

## Introduction

Welcome!

We hope your child will be very happy with us and that you will be pleased that you chose our school at Mere.

This booklet should be read alongside the Prospectus, which provides greater detail and further information. However, for Reception age children, there are specific questions that we are asked regularly, and we hope to answer most of them here.....

## What happens at the play visits?

The children will spend three sessions in their classroom with the children who will be in their class. They will meet their teacher and teaching assistant, participate in play activities, listen to a story and change their playpack. They wear play clothes on these days.

It is best if you leave your child for these sessions just as you would if they were going to pre-school.

On the second and third visits there is also the opportunity for you to meet in the school hall with the Headteacher and members of our school community.

You will also be able to purchase your child's school uniform.

## What does my child need?

Your child needs a **named** school uniform.  
The uniform is as follows;

- grey trousers, skirt or pinafore
- white shirts
- grey, navy blue or white socks or tights
- school sweatshirt or cardigan
- PE kit, navy shorts, white PE top or school PE top, plimsolls; all in a named draw string bag. (Please explain to your child the PE kit stays at school. It is brought home half termly to be washed).
- A school reading book bag. (Please check in the bag daily for letters from school).

I cannot stress enough the **importance of naming** clothing and belongings particularly in the Reception class.

School sweatshirts, cardigans, fleeces, hats, PE tops, PE bags and reading book bags are available from the school office. We also have good quality second hand school uniform which can be purchased on the play visit afternoons.

How can I prepare my child for school?

Talk in practical terms about what will happen. Explain that many activities will be similar to pre-school or nursery experiences. Teach them how to ask for help, but encourage their independence too. Your child will feel much more confident if they can manage personal things such as going to the toilet and getting changed for PE by themselves.

Where do I bring my child on the first day?

The teacher will meet the children at 8.55am by the classroom door when the bell rings. For the first few weeks you can help your child with their belongings in the cloakroom and settle them down with an activity. Once your child is used to the morning routine and separating from you, please encourage them to come in on their own. We aim for all children to be coming in on their own by Christmas.

Please respect the teacher's need for classroom preparation before morning school.

For security, the classroom doors are **locked** following the arrival period. Latecomers would therefore need to use the Main Entrance and report to the school office.

What should I do if my child cries and does not want me to leave?

Initially try and distract your child by involving them in an activity. If this does not help, please just go! We will contact you if your child is unhappy for an extended period. Remember most children settle very quickly and happily, so keep calm, be firm and be brief about saying 'goodbyes'. Re-assure yourself that your child will be fine, even if you are not!

How much help does the teacher have?

Currently, the Reception class has a teaching assistant for most of the week. We also have students from various educational establishments who complete work experience or teaching practice with us. Some parents and friends help in school with reading or any other skill they can offer.

## As a parent, how can I help?

Early days at school can be very tiring for most children. They may come home irritable and fretful, as they will have been trying so hard to please at school. Try and spend a few quiet minutes together talking about the day and then see that they have a good nights sleep.

There are many little things parents can do to help staff and avoid teaching time being wasted. We are grateful to all parents who: -

- ensure their children arrive on time.
- ensure their children are collected on time.
- **name** all personal belongings and clothes.
- send dinner money on Monday mornings in a named envelope.
- send any money coming into school in a named envelope.
- phone the school if their child is absent.

How do you keep discipline in school?

We have a 'Behaviour Policy' and a set of 'Golden Rules' for all who work in school. The key to good behaviour is rewarding and praising all the children whenever possible. Your child will be expected to conform to our expectations by showing consideration to others, respecting the staff and using the classroom responsibly. Teachers use a range of strategies to maintain discipline, including a 'look', a verbal reminder or reprimand, sanctions and in serious situations, a referral to the Headteacher.

And finally...

Please use the time at the end of the school day to talk to us informally about any concerns you or your child may have. If you wish to discuss any matter privately, this can be arranged too.

Starting School  
at Mere