison Evans**
	aevans@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk
	prepreception@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk

Preparatory School - 0161 249 2243

Contents

Page

3. Starting School

4. The First Day

5. Week 2 Onwards …. A Typical Day in Reception

5. Breakfast Club

6. After School Club (ASC)

6. Parent Communication

6. The School Bag

7. Homework

7. Reading

7. Food and Drink

8. Our Curriculum

8. Assessment

8. Additional Reception Equipment

9. Medicine and Health in School

9. Behaviour

10. English as an Additional Language (EAL)

10. Policies

10. Complaints

Starting School

Starting school is such an exciting, busy time and we hope that the following ideas help your daughter (and you!) to get ready for it:

- It is helpful if your daughter can recognise her written name. It is also helpful (not essential) if she can write her own name. If you are working on this at home, please can we ask you to teach her to write her name with a capital letter at the start and then with lower case letters.

- Encourage your daughter to play 'dress up' in her new school uniform. Teach her how to get dressed and undressed independently. Remember to show your daughter where her name label is.

- Show your daughter how to distinguish between the front and back of clothes. Help her learn how to turn inside out clothes the right way. Please spend extra time teaching your daughter how to put on her tights and socks.

- Show your daughter how to put on her coat and do up zips and buttons. During the school day, we put our coat on at least 4 times!

- It is helpful to add a loop of ribbon to her overall and coat to help her to hang them up.

- Let your daughter get used to being away from you if she is not used to this. Perhaps she can go to a relative or friend's house to play?

- Help her to develop confidence to manage her own personal needs:

1. To use the toilet and wash hands independently
2. To use a knife and fork to eat
3. Blow and wipe her nose and put the tissue in the bin

- When school starts, ask your daughter to pack her own bag so that she knows where everything is. It is also a nice idea to add a small key ring or ribbon to her school bag to help her to identify her own belongings.

- Playing games such as, I Spy, Snakes and Ladders, Hopscotch, reading together, singing nursery rhymes as well as dressing up, baking, shopping etc. all provide wonderful opportunities for learning through play and a good bridge into school life.

- Encourage your child to express their feelings by creating a safe space for open conversations.

- Try to organise a play date with another girl who will be in the class. It is always nice to see another familiar face on the first day.

The First Few Days

The best overall advice that we can offer is to be positive and organised. In terms of practical advice:

- Find a little time the day before to let your daughter try on her school uniform, coat and shoes. Check that everything is named and show your daughter where her name is. Help your daughter to lay out her uniform ready for the morning.

- Help her to pack her school bag. Remember to put in a change of underwear too - just in case…. She will also need a named water bottle

- Remind your daughter of her teacher's name and that all staff are there to look after and help her. Use the photograph postcard to help with this.

- To aid with the transition to school, the new Reception cohort will begin with 2 half days. (Thursday 3rd September-Friday 4th September inclusive).

- The classrooms will be open from **8.30am** and the day will start at **9.15am.**

- When you arrive, please come straight to the classroom where we will be waiting to welcome you. Your daughter will have a named peg where she can put her coat. There will also be a box for water bottles and school bags.

- Parents are very welcome to come in to help with unpacking, to have a look around and even have a little play. We will encourage you to leave by 9.15am. We promise to contact you if your daughter is unhappy or unsettled.

- Please arrive promptly for home time at **12.30pm** – your daughter will be very excited to see you. Please wait in the outdoor area next to the classroom.

- Please note that school will provide a snack, milk and lunch

- In the first few days, we will spend time getting to know where everything is in our classroom, including where the toilets are. We will also start to think about some of the rules like being kind and listening carefully. The days will be play based and there will be lots of opportunities to get to know each other. Timetabled lessons such as PE and Music will start in the first full week.

A Typical Day in Reception

From **Monday 7th September 2026**, girls can arrive at school from **8am.**

You are welcome to come into the hall to help your daughter to unpack for the first term. We then encourage you to drop off you daughter with the staff on the playground to encourage a little more independence.

If you arrive after 8.45am, please sign your daughter in at Prep Reception. *If your daughter is going to be absent, please contact Prep Reception before 9am. On her return, she will need to bring a written note explaining her absence.*

7.30am	Breakfast Club (Infant Hall)
8am	Playground, Infant Hall or classroom
8.45am	Registration - classroom
9am	Assembly / Form Time / Singing Practice
9.15am	Timetabled lessons
10.00am	Snack and Story Time
10.25am	Playtime
10.40am	Timetabled lessons
11.40am	Lunchtime
1.00pm	Registration
1.10pm	Timetabled lessons
2.15pm	Playtime
2.30pm	Timetabled lessons
3:25pm	Home time. (Collect girls from the Reception classroom)
Girls are then supervised until 4pm in the Infant Playground or Hall. Girls using the bus will be taken to the bus room and then walked to the bus by a member of staff Girls in After School Club may stay until 6pm. There is an additional charge for After School Club.	

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club is available to any pupil of the School from Pre School to Year 6. Whilst this service is not charged, parents must ensure that there are sufficient funds on their ParentPay account to cover the cost of any food that their daughter consumes. The club is held every weekday from 7:30am-8:00am during term time and uses the Infant Hall. To gain entry please select the 'After

School Club' option on the intercom at the Prep gate entrance. Parents do not need to book in advance.

Girls should not be dropped off for Breakfast Club after 8.15am.

After School

After School Club provides a flexible service for pupils in the Preparatory School whose parents find it difficult to collect their children from school at the usual finishing time (3.25pm).

After School Club is available to our pupils from Pre-School to Year 6 and is at an extra cost. The Club is held every weekday from 3.25 – 6.00pm during term time and uses the Infant Hall, next to the Reception classroom.

After School Club is not an extension of school and does not provide extra lessons. Supervision, care and organised activities are provided. A light, nutritious snack and drink are provided, the cost of which is included in the fee.

Parents wishing to register their daughters for the After School Club should contact the Preparatory School Reception. This can be booked in advance or on the day.

Parent Communication

We use the interactive learning platform 'Seesaw' as our primary means of communication with parents. Seesaw is an online website and app, which the Infant teachers use to create a portfolio for each girl to record and highlight girls' achievements. It can be downloaded as an app for phones/tablets or used via the web. It is also used as a communication tool, allowing teachers to explain and upload homework tasks. Parents are also able to write messages and share photographs of work and activities with the teacher. You will be given instructions on how to join Seesaw and this can be downloaded as an app for phones/tablets or used via the web. Joining before or during the summer holidays will enable you to receive some recorded stories which will be sent out weekly.

The School Bag

When your daughter starts school, she will need one of the MHSG school bags.

Your daughter will also be given a 'Reading Folder' and we will gradually build it up to contain the following items –

A Reading Record: This is a small, diary that allows us to keep a record of the books your daughter has read. When you have read the book at home, we ask that you **sign your initials** and add any comments you feel are helpful.

New sounds and words: The girls will bring home new sounds and words most days. Please practise these words for a few minutes at home every day.

Reading Scheme Books: We use a wide range of reading scheme books to introduce your daughter to reading in an enjoyable way. Once your daughter has learned enough sounds and words and is able to blend confidently, we will begin to send home a reading book for your daughter to read to you every day.

The school bag must come into school EVERY DAY. Please remember to keep the Reading Record, words and books in the bag.

Please check and empty the school bag every night – there may just be one of your daughter's wonderful, creative masterpieces waiting for you…

Homework

The majority of homework in Reception is linked to learning to read. From time to time, we will set other little homework tasks linked to our topic work or Maths. We will give you plenty of time to complete these activities and we will upload all of these to Seesaw.

Tips

- Set a homework routine. For example, when you get in from school every day, have a little snack, a play and then homework. Children like routine so find one that works for your family. Using a timer can be very helpful when setting routines.
- Make sure that your daughter has a quiet, comfortable place to work.
- Use lots of praise – homework should not be 'stressful' for the girls or parents. If it is, make time to pop in and see us to discuss.
- If your daughter is tired or unwell, do let the teacher know and perhaps complete the homework another night. We are very understanding ☺.

Reading

From the second week of school, your daughter will be expected to spend a short time (a few minutes) every day at home learning sounds and words and later, when she has a reading book, we ask that you spend time listening to her read on a daily basis.

When reading at home, encourage your daughter to talk about what is happening in the pictures, what the characters are doing and what could happen next.

Remember:

- Reading should be an enjoyable experience
- Easy books encourage confidence and fluency whereas tricky books can just lead to frustration
- Re-reading a book is vital for building up a good sight vocabulary

If your daughter does need a little help, give her time to think and to have a go then prompt her to:

- Look at the pictures for a clue
- Sound out the word
- Miss out the tricky word, read on and then come back to it
- Look at the first sound and have a good guess
- Failing that, tell her the word and keep reading a positive experience

Food and Drink

We eat our snack at 10:00am in the classroom. We provide chopped fruit with crackers or breadsticks. Milk is also available at snack time and fresh drinking water is available throughout the day. We do encourage the girls to drink plenty of water.

Lunch

We are very lucky that our delicious school meals are all prepared on site. Weekly menus are available on the school website.

Class teachers will help the girls to choose food, and extra lunchtime staff will come to look after and support the class as they eat. It is helpful if you can also go through the menu with your daughter to help her think about what she likes.

Girls can sometimes take a little time to settle into the routine of school lunch; please try not to worry. We will work with you, your daughter and the catering team to ease any concerns as quickly as we can.

Do keep us up to date with any special dietary requirements including allergies.

Please note that you will be invited to 'Dine with your Daughter' during the school year. This is a great opportunity to come in and have a school lunch too – more details will follow.

Our Curriculum

You will be invited to Prep Welcome Evening on Tuesday 8th September where our Reception curriculum will be discussed in greater detail and we will give you more information. You will also be given a copy of the class timetable.

Please note that optional, weekly Ballet lessons, will be available for Reception girls. Details will be sent nearer the time.

Assessment

Staff are continually observing and assessing individual girls throughout the school day. We do this so that we can plan appropriate, individual next steps and targets to ensure each individual girl is making excellent progress.

We would like to reassure you that the girls are not aware that we are assessing them and any one-to-one assessments are viewed as 'fun' and not a test.

There will be two parents' evenings throughout the year, one in the Autumn term and the second in the Spring term. However, we promote an open-door policy, so please feel free to get in touch if you have any concerns or queries about your daughter's progress.

The First parents' evening will take place in October where you will have an opportunity to discuss how your daughter is settling into school life.

Additional Reception Equipment

In addition to the items on the school uniform list, your daughter will need:

1. A pair of named wellington boots (any colour)

2. A change of underwear (for little accidents ☺)

3. Spare socks or tights

4. A named water bottle.

5. A PE bag **will not** be needed in Reception (the girls come to School in their PE kit on the PE day and Outdoor Learning Day).

6. We wear PE kit to school at least twice a week and usual uniform on the other days.

7. School regulation art overall.

8. A plain black swimming costume, school swimming hat and towel.

Medicine/ Health in School

A School Nurse is usually in school every day of term from 9.00am – 4.00pm. She administers First Aid and looks after the girls if they become unwell. She also supervises arrangements for health checks, medical examinations and immunisations/vaccinations. She can advise on contact with other support services.

Please note that the School Nurse works within the Code of Professional Conduct of the Nurses' and Midwifery Council. Information given to the School Nurse by a pupil or parent remains confidential to the pupil or parent unless permission is given to pass on that information. If your daughter is ill and needs to go home, a member of staff will telephone you so that you are able to arrange transport home for her.

If your daughter needs to take medication during the school day, please send in the medicine in the original container, with the pharmacy label, instruction leaflet and a "Request for Medication" form (available from Prep Reception), stating her name, nature of illness, name of medicine, time and the dates to be given. Details of a contact number would also be useful.

Any medicines must be given to our Prep Receptionist, Alison Evans, who will arrange for the medicine to be stored securely. All medicines will be administered by Paediatric First Aid trained staff.

Sometimes, it is necessary to hand medicines to the School Nurses, who will also be able to administer medicines to girls.

The above does not apply to inhalers used by children with asthma who are encouraged to have their named inhaler with them or their teacher at all times. For our Reception girls, please hand any inhalers to the class teacher at the start of the day.

During the Reception year, all girls have a routine medical check with the School Nurse. Your daughter's weight, height, sight, hearing and general development will be monitored.

Behaviour

Pupil Code of Conduct (Golden Rights)

- Do be gentle; do not hurt anybody.
- Do be kind and helpful; be polite, considerate and co-operative at all times. Do not hurt other people's feelings.
- Do work hard; do not waste other people's time.
- Do look after your property; show respect for your own class possessions and those of others. Take care of the classroom equipment and environment; do not intentionally damage or break your/school's/other's belongings.
- Do listen and follow instructions; listen to and follow adults' instructions. Listen to the views of others without interrupting them. Do not interrupt, shout out or be rude.

- Do be honest; do not cover up the truth.

Positive behaviour is rewarded in many ways including:

- Individual stickers and house points
- Golden Girl awards – handed out in assembly

We focus on girls learning to name and identify their emotions and how to manage their feelings. We use a strategy linking colours to emotions and link this to the story of The Colour Monster.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

If your daughter speaks a language other than English at home, please inform us so that we can be aware and ensure she receives the appropriate support in School.

School Policies

All School policies are available to parents by request. Please contact your class teacher if you would like a copy of any policies.

Please note that Mrs Gibbons (Head of Preparatory School) is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Mrs Anderson is the Deputy DSL. Any concerns should be directed to either Mrs Anderson or Mrs Gibbons.

Mobile phones – are not prohibited while parents are on site, Any device which can be recorded or take photographs is strictly forbidden. Thank you for your support with this.

Complaints Procedure

Please refer to the 'Preparatory School Parent Handbook' for the procedure to follow if you do have a complaint.

We have a duty to inform you that written complaints about the fulfilment of the EYFS requirements will be investigated and the complainant will be notified of the outcome of the investigation within 28 days. The record of complaints will be made available to OFSTED and ISI on request.

You can use the following details to contact OFSTED or ISI directly:

OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education)

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Email: enquires@OFSTED.gov.uk

ISI – (Independent Schools Inspectorate)

Tel: 0207 600 0100
Email: concerns@isi.net

Manchester High School for Girls
Grangethorpe Road
Manchester
M14 6HS
Tel: 0161 224 0447
Fax: 0161 224 6192
Direct line to After School care (emergency use only)
07811198826
Email: administration@mhsg.manchester.sch.uk
www.manchesterhigh.co.uk
Twitter: @mhsg
Facebook.com/ManHighSG

Registered Charity Number 1164323
Date published: September 2026