

# **Your Guide to Starting School**



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## Introduction

This leaflet is written by teachers and a school Mum, for parents and carers who are new to school life.

It aims to give useful information about the practicalities of having a child in school and also some understanding of what goes on during the session.

Sometimes you find that when you ask how your child's day was, the stock response is 'I can't remember' or if you ask what he/she has done the response is, 'Nothing!' or 'Play!'.

This booklet will hopefully give you a little insight into what goes on in the Reception class in the first few weeks of starting school.



## Contacting Nursery and Reception Staff

**If you wish to speak to Mrs Hope or Mrs Spence prior to starting in September 2020, please ring or email school.**

## **Things to know before starting school (preparation)**

Before your child starts at Nantwich Primary Academy, there are a few things they need to be able to do for themselves. This will help them in the first few weeks and will enable them to feel more independent and in control in the new environment. With many children to teach, the staff are not in a position to be able to give your child the attention they may be used to from being at home. It will help your child towards independence if you can start practising certain things well before they start at school, even if this means getting up a little earlier than usual.

### **Getting dressed/undressed**

Help your child to learn to dress and undress. This includes taking clothes and coats off the right way round so that they can easily put it back on themselves. Children should also know which feet their shoes go on. Try to find items of clothing that are easy to put on and take off: easy buttons, looser fittings, simple black school shoes with velcro rather than laces, coats that have simple fastenings that a child can do up quickly before playtime. If, for instance, your child cannot do up buttons, it would be easier for everyone if their clothing did not have any. If your child cannot manage gloves, buy them some mittens instead so they don't get cold hands.

*TIP: Putting half a picture in one shoe with the other half in the other shoe may help with getting them the right way around!*

*TIP: Make sure there is a loop on your child's coat and teach them to use it. Then it will stay securely on the peg and spend less time on the floor!*

## **Going to the toilet**

Children should be able to take themselves to the toilet when they need to without assistance and wash and dry their hands afterwards. There are three toilets shared by Nursery and Reception. The toilets, sinks, soap and hand drier are all at child height.

A member of staff will deal with toilet accidents. Your child will be given some clean clothes to put on and their own clothes will be put into a bag and returned to you. The borrowed clothes should then be washed and returned to school as soon as possible please. If your child is likely to have an accident, it is useful to discuss this with the staff in advance and to include some spare named clothes in a small named bag.

*Remember that there can be a huge difference between a child born in September and one born the following August. Don't compare your child with others!*

## **The first day**

Explain to your child what will happen on the first day. They need to know that you will not be staying in school with them and they need to know who to ask if they have a problem.

If you do feel that you or your child would like a more gradual transition, you would be more than welcome to come into school and discuss this with the staff so that you can both work out the best way to help your child settle. If you are concerned about your child, a call to the school later that morning can reassure you that they have settled well and are no longer upset.

While telling your child that you will miss them loads may well be true, it can pile on added pressure of thinking that you don't want them to go either. Instead try 'Wow, this is so exciting! You will have so much fun. I will see you later'.

*TIP: The teachers have done this many times before. If your child gets upset, don't let them see you getting upset too. Leave them with the teacher and walk away! More often than not your child will have settled before you have arrived home!*

## Uniform

Details of the school uniform can be found within this pack.

Jumpers and cardigans and other items can be ordered through the school office and the rest can be bought from local supermarkets or shops.

## Coats

Coats should be zip fastening, warm, hard wearing, waterproof and with hoods when required. This will save bringing in a separate waterproof jacket for wet weather play. The school follows the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum, so children will be allowed outside in all weather!

*TIP: In the winter when hats and gloves are worn, tell your child to put the gloves in the hat and then put the hat down one of the coat sleeves so they are not mislaid.*

## Shoes

Shoes should be black, easy to fasten (Velcro) and hard wearing. Children **should not** wear trainers or lace-up shoes to school. Named wellingtons should be brought into school and left so that they can be worn during wet weather and snow in the winter months. A PE kit of t-shirt and shorts are provided by the school for Reception children, they just need a pair of Velcro black PE pumps to stay in school.

*TIP: Label everything, even shirts, pants, socks and tights!*

## Socks and tights

Socks should be plain white, grey or black. Tights should be plain white, grey or black too.

*TIP: Long sleeved shirts are hard to roll up and keep clean and dry.*

## **Hair**

If you have a child with long hair, it is much easier for everyone if it is tied up. This is more hygienic and keeps it cleaner and more tangle free. It also decreases the chances of head lice. If your child is reluctant, try explaining about head lice visiting them!

## **Jewellery**

Jewellery is discouraged in school as it might get caught on our outside equipment or clothing.



## **Format of the School morning**

8.40am Arrive for the day, coats on pegs and children into classroom.

8.50am Toast and Milk and registration.

9.00am Main class input

9.20am Literacy, reading, teacher-led and child-initiated activities.

**Daily activities are based on the EYFS curriculum and are set out in areas of learning.**

10.25am Snack and child initiated play

10.40am Teacher led and child initiated activities indoors and outdoors.

11.00am Phonics

11:40am Lunchtime in the hall.

12:15pm Back into the classroom for play in our outside area.

12:50pm Afternoon registration

13:00pm Mathematics teacher-led and child-initiated activities

15:15pm Hometime parents/guardians collection from Nursery/Reception entrance/exit.



## **Play time**

Your child will be provided with fruit and milk or water at snack time, there is usually a selection of fruit to choose from and this changes seasonally between oranges, bananas, carrots, raisins, grapes, apples, pears, tomatoes and strawberries.

Your child will receive free milk until they are five. It is currently priced at 20p if you wish your child to have milk after their fifth birthday. You will need to pay for milk on a weekly basis. Please send money to the office in a named envelope.



## **Assemblies**

These take place throughout the week and last around 15 minutes. If your child has a recent certificate for an external activity (e.g. swimming badge) they may bring it into school on a Friday for the Celebration Assembly.

On a Friday Celebration Assembly certificates are awarded to children who have excelled at something (not necessarily academic). The whole school attends assembly.

## **Security**

EYFS staff will not let your child leave at home time until they see you waiting. If there is somebody else collecting your child, please let your teacher know in the morning or ring the school during the day. To help staff, especially during the first few weeks, please give them a wave when you see your child at the front of the queue.

Entry to the building during the school day is via the main front door, which has a button to press to gain entry. All visitors to the site have to sign in at the main desk and must wear an identity badge.

Any child taken out of school early will need to be signed out using the screen at the front entrance.

If you have any issues with people who can or cannot collect your children, please let staff know immediately.

### **Accidents, illness, medication and upsets**

If your child is injured during the school day, they will be taken care of by one of the first aiders. Cold compresses and plasters are applied when required.

If your child has had a minor bump, the first you may know about it is when you collect your child as a 'medical form' is sent home with them.

Obviously, if it is more serious, the staff will tell whoever is collecting your child that day or you will already have received a phone call.

If your child needs **prescribed medication** during the school day, a form with instructions for dosage and frequency will need to be completed. Just ask staff for a copy. We cannot give non-prescribed medicine like Calpol to your child.

Your child will occasionally have fallings out with friends or perhaps trip, bump themselves and become upset. The teachers and staff are very professional and will deal with the situation as appropriate.

*TIP: You will need to inform school if your child has any illnesses such as chickenpox, head lice, impetigo etc. as these are contagious and school may send a letter home to other parents.*

### **What if I have a problem?**

Ask to speak to your child's teacher: Just ask them after school or book an appointment to see them at 8.40am in the morning, when the teachers are trying to get all the children settled into school, is not the best time to want an appointment. However, if there is something which will be affecting your child that day, for example, a disrupted night's sleep, or anything else you need the staff to know, please tell them in the morning as you hand your child over.

### **Other important information**

#### **Reading**

A big emphasis is put on sharing books in Reception. Each child will do phonics with an adult every day providing the children with a flying start in this area.

Children will bring home a school reading book and a pack of tricky words to learn together with a reading diary. Children should read at home or share a story almost every night with a parent or carer. Please write in the reading diary when you have read/practised the tricky words with your child.

#### **Behaviour**

Nantwich Primary Academy has a whole school approach to positive behaviour. The children start out each day in the green zone. They may also move down zones where consequences of the wrong kind of behaviour are dealt with appropriately. We also use 'Dojo's' where children can earn positive points for different things. Parents can also log onto this system to view your child's points, send messages to staff and view the class story.

## **Topics**

There is generally a topic for the class each half term. In the past these have included: Marvellous Me, Space and Dinosaur Roar! You will be able to find out what the topics are from the newsletter your child's class teacher sends out

## **Parking**

Many parents and children walk and cycle to school, as it's often quicker than driving. Unfortunately, there is no parking on site.

## **Dogs**

No dogs (apart from guide dogs) are allowed on the school site. Dogs are tied up outside the school gate.

## **Smoking**

The whole school is a no-smoking area.

*TIP: Do not be surprised to find that if you ask your child what they have done all day, they may well simply say "nothing". Apparently this is particularly true of boys. Try a different line of questioning and ask, for example, what was their favourite thing about the day, as this often gets a better response. You can also look on your child's LearningBook or ClassDojo as these are updated regularly!*

**And, of course, we couldn't leave out what the most important people of all have to say ...**

I like school because we do good things and I make things  
and I go on trips.

I like my teachers because they help me with my work.

I like school because I like the role-play and I like all my new  
friends.

I like playing outside and I like the football.

I like playing outside with my friends and I like doing reading,  
writing and phonics.

I like the teachers. I like everything!

I love the bike track!





