

# New parents key information for September 2022

## School Day –

From the beginning of the next term, our school day length is changing. We will now open the school gates at 8:50 am, with school officially starting at 9:00 am. All children finish school at 3:30 pm. This makes the school day 10 minutes longer than we currently offer – this is to meet the Government target that all schools will offer a 32.5-hour week by September 2023.

## Morning drop-off –

Once the gate to the left-hand side of the front of the school opens at 8:50 am, you walk your child around the side of their classroom, up a set of stairs on to the playground. You can then stay on the playground until the children are instructed to line up by the class teachers. Along with all the other parents, you will then leave the school site via the side gate you entered in.

If you are running later than 9 am when you arrive and you find the side gate locked, please walk around to the right-hand side of the school building to the foyer area outside the school office. A member of staff will then let your child into the school building.

## Afternoon pick-up –

The side gate is opened at approximately 3:25 pm each day. All parents congregate in the courtyard area, outside Class 1. A member of staff will see that all the children have an adult to take them home, before allowing them to leave the classroom.

If you are unable to pick-up your child one day, so require another family member, friend or another child's parent to pick them up, then please notify the school office of any change of pick-up arrangements.

Finally, whilst it will not be relevant to your child now, we do allow our Year 6 pupils to walk to/from school independently, if their parents have provided us with written permission to do so. Therefore, you may see some of the older children arriving/leaving the school site without a parent.

## Uniform –

Deadline for items with the school logo to be ordered from Price & Buckland is 1<sup>st</sup> August. This will ensure that you get the items delivered to your house before the start of the autumn term.

Nearly new uniform (2<sup>nd</sup> hand) is available from our school office. If you want to see the items that we currently have available, and we can also let your child try on different sizes, then phone or email the school office to arrange an appointment before the end of the summer term (01799 584219 / [admin@ashdon.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ashdon.essex.sch.uk)).

Please remember that many items of the school uniform can be purchased from major retailers like Tesco or Marks & Spencer, as they do not need the school logo on them. This helps families keep the overall cost of the uniform down.

Please name every item of clothing, including PE Kit & shoes, as children do lose items on a regular basis!

For those children who are in receipt of Free School Meals (see below), our school has a scheme to provide some financial support to families purchasing items with a school logo from Price & Buckland.

For further details of our uniform dress code and expectations, please refer to our prospectus and/or the Uniform Policy, both of which are available on our school website.

## **Snack, lunches and water –**

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free lunch on a daily basis from our school kitchen through the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme. This should not be confused with Free School Meals (see below) which your family has to meet specific criteria, as all children of the above age-range are eligible. Our lunch meals are prepared and cooked onsite and are on a 2-week menu. If parents don't want their child to have a cooked meal from the kitchen, they can choose to provide a packed lunch from home, on either some of the days each week or all the time.

It is important that the school is aware of any dietary needs/allergies your child has, so that they are given suitable food whilst in school. E.g., vegetarian, dairy intolerance, coeliac disease, etc.

Please give your child a named water bottle to have available in the class at all times. Your child will have opportunity to refill their bottle, when required, during the school day. We ask that the water bottle you provide for children in Class 1 has a nozzle (either flip-up or rotate or pull-up variety), not the flask style where you have to remove the top of the bottle to be able to drink from it (the children will often spill water in the classroom/on their desk using this design).

Snack – Each day, the children in Class 1 are given the opportunity to eat a piece of fruit provided by the free School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme run by the Government. Technically it is for 4-6 year olds, but usually there is enough fruit that even our 7 year olds in Class 1 will have a piece daily. For this reason, we ask that they are not sent in with their own snacks, unless it is an alternative piece of fruit.

Milk – your child is entitled to free milk until they are 5 years old, through the Government Scheme run by Cool Milk on our behalf. Parents can then choose to pay for milk via Cool Milk, once they are over 5-years old. Children whose parents have applied for Free School Meals (see below) can continue to receive free milk beyond the age of 5.

## **Free School Meals / Pupil Premium –**

You had within your welcome pack information regarding Pupil Premium and Free School Meals. Often parents of children in Class 1 think that they shouldn't apply for Free School Meals (FSM), as their child is already getting a free lunch from the school via the Universal Infant Free School Meals scheme.

However, parents who successfully apply for FSM will get additional support for their child in school for many years, as this triggers Pupil Premium funding for the school. Every school can choose how to spend their Pupil Premium, so, for example, we currently use it to provide additional reading support for those children, pay for individual music or dance tuition for pupils, reduce the cost of the trips and other activities for eligible families, so either they contribute less money or can participate for FREE and contribute £50 per year towards uniform costs per eligible child.

Please refer to the letter in your welcome pack detailing the eligibility criteria for applying for Free School Meals. If you have misplaced this and/or you have additional questions, then please speak to our school office.

## **Breakfast and After-School Clubs –**

The wrap-around provision we provide for working families at either end of the school day is currently run Neil O'Sullivan Sports. Their Breakfast Club currently starts at 8:00 am, but is likely to change to 7:50 am from September 2022, to tie in with our adjusted school day mentioned earlier. The After-School Club runs from 3:30 pm until 5:30 pm, but some parents pick up earlier, e.g., 5 pm. For further details please contact our school office.

## **Contact numbers –**

In an age where many families change their mobile contracts quite frequently, it is important that the emergency contact numbers we hold in our school office are always kept up-to-date.

### **Medication –**

Any ongoing (e.g., asthma pumps) or short-term medication for your child that needs to be administered during the school day, must be named and kept in the school office (in the case of some medication, e.g., asthma pumps or EpiPens, these will be kept near the classroom for quick access by the staff members) – please do not send it in your child's bag. You will need to complete one of our medication permission forms before any medication will be given out by school staff.

### **PTA –**

Our Parent Teacher Association helps organise events to help raise money, that goes directly into supporting the children of our school, either by organising/subsidising activities, such as school trips, or purchasing equipment.

We always appeal to our new Reception parents about joining our PTA, whether you can give a little bit of time or more, every contribution helps. Please let the school office know you are interested in helping the PTA and they will put you in touch with them.

### **Communication –**

One of the positive aspects that parents praise us for, is our welcoming/friendly nature. We operate an 'open door' policy, which essentially means we want you to come to us to discuss your child whenever you need to. Our teachers are always available on the playground at the morning drop-off time for a quick word. However, if you want to have a longer conversation with a member of staff, then please arrange a time with them for this to take place.

The Headteacher is on the school gate most days per week in the morning, so any quick queries can often be sorted out then.

If you need to send us an email, then please send it to [admin@ashdon.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@ashdon.essex.sch.uk) The office staff will then forward it on to the relevant recipient. Please do not send any queries to the email address used to send out information from the school office, e.g., letters, as this is not monitored, so your message will remain unread.

All parents receive a regular newsletter from the Headteacher, which will detail events that have taken place, school developments and will celebrate children's achievements. There will also be many other messages and letters sent via email, so please check your inbox regularly.

### **Reading Record/Mathletics/Bug Club –**

Shortly after joining our school, your child will be issued a reading record booklet. You are able to record any books they have read/shared with you from school. It is important that this is in school/taken home on a daily basis.

They will also be issued with a username and password for the Mathletics and Bug Club (reading) websites, together with guides on how to use them.

### **School bags –**

Your child will need a small school bag to carry their reading record, reading book to and from school. There is no need for them to come with a huge rucksack.

### **PE Kit –**

We are currently asking that on days of the week the children do PE, that they come into school wearing their PE Kit. For Class 1, this is Tuesday and Friday.

### **Safari –**

Most Thursday afternoons, all of Class 1 go on a trip around the village, to look at the environment through both a scientific and geographic focus. All of the children should come in casual clothes that you don't mind getting wet and muddy, not in their school uniform. They will also need a pair of wellies in addition to a pair of trainers. Miss Foote will provide further details in September, but she is always looking out for parent volunteers who can assist on Safari, as without parent support, we are unable to do this activity.

### **Transition –**

To support your child moving into a school setting, we will put in place a short transition period of reduced hours before they start full-time.

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July, your child can join Miss Foote in Class 1 for the morning between 9:30 am and 12:00 pm. Please arrive and collect your child from the foyer area next to the school office. On this morning they will not be staying for lunch.

The school term starts on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2022 – Only in school between 9:30 am and 12:00 pm – this will allow all of the other returning children to settle back into school. Please arrive and collect your child foyer area next to the school office. On this morning they will not be staying for lunch.

Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022 – Arrive between 8:50 am and 9:00 am and walk your child up to the playground where Miss Foote will be there to meet them. They will stay for lunch on this day, so please collect them at 1:15 pm from foyer area next to the school office.

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022 – Your child starts full time, i.e., 9:00 am – 3:30 pm each day.