



Starting School – Frequently Asked Questions

The School

How is the school organised?

We have 9 classes; 3 in each of the 3 year groups. Our intake number is 90 and each class is usually full – 30 children. As well as the class teacher, there is Teaching Assistant in each class; in Reception and Year 1 they are full time but in Year 2 they only have a TA for 4 days a week.

I heard that teachers have PPA – what is this and how does it affect my child?

PPA stands for Planning, Preparation and Assessment time. Every teacher is entitled to 10% of their teaching time as PPA. At our school it is taken every other week. Our PPA is covered in 7 classes by Ms Prosser, our EYFS and Forest School leader. The other two classes are job shares and so they cover each other. The children soon get to know this happens and it becomes part of their normal routine. They still continue with the usual curriculum for that day – it is just taught by Ms Prosser instead of their class teacher.

How can I get involved in school life?

We have lots of people who come into school and volunteer to hear readers or help in class (although not currently due to the COVID situation). We also have a Parent – Teacher Association that is always looking for more help and/or committee members.

Food and Drink

Are you a nut free school?

Yes, we are.

How long do the children get to eat lunch?

The Reception children all go to lunch at 11.45am and they have 25 minutes before the next shift comes into the hall. If they need a few minutes longer we can give this, as long as it isn't everyone!

How much is a school dinner?

Nothing! All children in Reception to Year 2 are entitled to a Universal Free School Meal and so there is no cost to parents/carers.

Even though we get a free hot dinner, I have heard I should still claim for Free School Meals as I am on benefits. Why is this?

You are right, even though your child gets a meal, if you think you are eligible for FSMs, we would encourage you to apply because this will bring funding into school that will be used to support your child and their learning. If you are eligible, your child will also be able to attend one after school club per week, funded by the school, and if they go on a school trip, we will not ask you for any money for that. You can check eligibility and apply online using this [link](#).

Does my child have milk in school?

All children under five are eligible for free milk at school. Once they turn five, they are still able to have this but you will have to pay for it – it is currently about £15 per term through [Cool Milk](#). If your child has a school dinner they also have the choice of water or milk with their meal.

Do the children get a snack?

Yes, there is a national fruit and veg scheme that offers a piece of fruit or veg to your child each day. If you want to send in your child with their own snack, it must be fruit or veg (fresh or dried).

Is drinking water available?

Yes. Pre-COVID we had working water fountains in or near each classroom but these are currently turned off for obvious reasons. At present, each child is asked to bring in a bottle of water and if they forget, we have cups that can be used. We try and encourage children to drink as much of their water as possible but some are better at this than others. All children have either milk or water with their school dinners and are encouraged to drink at snack time.

What should I put in my child's packed lunch?

We encourage healthy eating. The children are expected to eat their savoury first. While we are happy with a lunchbox sized chocolate coated biscuit or wafer, we do not allow chocolate bars or sweets. Fizzy drinks are not allowed either. We do not police the lunchboxes, but if we felt there was a concern, we may talk to parents/carers about alternative healthy options.

On my child's birthday can I send in sweets or cakes?

Yes, if you wish but this is not an expectation. At this time, due to COVID, we are asking that cakes are shop bought and sweets are sealed / wrapped so there is minimum handling.

School Uniform**Where can I buy school uniform from?**

We keep a small stock of branded jumpers and cardigans in school for purchase or branded items can be purchased online from our supplier, [School Trends](#). You do not have to have branded uniform and can buy generic items from anywhere selling uniform, such as supermarkets.

Can my child wear jewellery in school?

Children may wear wristwatches and small, plain studs only in pierced ears, but in the interests of safety, no other jewellery may be worn. Earrings must be removed or covered with tape (provided by parents/carers) for PE lessons.

Health**What do I do if my child is prescribed medication?**

If you feel they are still well enough to come to school, we can administer prescribed medication. You will be asked to bring it to the office in its original packaging, so we can see who it was prescribed for, and you will need to fill in a consent form before we are able to administer it. It is the parent/carer's responsibility at the end of each day to come and collect it from the school office.

What happens if my child has a medical or dental appointment?

While we encourage parents to try and make appointments outside of the school day, we recognise this is not always possible. If your child will be in late or needs to be picked up early because of an appointment, please contact the school and let us know beforehand.

How long before my child can return to school after illness?

For cases of vomiting or diarrhoea, the rule is 48 hours after the last episode. For all other illnesses, you need to judge when you feel they are well enough to return.

What do you do if a child has an accident at school?

We will of course first aid your child. If it is an accident that results in a noticeable mark/bruise/cut, we will usually give you a ring just to let you know what has happened. Children are also issued with a sticker to wear, to show they needed first aid. With more serious head injuries, we will ring to ask you to either come and collect your child, or at least come and see the injury to see if you would like

to take them to be checked or are happy for them to remain in school under observation. If an accident was serious, we would of course ring 999 and then let you know immediately.

What do I do if my child gets headlice?

As soon as you are able to, you need to treat your child's headlice. Headlice is not a reason to be off school. You should also let us know as if we have several cases, we usually send out a reminder to check hair and treat headlice to all parents/carers.

Transport

Can I park on-site?

The only on-site parking for parents/carers is for holders of a blue badge – they need to request permission to park in our disabled area and we will issue a badge. If there is a short term reason for needing to park on-site, please discuss that with us. There is very limited parking in Hawkins Close so we strongly encourage people to park further afield and walk in - it gets very busy with cars and lots of people in a very enclosed and small area.

Can my child cycle or scoot to school?

Absolutely yes! We have racks at school, just inside the entrance gate, where children can leave their bikes and scooters for the day.

Wrap-around Care

Is there breakfast and after school club?

Yes, this is run on-site at the Junior School – please see the PDF at the bottom of this part of the website for more information.

Do you run after school clubs?

Usually yes, there are some clubs running although not all are for Reception, especially in the Autumn term when they are settling in. However, in the current COVID situation, no after school clubs are running. When they are running, clubs include football, gym and Zumba, although these may change from time to time.

Communication

What do I do if I need to see a teacher?

Under normal (pre-COVID) circumstances, if you just need a very short chat, this can be done on the door when dropping off / collecting, however this is currently not possible so you would need to either email the teacher directly or ring the school and ask for a call back. If you need a longer discussion with the teacher, you will need to make an appointment with them, so again, either ring or email to arrange that. We aim to meet or talk to parents/carers as soon as we are able after a meeting is requested.

How do you communicate with parents?

We use Parent Mail to send out the majority of our communications. We have a monthly newsletter and lots of other letters in between. The website is regularly updated and sometimes we have notice boards outside! Sometimes we will ring if we need to talk to individual parents.

Do you have a school council?

Yes, we have our 'Linking Voices' although due to the current pandemic, we cannot hold meetings as it would mean mixing 'bubbles'. Reception representatives join from January onwards, once they are settled in. Meetings take place every two or three weeks. Class representatives are chosen by their peers and represent their class for half the year before another classmate takes on the role.

Education

What should I do if I am worried about my child's progress?

If you have worries, you need to raise these with the class teacher initially, so you can discuss and agree a way forward. It may be that we suggest you talk with our SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator) if concerns are ongoing and could be the result of a barrier to learning that we could support them with.

What if my child can't speak English or my English is limited?

We would suggest that before starting the school, you meet with our SENDCO. We have extensive experience supporting children in these circumstances, and we in turn are supported by a fantastic team at WSCC, whose service includes providing translators for meetings, so please don't worry. Our school website has the facility to translate into a range of languages too.

If you have any other questions that you think other parents might benefit from knowing the answer to, please let us know and we can add to this list.