



Tuesday 15th September 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

Getting to know your child

We hope your child has had a lovely start to their time at Saltergate. As they settle into their new routines, make friendships and become familiar with the adults around them, our Early Years team will be spending time getting to know each child as an individual.

Over the coming weeks, we will complete some baseline assessments. These are a normal part of starting school and help us understand your child's starting point, so that we can provide the right support, challenge and opportunities for them.

Reception Baseline Assessment – the DfE assessment:

Children in Reception will take part in the Reception Baseline Assessment (RBA). This is a statutory assessment set by the Department for Education (DfE) and is completed within the first six weeks of starting Reception.

The assessment provides a snapshot of your child's early skills in literacy, communication and language, and mathematics. It is short, practical and age-appropriate and is completed individually with a familiar member of staff.

There is no need for your child to prepare. Children cannot pass or fail the assessment, and it is not about judging or labelling them. The DfE explains that children are unlikely to even realise that they are taking part in an assessment.

[DfE – Reception Baseline Assessment: Information for Parents](#)

The Red Kite Learning Trust BESSI Baseline:

Alongside the statutory DfE assessment, schools across Red Kite Learning Trust will also complete a BESSI baseline.

The Brief Early Skills and Support Index (BESSI) is different from the RBA. Your child will not sit a test or complete activities for the BESSI. Instead, it is completed by the teaching professionals who know and work with your child, using their observations and professional knowledge.

The BESSI helps us understand your child's starting point in areas such as:

- Behavioural adjustment – routines, relationships and turn-taking
- Language and cognition – communication, understanding and thinking
- Daily living skills – independence and everyday tasks
- Family support – information that helps us understand your child's transition to school

How will this help my child?

The purpose of the BESSI is to help us use what we know about your child to inform our teaching and provision. It can help us recognise their strengths, identify areas where they may benefit from additional support and plan experiences that meet their individual needs.



Starting school is a big step, and every child arrives with their own unique experiences, skills and starting points. These assessments help us to get to know your child well and support them to thrive from the very beginning of their school journey.

If you have any questions about the information in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch. I will be very happy to answer any questions you may have.

Many thanks,

Miss Gotts
Reception Teacher
EYFS & KS1 Leader