



Starting School

New Parents Information
Booklet for reception children
2016/17

The aim of this booklet is to give you a brief overview of what your child's first year at school will involve and how you can help them prepare for it. It also includes a list of general information that new parents of reception children at Ashton Keynes might like to know.

What our children say:

"I like learning and making new friends in Class R" Alice

"I like the writing tool box" Isobel

"I like learning about dinosaurs in our topic" Freddie

"My buddy is nice and he is kind" Monty

"I like that we get to make things and I love the writing tool box"

Welcome from the headteacher :

Starting school is an important milestone in your child's life. At Ashton Keynes we aim to make the transition between home and school as smooth as possible. We aim to do this by forging strong links between parents, carers and the school and we are justly proud of our family ethos.

Children are valued as individuals and form an important part of a happy and stimulating whole school environment. We are delighted you have chosen Ashton Keynes CE Primary School for your child and we warmly welcome you to be part of Team AK.

We look forward to supporting you and your child on their exciting learning journey through our school where we know they will shine. We hope that you will embrace the many opportunities to help your child and the school community so we can all reach for the stars and aspire to be the best school we can be.

My door is always open and I look forward to working with you and your child.

Mrs. Samantha Saville
Headteacher

Our vision:

Our vision is to enable all children to reach their full potential. To provide **academic excellence** and **skills for life** which **prepare children for modern Britain**. We will instil a **love of learning** in a happy, stimulating environment which **inspires challenge**, and **independence**; where children feel secure to take risks and learn from their rich experiences. Their journey through school will be **underpinned by Christian values** whilst being **inclusive** of all. Our school will be a place that the **whole community is proud** of.

Our ethos: At **AKPS**, we value team work and it is a place where our pupils:

TEAM AK
THINK - ENJOY - AMAZE - MANNERS - ACHIEVE - KINDNESS

Our values: Our worship council working with the Reverend Shirley has defined our core Christian values:

'We persevere, we are creative, we trust one another and we are friendly.'

School Staff: Here are some members of staff you need to know initially, others can be found on our website.

Head Teacher:
Mrs Saville



Class R Teachers: Mrs Crowley



Mrs Serle



Class R Teaching Assistants:
Olivia Davis



Stuart Jackson



Dawn Brown



Office Staff:

Mrs Sanderson Wednesday, Thursday Friday
Mrs Timbrell Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
Mrs Cook: Business Manager Monday, Wednesday, Thursday

Breakfast club : Ms Sampson, Mrs Morton

Chair of Governors: Sarah Harris

FoAKS (friends of Ashton Keynes) Co-Chair people: Sarah Edmunds, Kim Olden

School Nurse: If you wish to contact the school nurse (Sarah Barkham) for information or advice, her phone number is 07775681387.

The School Day:

- ✓ Children should be dropped off in the classroom no earlier than 8.45. You may stay with your child until the rain shaker sounds at 8.55am, please leave the playground prompt as the gates are locked at 9.00am. Then from January, the system changes to work with the rest of the school and the children will be on the playground until the bell at 8.45 when they form a circle with their teacher and go into the classroom, you are welcome to join the circle during this transition period but we ask parents/carers not to follow to class.
- ✓ You should collect your child from outside the classroom at 3.15. We will wait until we can see you before sending your child out.
- ✓ If your child is to be collected by anyone different please tell a member of Class R staff or record this in the notebook in the cloakroom.

Food and drink :

- ✓ Each child will be given a water bottle on their first day in school. The children have access to these throughout the day. The bottles should be brought into school daily having been refilled with water only please. Replacement bottles can be purchased from the school office, or you can use your own. Please ensure they are named.
- ✓ Fruit is available at snack time each day for all children. This is part of the government 5 a day campaign.
- ✓ Milk is also available at snack time for those children whose parents have requested it, either on-line or by post. This is free up until your child's fifth birthday.
- ✓ If your child would like a free hot school dinner (all Children from Reception to Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal) menu choices will need to be in school in advance. Menus can be found on our website. Please hand choice forms into the office by 9.00am on Wednesday, the week before the meals are required. Meals are provided by the company 'Cygnet'.
- ✓ The mid-day supervisors encourage children to eat as much of the lunch provided for them as possible. As a general rule they will allow the children to leave one item. Please bear this in mind when you pack your child's lunch.
- ✓ Packed lunches should be left on the shelves in the school hall at the beginning of the day.

Clothes and Possessions :

- ✓ Uniform consists of a navy cardigan or sweatshirt, a white or navy shirt, dark grey trousers for boys or blue skirt or trousers for girls, checked or striped summer dress and black, brown or navy shoes.
- ✓ More information can be found at www.akps.org.uk/resources/school-uniform/
- ✓ The school has four houses – Mercury, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter. Your child will join one of these- see the front of this pack as to which house your child is in. When buying PE kit you will need to buy a coloured coded T-shirts to match your child's house.
- ✓ We ask that all toys are left at home to avoid problems such as breakage or loss.
- ✓ On hot days please remember sun hats and cream. School blue hats are available from the school website. The school field has very little shade.
- ✓ Please ensure your child keeps a pair of named wellies in school to maximise the use of the outdoor area.
- ✓ **Please, please ensure all items of clothing are named.** PE changing time is chaotic at the best of times!
- ✓ Please provide your child with some spare clothes, including underwear, socks/tights etc. This is really useful in case of accidents and also when children are playing outdoors on wet days or using the water tray.

Star challenge : SHINE BRIGHT ★ REACH FOR THE STARS

The star challenge was introduced to enable all of our children to make visible progress. It is a way of developing the pupil's learning behaviour so they are more involved in challenge within the lessons and are encouraged to make more independent decisions about their learning. More details on the Star Challenge can be found on our website.

The children said : Year R: *'I like to do the Wow it makes me feel excited and happy'*

'The stars give me a chance to do harder things' 'I do 1 star and now I try a 2 star it feels special'

Show and Tell : We have a rota for 'show and tell'. Each child will have the opportunity to bring something from home that is special to them to talk about and share with the class. The day before your child's turn they will come home with a sticker on them informing you they need to bring something in the next day. This is an important part of your child's social development as it builds their confidence to talk to their peers as well as developing the ability to ask suitable questions.

Assemblies :

Monday with the Headteacher

Tuesday with teachers or led by our pupil worship council/ class assemblies for parents and carers

Wednesday-Singing

Thursday- Celebration- everybody has a chance to shine and receive merits

Friday- Open the Book (a team of volunteers from the church come in to act out and involve children in Bible stories)

Heroes and Heroines- At the end of each term you will be invited in to celebrate children in the school who have earned merits, including the Golden Headteacher merits. We do not share in advance who we are celebrating so that we create an ethos where we each share everyone's success.

Buddies : Our school has always worked hard to promote links between our junior and infant children to help build confidence, friendship and support for the children. This is known as our Buddy system.

Year 6 children use break time to get to know their reception buddy, helping them become settled in the first weeks at school. The Year 6 Buddies will also help your child during lunch to help them have a positive first experience of lunchtime at AK.

Our Buddies will become reading buddies with the reception children, to further promote a love of sharing books and academically by helping as they become a reader. Later on, the Year 6 children will be working with their teacher to plan some exciting activities to share with their reception Buddies.

We think that there are many benefits of having the Buddy system at our school, including developing friendship, confidence, responsibility and promoting our TEAM AK ethos.

Reading Books: Your child will bring home two reading books; one to share and one for them to begin to read. More information will follow in September.

Birthdays: We celebrate birthdays at whole school assembly each week and ask that children don't bring cakes or sweets to share on these occasions.

Trips: The children generally go on one significant trip each year. However, we do take advantage of the surrounding area and frequently take trips to different parts of the village (for this you will need to sign the authorisation form in this pack).

Contact Details: Please ensure you update your contact numbers in the school office if you change jobs or get a new mobile.

Updates: In addition to ParentMail (which you will receive a letter for how to sign up in September) we post regular updates on our website. Each class also has its own page with news and photos of recent learning and events. Have a look at the school website at www.akps.org.uk

Before and After school Provision: Breakfast club is run by Sharon Sampson and is available from 8am every day in the school hall. For £3 your child will receive breakfast, participate in some calm activities before joining the class for the start of the school day. Bookings must be made in advance via the office or Mrs. Sampson. After school care is provided on site by Mighty Oaks a professionally run after care and holiday club. This runs from the end of the school day until 6pm.

School Clubs: A multitude of age related after school clubs are provided for children at AK some free of charge, some incur a cost. Clubs will be available to reception children in the summer term to allow them time to settle into school in the first terms.

How can I help my child prepare for school? The **most important** things you can teach your child before they start school are to:

- ★ Use the toilet independently
- ★ Dress and undress independently, including doing up zips and buttons
- ★ Recognise their own name

- ★ Recognise their own lunchbox

You may also like to take some time to share the starting school booklet regularly throughout the summer with your child.

What will my child learn in Reception Class? The period from birth to the end of reception year is described as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). It is broken down into seven areas of learning, each with its own Early Learning Goal. Each area of learning is of equal importance and is vital in developing well-rounded children who are confident, creative and independent learners.

There are three prime areas of learning which are fundamental to the child's development and support development in other areas. These areas of learning are:

- ★ Personal Social and Emotional Development
- ★ Physical Development
- ★ Language and Communication

The remaining four areas of learning include specific skills and knowledge which are vital for children to participate successfully in society. They are:

- ★ Literacy
- ★ Mathematics
- ★ Understanding the World
- ★ Expressive Arts and Design

Each area of learning is divided into overlapping age bands and children will work through the developmental steps in order to reach their Early Learning Goal. Most children are expected to reach these goals by the end of their first year of school. However, some children will exceed these goals and others may still need to work towards some of the goals. It is important to remember that all children progress at their own rate.

During the Early Years Foundation Stage children further their understanding by playing, talking, observing, planning, questioning, experimenting, testing, repeating, reflecting and responding to adults and to each other. Their day will involve some teacher directed activities as well as lots of structured play activities. These well planned play activities are a key way in which children learn with enjoyment and challenge.

At Ashton Keynes school we aim to develop children who are creative, independent and responsible learners. Our curriculum is organised by topics, which vary in length and form the focus of their learning for that term. Learning Activities from the Early Years Foundation Stage will then be themed to fit that topic.

Examples of some topics we have taught previously are: *It's a Bugs Life, Autumn Leaves, It was on a Starry Night, A Winter Wonderland, Knights and Princesses and Down with the Dinosaurs*. In order to keep the curriculum fresh and exciting we do not have a timetable of topics and new topics will be added each year. Our choice of topics depends on the interests shown by the children.

Learning will take place in the classroom and in our free flow outdoor learning area. The role play area and learning zones transform every few weeks to fit in with the chosen topic.

Forest School: Using the schools many outdoor learning environments, children are encouraged and inspired to grow in confidence, independence and self-esteem through the mastery of small achievable tasks.

Mr Jackson a trained Forest School leader with many years of experience will teach, enthuse and encourage the children. The children quickly learn boundaries, both physical and social, within which they must work.

- ★ **Our aim:** To develop self-esteem, confidence and social skills through learning about the environment and nature.

Areas of Learning: Prime Areas

Personal, social and emotional development: This area of learning is divided into three key aspects:

- ★ Making relationships
- ★ Self-confidence and self-awareness
- ★ Managing feelings and behaviour

Children will learn to play cooperatively, form positive relationships and develop a better understanding of their own and other people's emotions. They begin to recognise their own strengths and the strengths of others. They will take part in activities which will help them to express their own views and develop their confidence as learners.

Communication and Language: The area of Communication and Language has three main parts:

- ★ Listening and Attention
- ★ Understanding
- ★ Speaking

Within this area of learning children will experience speaking and listening activities in a range of situations and for different purposes. More specifically they will develop their understanding of language and will begin to learn new vocabulary. They will be able to listen and respond to ideas expressed by others and will develop their ability to create narratives and explain ideas logically and in sequence.

Physical development: Physical development in the foundation stage is broken down into two main areas:

- ★ Moving and Handling
- ★ Health and Self-care

This area of learning is about improving skills of co-ordination, control, manipulation and movement. Physical development has two other very important aspects. It helps children gain confidence in what they can do and enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active. Effective physical development helps children develop a positive sense of well-being.

Areas of Learning: Specific Areas

Mathematics: Mathematics is grouped into two main areas of learning:

- ★ Number
- ★ Shape, space and measures.

As part of their mathematical development children will practise counting, sorting, matching, creating patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and problem solving. Mathematical understanding will be developed through stories, songs, games and imaginative play, so that children enjoy using and experimenting with numbers. By the end of the EYFS it is expected that children will be able to count reliably to 20, placing the numbers in order and naming one more or one less than a number. They will develop their ability to solve problems and add and subtract numbers. Also, they should be able to use everyday language to talk about time, money, distance and other measures and should be able to create and describe patterns.

Literacy: Literacy is divided into two key aspects:

- ★ Reading
- ★ Writing

At the beginning of the year our main focus in literacy will be to learn the letter sounds and master the skill of blending. In school we begin by teaching the letter sounds using Jolly Phonics. As soon as we have learnt the first six sounds (s, a, t, p, i, n) we start to blend sounds together to make simple words and read them. The children also begin to identify the sounds they hear in words which then moves them onto writing simple words. As we introduce each weeks new sounds we will send home a sound fan for you to share with your child.

When writing at home with your child, always encourage use of lower case letters and correct letter formation from the start. Included in the induction pack is a correct letter formation guide.

As part of their reading development children will be able to bring two books home; one to share with parents, older siblings or other relatives, and one which will be at a level for them to begin to read themselves.

Understanding the world: In this area children are developing the crucial knowledge, skills and understanding that help them make sense of the world. This forms the foundation for later work in science, design and technology, history, geography and information and communication technology (ICT). This area of learning has three aspects:

- ★ People and Communities
- ★ The World
- ★ Technology (the children will have regular access to laptops, the interactive white board as well as a range of programmable toys).

Expressive Arts and Design: Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another and so extend their understanding. This area of learning includes art, music, dance, role-play and imaginative play. It has two key aspects:

- ★ Exploring and using media and materials
- ★ Being Imaginative

Children will be encouraged to explore a range of media and materials, experimenting with colour, form and texture. They will have regular access to musical instruments and role play clothes so that they can express themselves in a variety of ways.

How will I know how my child is getting on?

Parents Evening: We will discuss your child's progress on a formal basis at parents' evenings during the year and you will receive a written report at the end of the school year. You are welcome to discuss any concerns you may have, either by appointment or informally at the beginning or end of the day.

Merits and stickers: Each week children from each class are chosen to be awarded a merit. Merits recognise all sorts of positive attributes and the reason for the merit will be written on it.

In class children are awarded with stickers if they do something really special!

Learning Journeys: Your child's progress will be recorded in their Learning Journey. Each child's learning journey will contain a range of evidence to demonstrate their learning across all areas of the EYFS. This evidence will take the form of photographs, independent work (writing, drawing, etc.) and observations from teaching staff. Learning journeys will be kept in the classroom and you are welcome to have a look at your child's learning journey to see how they are getting on.

Big Book: In addition to each child's individual learning journey each class will also have its own Shared Learning Journey or Big Book. This is where children can record experiences and ideas collectively as a group. They are a record of activities that the whole class have participated in and are always available in the classroom for parents to look at.

We greatly value the role that parents play and we aim to work together to achieve the best for your child. The greatest help you can give your child is encouragement and support. Please feel free to ask any questions you have and discuss any worries or concerns, however small, before they become problems. Please also share with us things which the children have found exciting or special.

If you have any questions, please contact the school office and they will be able to guide you or put you in contact with us.



We look forward to welcoming you and your children in September.

Kind regards

Mrs Crowley, Mrs Serle and the team