

Dear Parents,

## **Welcome To Cheriton Primary School**

Starting school is an important milestone in a child's life. Our aim at Cheriton Primary is to make the transition to school a happy and secure one for each child. We seek to provide an environment in which your child can be given the best possible start to their life in school. Every child will begin school with their own unique set of skills, knowledge and experiences which we will celebrate and build upon as they are introduced to school routines and expectations. Through appropriate teaching methods, including plentiful provision for exploratory play, every child will have equal access to a broad curriculum and be given the opportunity and encouragement to develop to their full potential.

The aim of this information is to help you and your child as they start their important first year. We know that starting school can be a stressful time for both children and parents, but there is a lot you can do to help your child settle into school routines more easily.

We believe that the partnership between home and school is vitally important and we hope that this information, along with our introductory meeting, will help you to feel fully involved in this new phase of your child's learning.



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## **Useful Information**

### **Telephone Numbers**

It is of utmost importance that you, or a named adult, are easily contactable during the school day in case of emergency. We require phone numbers of at least two people and would ask you to make sure that these are kept up-to-date, especially mobile phone numbers which change more often.



### **Absences from School**

If your child is absent from school, please ring the office in the morning of the first day of absence and office staff will document the absence. Alternatively send in a letter with a sibling or friend explaining the reason for the absence as it is a legal requirement that all absences are explained and documented.

### **Worries and Concerns**

If you have any worries or concerns about your child, however small they may seem, please do not hesitate to discuss these with the staff. Staff are available before school most days for a brief chat and if you need a longer discussion, a mutually convenient time can always be arranged through the office who will always pass a message to the Class teacher. There is a **Class Day Book** available for you to write useful information on a daily basis e.g. someone different picking up etc. It is checked each morning at registration.

### **School Day (once the children are full-time)**

9.00am	School Starts - Foundation Stage children come in to class and settle to a morning activity. They do not line up with the other classes until later in the school year.
10.30am - 10.50am	Morning playtime
12.00pm - 1.15pm	Lunch - time
2.50pm – 3.00pm	Afternoon playtime
3.30pm	Home time (we bring the children out at 3.25pm so that we can hand them over one by one)

It is very important that your child arrives at school on time each day. Children can become quite anxious and find it difficult to settle if they regularly arrive after their friends have started an activity.

It is equally important that you are on time at the end of a school day, which will initially seem very long to your child.

### **Home time**

Please wait alongside the office, behind the side gate. We will bring the children outside to meet you **at 3.25pm**. In this way we can hand them over to you individually and safely, before the rest of the school pours out. For your child's safety, we only hand Foundation Stage children to the 'nominated' adults for that family. If somebody different is going to collect your child, please write this in the **Day Book**, kept just inside the cloakroom or on the class fence, and ask the person to make themselves known to us. Alternatively, telephone the school office and they will let us know that there has been a change to arrangements.

### **Playtime**

Foundation Stage children are given a daily selection of fresh fruit or vegetable and this is free of charge. They are also offered a drink of water. **We do not therefore have snacks from home** as some of the older children do.

Children may bring in **one** small toy to play with at playtime, which must be of a size which will fit inside their 'shoebox'. No electronic games and no toy weapons of any kind are allowed. The toy remains the responsibility of your child and inevitably, some do get lost or broken. Please bear this in mind and do not send in 'favourites' or precious things.



### **Lunchtime**

Although we try very hard to minimise this, lunchtimes can initially be stressful for young children. There is a new routine, and, as well as lots of new faces and some unfamiliar foods, they will be expected to make choices and to eat their food independently.

#### **School Dinners**

You will be given a menu for the cooked meals provided by Hampshire Caterers so that you will be able to discuss the options with your child and help them choose. In class, your child will have a sticker to wear which indicates their choice and reminds them what they chose when they get all the way to lunchtime. These choices are also recorded by staff, so it isn't a problem if stickers get lost.



#### **Packed Lunch**

If you provide your child with a packed lunch please ensure that they can easily open the lunch box, as well as any smaller tubs or packets within. *Factory sealed packets are very difficult for children to open.* Please check that your child can do this independently and if they cannot, we suggest you snip the packet open at home or decant the contents into a tub.

Our school is part of the Healthy Schools programme and we actively encourage a 'healthy lunchbox'. We find that many Foundation Stage children tend to eat more when offered small portions of a variety of different foods cut into small bite-sized pieces, rather than being faced by large sandwiches and whole apples or bags of crisps. Although the dinner ladies can provide a cup of water, it is a good idea to



include a drink as the younger children sometimes find it more comforting to have everything from home. Ice packs are essential in warmer weather.

### **Uniform**

*Every child will need a Cheriton School book bag.*

These have practical carry straps and several different pockets. In Class One, we use each section for specific purposes and find that this really helps the children with self-organisation.

*Indoors:*

Grey trousers

Grey skirt or pinafore

White polo shirt

Bottle green jumper, sweatshirt or cardigan

Appropriate colour socks or tights

Grey shorts

Green check dress

Black velcro shoes

*Games Kit:*

School crew neck T-shirt and green shorts,

Velcro trainers and socks.

A draw-string P.E. bag

*Outdoors:*

Hats or caps for cold/hot weather

Waterproof coat with a hood

School Fleece

Gloves/mittens

Welly boots

Water Bottle

*Uniform items, embroidered with the school logo, can be ordered from the school office at any time throughout the year. Please name all uniform items.*

### **Shoes**

Children are expected to wear sensible, black shoes. Trainers are not allowed except for PE. Some shoes are harder to fasten and to get on and off than others. Please allow time for your child to practice with any new shoes before they start school. It is much better for your child to have shoes that are easy to cope with.



Please avoid laces, unless your child is very competent at tying them tightly enough to be safe.

### **Jewellery**

Jewellery is not allowed to be worn in school. Children who have had their ears pierced may wear small studs but not for PE. Please leave them at home on these days.

### **Parent Helpers**

We always welcome parents in school and the extra help is invaluable. However, for the safety of all our children, all helpers are required to have a current DBS certificate. Please ask at the School Office if you would like a form. In order to give our youngest children time to settle effectively, we do not encourage parental help in the Foundation Stage classroom during the first term. The other classes would be very grateful for any offers of time. In particular there is a rota of parents who support our reading programme.

### **The Curriculum**

In the first term, we work at introducing how to access the different Areas of Learning. We help children find their way around the classroom and school so that they know where to find things and can access materials independently. During this time we will undertake a range of activities that will allow us to build up a picture of the skills, personality and knowledge each child brings with them.

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (Sept 2012) is currently made up of three *PRIME* and four *SPECIFIC* areas of learning. All areas of learning are important and inter-connected.

#### *PRIME*

- Communication and language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

#### *SPECIFIC*

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the world
- Expressive arts and design

## **Reading**

Story sessions at your local library are a good way to start to learn the important pre-reading skills.

In Foundation Stage the emphasis is on teaching children to enjoy books, and to apply a variety of appropriate strategies when reading. This is done as a whole class, in group situations and individually.

We recognise that reading and enjoying books at home is vital to a child's development and will regularly send home books for you to share with your child.

This will include books chosen by the child as well as those chosen by the class teacher. Every child will be given a Reading Log and we invite parents to use the log to record reading done at home. Please add comments to inform us or to encourage your child. Showing that you have shared the book will help us to know how much the child has experienced at home.



## **What can you do at home? Getting Ready For School**

There is a lot you can do to help your child settle into school happily. Outlined below are a few ideas, many of which you will already be doing. Children are all different and they progress at different rates, we do not expect that they will all enter school having mastered each of the skills below.

### **I. Separating From their Parent or Carer.**

Your child needs to be able to say goodbye and to go into the class knowing that they will be able to cope without you and feeling assured that you will be there, waiting for them, at the end of the day. This all takes practice and maturity and it is absolutely fine and normal for there to be a few tears on some occasions!

It will help your child enormously if you establish a morning routine and try to keep it the same, telling the child exactly what to expect.

For example, say...

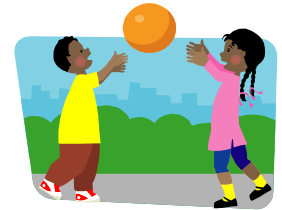
“I am going to stay with you while you line up, then I will kiss you goodbye before you go into the classroom to find your friends. Daddy will be waiting for you by the gate at home time”

**A caring but swift departure on the adult's part really does make it easier for the child.**



## **2. A Member of a Group**

Your child will be expected to talk to, listen to and play with other children. It is important that they learn how to share, to take turns and be part of a group. There will also be times when they're expected to work on their own. There will be fewer adults than at Pre-School and they may have to wait patiently for attention for longer than they are used to. Try to encourage your child to play or do an activity on their own for increasing lengths of time. Help them to see that sometimes you cannot give them attention immediately, and that at times, we all have to wait.



## **3. Trusting Unfamiliar Adults**

At school your child has to learn to trust other adults, to respect them and follow their instructions. It will help if they have spent time with some of your friends and adult relatives.

## **4. Dressing and Undressing**

In cold or wet weather, coats need to be worn at playtime and at lunchtime. Please check that your child can put on and do up their own coat, and put their own gloves on.

In preparation for PE lessons, try to teach them to dress and undress independently in a reasonable amount of time. Let them practice changing into their PE kit, and back into uniform again, before they start school. It will help them know what to expect.

## **5. Names**

We use lower case letters for writing names, with only a capital at the beginning. It would be helpful if they can recognise their name written down like this (not all in capitals) and especially helpful if they recognise it on their own name tapes on their clothing.



## **6. Looking After Things**

In class, children are expected to tidy away things they have used. Give your child responsibility at home for putting their clothes and toys away once they are finished with.

Your child needs to know how to take care of books, how to turn the pages gently, how to return them to the shelf the right way round and generally be familiar with them.

### **7. Looking After Themselves**

It would help the whole class if your child can manage elements of their own personal hygiene such as blowing their own nose. It is surprising how many children do not know how to do this! They will also need to take themselves to the toilet and **to wipe themselves**, to flush the chain and to wash their hands afterwards.



### **8. Concentration**

During story time or in assembly, your child will need to be able to sit and listen for short periods of time. When reading them a story, it will help if you encourage them to sit still, and to look at you and the book as you read.

It is very important to encourage your child to concentrate on one thing for increasing lengths of time. It helps if they look at you, both when you are talking to them and they are talking to you.

### **9. Helpful Skills**

It will help your child if you spend some time with them working towards being able to do the following

1. To identify colours.
2. To do a jigsaw.
3. To count objects and recognise numbers to 10.
4. To recognise their name.
5. To use scissors safely to cut out a simple shape.
6. To thread a string of beads.
7. To talk about what they see in a picture, as the beginnings of story-telling.
8. To play a simple board game using a dice.
9. To spot and to talk about differences in size and shape



### **Tapestry – Online Learning Journal**

The Class One team will be using an online journal to record all the learning and fun of your child's early years education. Tapestry is a way for teachers and practitioners to capture children's experiences as well as monitor development and learning. The journal is shared online with parents, who are able to see



special moments and view their child's progress. They are also able to add text, images and videos, which can be uploaded via PC, tablet or our mobile app - anywhere there's an online connection. Every entry helps to create a complete story of a child's time in reception.