



Established in 1856

St Peter's Church of England Primary School Aylesford

Parent Handbook

Welcome to St Peter's School

It is a pleasure to welcome you to St Peter's Primary School. We are very pleased that your child will be joining our school community. We try to foster a family feel at St Peter's and we have written this guide in an attempt to provide you, as a new parent, with all the information you will need about how our school operates.

If you encounter a situation which we have not covered within the guide, please tell us and we will include it in next year's edition. In the short term, if there is something of which you are unsure, just ask us.

Your First Day – Don't be Nervous!

School Times

Main gate is opened, and children and parents can come onto the site.	8.30 am
School starts and the main gate is closed.	8.40 am
Lessons	8.40 – 10.15/30am
Playtime – Key Stage 2	10.15 – 10.30 am
Playtime – Key Stage 1	10.30 – 10.45 am
Lessons	10.30/45 – 12pm
Lunchtime:	12.00 – 1.00pm
Lessons	1-2.40pm
Act of Worship	2.40-2.55pm
End of School and the main gate is opened to allow parents to come onto the site.	3 pm

Coming to School

The Headteacher opens the main gate at 8.30am, and children and parents are then free to come onto the site. Children don't play on the playground before school; they should go directly to class. The teachers will register the children as they arrive. We ask that you get your children to school in sufficient time for our school day to begin at 8.40am. If you only arrive at the gate at 8.40, your children are going to be late to class. The register closes soon after 8.40am, so if they aren't in class by that time, they will be recorded as late. At 8.40, the Headteacher closes the school gate, so we ask that parents also leave the school promptly after dropping the children off.

The Headteacher remains at the gate from 8.30 until 8.40 and should you need to speak to him about any matter, please feel free to do so. If you have a more major issue to discuss with either him, or another member of staff, you may make an appointment to see them.

We ask that parents refrain from going into the classes in the morning. If there is a matter which you need to raise with the class teacher, please relay it through the Headteacher, or wait until the end of the day when the teachers are free. At 8.40am, they are busy supervising the children as they arrive and we would prefer it if you didn't disturb them at this time.

Cycling to School

Children are encouraged to cycle to school. However, it is forbidden for children to cycle in the school grounds. In the interests of safety, we insist that children dismount before entering the gates. Also, please do not allow your children to ride bicycles or scooters around the playground at the end of the day as it is too crowded for this to happen safely.

Bicycle and scooter racks are available at the main entrance to the school. We ask that children lock their bicycles up before leaving them. Unfortunately the school cannot accept responsibility for any loss or damage which may occur to the bicycles whilst they are on school property. However, any incident involving a pupil will be dealt with thoroughly.

Parking

There is severe congestion around the school at the beginning and end of the school day. If at all possible, please refrain from using your car to transport your child to school. If that isn't possible, please try to car share. There is a large and free public car park in the village. Should you need to drive your child to school, it is easiest for you to park there and to then walk up to the school gates.

However, please be warned that there is no Road Crossing Patrol anywhere around the school, so please be aware that you and your child must use your own judgement to cross roads safely.

Reception Year

The Reception class room is located at the rear of what is called 'The Lodge'. During the first two weeks of the school year, Reception staff complete home visits, calling in at the homes of every child who is joining our school. They will discuss the child's needs with the parents and start the process of getting to know the child and the family.

Our Reception children have a staggered entry into school life. The first week they stay until lunch, when we ask that you collect them. In the second week, they stay and eat lunch with us. They are entitled to a free school meal under the government's initiative, but they can obviously also bring their own food should you prefer that option. We ask that you collect them after lunch. From the third week they are full time.

School Organisation

St Peter's is organised into two key stages. Years R-2 are the Key Stage 1 classes, whilst Years 3-6 are Key Stage 2. Each key stage has its own Manager. Mrs Stone is the Key Stage 1 Manager and Mr Eastwood manages Key Stage 2.

Information about Pupil Progress

Home Visits for Year R

The parents of our Reception intake have a home visit in the first two weeks of the school year. The class teacher and teaching assistant will make an appointment to visit you in your home, in order to meet you and your child in your own environment. Doing so enables us to begin to get to know you and your child, to begin to develop a relationship with you both, and to gain an insight into your child's character and any specific needs they may have.

Meet the Teacher Evenings for Years 1-6

Your child's new teacher will have a transition meeting with the teacher from the previous year, so they will be aware of all of the children's needs, any medical conditions, friendship groups etc; so please be assured that the teachers are informed about the class they inherit in September of each year. Parents of children in Years 1-6, don't have a one to one meeting with their child's teacher at the very start of the academic year, as there is comparatively little to discuss when the school year has only just begun. Instead, for Years 1-6, we prefer to begin each academic year in September with a 'Meet the Teacher Evening'. All parents are invited to come into their child's new class and meet the class teacher. The teacher will spend 30-40 minutes explaining what topics are being studied and explain specific arrangements such as how spellings are taught, when homework will be set,

on which days the children will need their PE kit etc. They will also answer any questions which you may have.

Written Reports

Parents of children in Years 1-6, are provided with 3 reports over the course of the academic year. These provide you with information about your child's level of achievement, their progress and the effort they are putting into their studies. You receive a simple progress report in November; the main written report is given to you in February and you receive a simple concluding report in July.

We prefer to provide you with the main report in February and not at the end of the academic year as is traditional. By doing this, we are able to make you fully aware of any issues which need to be addressed, such as a problem with learning or the need for a child to improve their attitude, whilst there is still time to do so. There is little point in telling you in July that your child isn't working hard enough as it is too late to address the problem. By highlighting issues in February, we still have half the academic year to work towards an improvement. Similarly, it is a boost to children to be praised for their hard work and progress in February and not make them wait until the end of the academic year to share this news with you.

However, parents in Year R receive just one large written report which is produced at the end of the academic year. It provides you with a comprehensive overview of your child's progress, attainment and attitude over the course of Year R.

Parent Communication and Consultation

All parents, including those in Year R, have three opportunities to formally come into their child's classroom in order to look around and to view their child's work. These open afternoon sessions take place in November, March and July, and are timed to coincide with the written reports being sent out for children in Years 1-6. Following the reports and the open afternoons, all parents, including those in Year R, have the opportunity to meet the class teacher on a one to one basis during parents' consultation evenings.

However, please understand that you are free to make an appointment to see your child's teacher **whenever the need arises** - you do not have to wait for a scheduled consultation evening if you wish to discuss a concern. You can speak to your teacher directly at the end of each day. Teachers will either be on the playground after school finishes, or at the doors of their classrooms. The teachers may not be free to discuss an issue straight away, as many of the teachers run after school clubs. However, they will always arrange a time when they can speak to you.

Alternatively, you can make an appointment to see your child's teacher by contacting the school office. You can telephone the office on 01622 717335 and you will speak to either Mrs Jo Lomakin, Mrs Gayle Rein, or Mrs Claire Phipps. The office is staffed from 8.15 am to 4 pm Monday to Friday. The office is closed during the school holidays.

Additional Educational Needs

Mrs Oag is our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, or SENCo. She manages the work of our Teaching Assistants (TAs), who work alongside the teachers to provide additional support to our pupils. She will be involved with you should your child have a specific issue affecting their progress within school. This may include special educational needs, medical difficulties, social or emotional concerns, or English as an additional language. Mrs Oag works part time at the school and is generally present on a Wednesday, although this day can change if she has meetings which she has to attend on other days.

Safeguarding

Mr Holditch, the Headteacher is the school's Safeguarding Lead. Mrs Stone and Mr Eastwood and Mrs Kalaichakis are Deputy Safeguarding Leads. Should you have any concern about a child's welfare or the behaviour of any member of our school community, including members of staff, you should report it to any one of them. Should your concern be focussed on Mr Holditch himself, you can report this to the Chair of Governors, Mrs Helen Tynan. She can be contacted confidentially through the school office.

The Extended School

Should you require after school care for your child we have an after-school club. The club operates from 3pm – 6pm and currently costs £15 per session per child. We also offer a breakfast club for those parents who require supervision for their children before school opens at 7.30am. Sessions currently cost £5.00.

You can find full details of the Breakfast and After School Clubs on our school website.

SPSA

The SPSA is our version of the school PTFA. They raise a phenomenal amount of money each year and these funds have supported a wide range of projects within the school. The financial support afforded by the SPSA is crucial to the development of the school. We would welcome your involvement in the SPSA. It is a very friendly group and meetings are held regularly.

Rewards and Punishments

School House System

At St Peter's we operate a very successful School House system. The children throughout the school are divided into four House teams, Cossington, Friars Medway and Kewlands. The children receive house points for good work and good behaviour. Each week, the house points are counted and the winner is announced in assembly. The cumulative points are kept and we have an overall winner each term.

Each house has its own captain and vice captain, who are elected from Year 6 by their class mates. We have a sports day each summer and the winning house receives a trophy.

Celebration Assembly and Tea Parties

Celebrating children's success is important to us. Every Friday we have a celebration assembly. Teachers select children from their class who deserve to be recognised for either good work or good behaviour. These children are recognised during our celebration assembly as 'citizens of the week'. All of the citizens then join the Headteacher in his office for a tea party involving biscuits and juice.

During our Friday assembly, any child who has received a medal, certificate, or has achieved anything of note in any activity inside *or outside* of school, is able to discuss what they have done in front of the school.

Gold Cards

Children will also have their efforts and achievements recognised by the class teachers who will award them a gold card. When they receive a gold card, the children visit the Headteacher, who praises their work and awards them a gold sticker.

Red Cards

Should your child misbehave they will receive a warning from a member of staff. If the poor behaviour persists, or if the child is verbally or physically aggressive towards another child, they will receive a red card. They will then be sent to the Headteacher if the offence is sufficiently serious.

You will receive a letter home detailing what your child has done. They will serve a playtime detention. If the poor behaviour persists, there are a range of increasing sanctions, culminating in a fixed term exclusion or, ultimately, expulsion from the school. These are set out in our discipline policy, which you may collect from the office if you so wish.

The Wider Curriculum

Clubs

We believe that it is extremely important for children to have every opportunity possible to participate in extra-curricular activities. Hence, the staff at St Peter's give up a great deal of their time to run a wide range of activities.

You can view a list of the current club activities on our website. However, the activities generally include a range of sports, including high five (netball), football, cricket, athletics, tennis, archery and rugby. Additional clubs include chess, art, music-choir, film club, debate, science and French.

Educational Visits

We augment our normal lessons with numerous offsite visits, as well as having visitors to our school. It is important that children gain first hand experience of what they are studying. We try to arrange trips which will support our children's learning but which are also local and not too expensive.

We also have a link with a French school. Children from their Year 3 class visit us each year and our own Year 3 children are offered a day trip to Hazebrouck to visit this school. There are also other trips to the continent including ones to visit the First World War battlefields.

Our school is also one of the very primary schools in the UK to be involved in the EU funded Erasmus project. During 2018-2019, this involved some of our pupils having fully funded week long stays at partner schools in France and Belgium. In 2019-20, six more of our pupils will spend a week working at a school in Munich, Germany. All of the children are working collaboratively on a project commemorating the centenary of the end of the First World War. We are part of a further planned project which will run from 2020-2023.

We also run annual residential trips for those children in Years 5 and 6. As from 2019-20, these will alternate between a week long stay at the activity centre in Carroty Wood, which involves abseiling, rock climbing, raft building, fencing, team games and orienteering, and week-long stays in Harelott France, which focus on cultural experiences, as well as including trips to the beach, snail farm and chocolate factory. Both trips include many nights of the children staying up chatting long after they are supposed to be asleep.

General Information

Absence

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school whenever their child is absent stating the reason for the child's absence. Parents should inform the school of their child's absence ***on each day thereafter***. This should be followed up with a letter upon a child's return to school.

In September 2013, the government introduced a new policy regarding term time absences, which means that parents may be fined if they take their children out of school during term time. Term time absences are only granted for what are classed as exceptional circumstances. The full details of the government's measures are outlined in our school absence policy, which can be found on our website.

Medical and Dental Appointments

We would ask where possible that any medical or dental appointments be made out of school hours. We appreciate that this is not always possible but would ask that you accompany your child to the school office after their appointment for them to be signed in. This will then be recorded as an authorised absence in accordance with our attendance register codes.

What to wear and bring to school

The children must wear school uniform at all times. A list of school uniform is provided separately and can be viewed on the school website. We ask that all clothing is clearly labelled. Children may wear stud earrings, but if you are having your child's ears pierced, please do it during the summer break, as children are not permitted to participate in PE activities whilst wearing earrings. In addition, we are not allowed to remove earrings for children, so please don't have their ears pierced until they are of an age when they can remove and replace the jewellery independently. Children should wear no other jewellery.

Children are generally not allowed to bring toys to school, apart from when joining the Reception year. However, for those children in years R and 1, if they are tired and a little emotional on certain days, we will allow them to bring a cuddly toy in for comfort.

Please do not send your child to school with expensive or sentimental items. Children may bring mobile phones to school but these must be left at the school office for the duration of the school day.

Equipment

We encourage children in the Upper School to bring their own equipment to school in addition to that which we provide. Useful items are pens, pencils and coloured pencils in a pencil case which should all be named.

P.E.

The children must wear school P.E. kits for all activities. Earrings must be removed, by the children, before any activities begin. If the children are not able to remove earrings please do it for them before they come to school on any day when they have P.E. activities.

Creative Thursdays

In September 2019, the school introduced a new initiative – Creative Thursdays. Every Thursday, each class will have lessons in art, music, PE and a Modern Foreign Language (MFL). Children should come to school in their PE kit on a Thursday and they will spend the day wearing it. Therefore children will need suitably warm tracksuit bottoms which should be navy blue or grey.

Music lessons take place in the church and are taught by professional musicians, either Dr Paul Richards or Mr Phil James. PE is taught by either Miss Price or Mr Holditch, whilst MFL will be taught by Miss Cavender or Mrs Paget. The art lessons are taught by your child's class teacher.

Lunchtimes

We aim to make the lunch break as enjoyable as we can. We don't want the children trying to eat as quickly as possible, in order to get back outside to the playground. We want the children to have a suitable period of time to eat their lunch and to sit and talk with their friends whilst they eat.

Parents are able to join us for lunch from time to time. You will receive details periodically about our parent meal weeks. You can then come along and sit with your child and eat lunch together.

If you believe that your child may be entitled to free school meals, please contact the school office.

Lunch playtimes are supervised by our team of mid-day supervisors.

Helping in School

We welcome parents into the school. We are happy to have you come in and help. Parents fulfil a variety of roles from helping in class, to listening to readers, to helping with displays. Some parents help to run clubs. If you feel that you have a special skill, or you just feel that you could help generally, please tell your child's teacher. All we ask is that you have a child protection disclosure completed by us.

Change of Address

Please keep us informed of any change to your address, telephone numbers, work place or the details of your 'emergency contact'.

Administering of Medicine

In the event that your child requires medication during the day we would suggest that dosages be taken before or after school. In the event that this is unworkable, we would ask that parents complete a form available at the school office in order for school staff to administer medicines to your child.

Medical Needs

Parents are asked to complete a medical needs form for their child. This is a confidential form which asks for information about existing medical conditions and allergies, allowing us to ensure that any needs for your child are accommodated.

Healthy Schools Policy

Pupils are encouraged to bring a bottle of water to school with them. They are allowed to keep the bottle on their desks, during lessons, to drink from as they wish.

They are also allowed to bring healthy snacks for morning break times. Chocolate and crisps are not allowed. We participate in the 'Fruit and Vegetables for Infants' scheme, in which every child from Reception to Year 2 is provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable daily.

Smoking

We have a 'smoke free' policy in school. Smoking is not permitted inside the school building or in the school grounds.

We hope that your child will be very happy at St Peter's Church of England Primary School and we look forward to working in partnership with you during the course of your child's time here.