

Frequently Asked Questions

A typical morning in EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage)?

As it is a big jump from pre-school there is a gradual start from part time to full time. The morning is made up of child initiated and teacher directed learning, where the latter gradually gets longer and the former shorter in preparation for Year 1.

Children are able to choose what they learn about through play and we try to tailor resources around their interests and build on children's experiences with resources they can engage with.

Teacher-led instruction will include phonics, maths and English to start with which builds up through the year. Plan, do and review is used when the children talk about what they have done and try to improve next time.

Extra-Curricular Activities

In normal times we are very proud of our 25+ clubs run by internal and external staff. The clubs cover all children's interests from art, sports, crafts and reading and there is always a huge take-up, with waiting lists, even if there is a cost to parents.

Breakfast & After School Clubs

This is open to all children, although they are separated into classes within the club. The cost is £4 for the morning (7.30 until school starts) to include breakfast, and £10 in the afternoon (after school until 6pm) to include a light tea.

Teacher/TA – Pupil Ratio

All classes have a full-time teacher and a TA who may be part time, but not in EYFS. Some children have a 1:1, or keyworker, the need for which will be ascertained by our SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) Mrs Root. There are 30 children in each class. This number will only be breached if the LEA direct us to do so.

Registration Groups

Elephants and Penguins are our EYFS classes and they mix all the time, particularly during child initiated sessions. When allocating children to classes we will use information gained from pre-schools, look at boy/girl ratios, parents' wishes (bearing in mind that 'best friends' don't always make the best learning partners) and children's ages to give an even spread. Unusually this year, due to unusual transition arrangements, we allocated classes alphabetically.

Longevity of Staff

In April Mr Chatley is taking up an opportunity which was offered to him so the governors are in the process of recruiting a replacement who will be in situ by September at the latest. He will be available to support if needed during the transitional

period. This is Mr Chatley's 6th year as Headteacher and has seen a few staff changes; however, many existing staff are still here. All staff are encouraged to further their development, even if this sometimes means in another school.

Miss Ridout, our Deputy Head, is expecting her first child in February.

The Leadership Team feels the school is an amazing place for staff and children to learn in.

Ofsted

Our last Ofsted inspection was in July 2017 when we received a "Good" judgement. This was based on a snapshot 2 days' judgement in addition to historical data. However, a new framework is now in place where schools are judged against different criteria.

We have made a decision as a school to move away from doing things just to please Ofsted. We now have a very strong curriculum, significantly better than in 2017, and believe we are on a journey from good to outstanding.

Post Lockdown Visits

It does not look likely that personal visits to school will be possible before parents need to make their school choices. Mr Chatley is in this position himself this year for the first time.

Usually we would start our transition in June followed by a couple of trial visits for the children, but this year we are unable to plan at the moment. The current new intake were invited in during the holidays so that they could meet staff and get their bearings around the site. Home visits took place in children's gardens so that social distancing could be observed but we hope to conduct these inside again in September. If possible, we will restart our pre-school visits in the Summer term.

Technology

We have iPads in the infants (Acorns) and laptops in the juniors (Oaks) for the children to use, although both sets of equipment are mobile so can easily be moved if needed. All classes have interactive whiteboards, but our most usual tools at the moment are visualisers which are document cameras which can show children specifically what teachers want them to do in real time. We do still use flip charts and books as we are increasing the quality of our modelling to children, e.g. sitting writing at a desk, holding a pen correctly etc.

Learning Journeys & Communication

Across the whole school we use Target Tracker as a sharing tool to keep parents up to date. We try to communicate as much as we can. In normal times we are a very open door school and encourage parents to communicate with us.

Other ways that we will communicate with you are:

- Parentmail
- Newsletters
- Twitter
- 2 x parents evenings
- Annual report
- Drop in “book looks”
- Meet the teacher
- Contact books
- Telephone calls
- Emails
- Encourage 2-way communication all the time
- The Leadership Team is on the playground before and after school every day

Swimming

Usually children in Year 3 go swimming at Mote Park and the cost is £5.00 per week which covers the cost of the coach. Swimming lessons are free.

Forest School

This is something that would take place during the school day rather than an extra-curricular club.

Trips

In normal times children will go on at least one visit. We also have visitors in school to enhance the curriculum, e.g. ‘Florence Nightingale’ recently visited Year 1.

Food

- Children have a snack in the morning from home, and a snack in the afternoon which is provided by school. This should be fruit or vegetables.
- Children should always have a bottle of water in class.
- Hot meals are provided by Caterlink and cooked on site (free of charge to children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2). The menu is on a 3 week cycle and is sent to parents in advance so children can choose when to have a school meal. We see this as a good opportunity for children to try new things. Wednesdays (roast) and Fridays (fish & chips) are particularly popular!
- Dietary requirements can be accommodated.

PTA/Friends’ Committee

We have for many years had a very supportive and active Friends association which all parents are welcome to join. The funds raised have helped us to buy laptops for the children and many other additional resources.

Volunteers

Again, once things return to normal, we would encourage volunteers in school to help with clubs, reading or trips. A DBS will be required and school can help organise this for you.

Advice

Read to your child as much as possible to engage them with books, and try to use correct vocabulary, e.g. biscuit, not biccyy.

Homework in EYFS

No homework in EYFS – read, read, read and read some more!

Summer Born Children

Please refer to LEA information in the Primary School Admissions booklet on the website.

Admissions criteria

1. Children in Local Authority Care
2. Health and Special Access Reasons
3. Current Family Association (siblings)
4. Nearness of Child's home to school (this is an "as the crow flies" measurement).

Catchment area

Last year, children living within 1.2 miles of school were all offered a place. It is impossible to guess at this stage what that distance will be next year as it depends entirely on the number of children applying and where they live.