



Shacklewell Primary School
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Executive Headteacher: Ms Nicole Reid
Headteacher: Mr Matthew Trahair

Wednesday 16th September 2026

Dear Reception Families,

Re: Reception Baseline Assessment

Welcome to the start of your child's primary school journey. As your child settles into their new routine, I am writing to share some brief information regarding the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA), which all state-funded primary schools in England carry out within a child's first six weeks of school.

What is the RBA?

The RBA is a brief, national assessment introduced by the Department for Education. It provides a snapshot of children's starting points in early literacy, communication, language and mathematics as they enter Reception. The data collected is used by the government to measure progress across the country from Reception to the end of Year 6.

How Does It Work?

- **Format:** It is a low-key, one-to-one activity carried out directly with your child's class teacher or teaching assistant.
- **Style:** The tasks are interactive and age-appropriate, using practical resources or simple tasks where children respond by pointing, speaking or interacting with materials.
- **Duration:** It takes roughly 15 to 20 minutes to complete. There is no strict time limit and it can be paused or split across sessions if a child needs a break.

No Preparation Needed

Please do not worry about preparing your child for this assessment. It is not a test with a "pass" or "fail" and children generally enjoy the dedicated one-to-one time with their teacher. The environment is kept completely stress-free, relaxed and informal—most children simply experience it as a gentle learning game.

Results and Reporting

The assessment is designed purely as an administrative tool for the Department for Education to track national progress over time. Because of this, the RBA does not produce a formal numerical score for individual pupils to compare against others, nor is it used as a label for your child.

The DfE has published a webpage with information for families with children in Reception. This information can be found [here](#).

Our priority during these initial weeks remains observing, bonding with and supporting your child so we can tailor our teaching to their individual strengths and needs.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your child's transition into Reception further, please feel free to speak to your child's class teacher or contact the school office.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "MTrahair". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

Matt Trahair
Headteacher