

Starting School

Information for Parents



Eastington Primary School

Introduction

This booklet is designed to answer many of the queries you may have about your child's entry to school in September.

We hope to make the transition from home and pre-school as smooth as possible for both parents and child.

Should you have any further queries/concerns then please do not hesitate to contact the Headteacher, Mr Malcolm Strang, or your child's class teacher to discuss these further.

In most cases, your child will already have come to the school for the pre-school sessions and classroom visits. This will already have helped him/her become familiar with the building, the staff and pupils.



The first few weeks of your child's school life are VERY important, and for this reason your child will begin on a part time basis, attending morning or afternoon sessions. Time spent in school will gradually increase and if the class teacher is happy your child is coping, full time education will commence after a few weeks.

Your child will still be very young and has many new routines to learn, so a gradual start will be particularly beneficial and will allow the staff to spend time with and get to know the children on a more individual basis. During this time we will carry out baseline assessments.

Opening times:

Morning session: 8.50am – 12.30pm

Afternoon: 1.30pm – 3.15pm

Children should not be on the school premises before 8.40am.

We realise that on their first day you will wish to bring your child into school and help him/her with his/her things. To help foster their independence we encourage them to come into the school/classroom on their own by lining up in the playground when the bell goes, from day two onwards. You are more than welcome to stay on the playground and wave them in. They will be collected by their class teacher.

At the end of the school day the children will be brought to the front of the school by their teacher and will wait with her until they can see that you are there for them. Although they will be reminded in school, please ensure that your child knows to wait with his/her teacher and not to walk off on their own. Please let your child and teacher know if someone else will be collecting him/her from school or if you are going to be late. This will save possible distress and confusion.

Lunchtime and Break time

We encourage the children to eat a healthy diet and operate a fruit/raw vegetable only policy at break time. The children can choose from the fruit and vegetables that we have in school or bring their own piece from home. They are also encouraged to have a drink at break time and can use the water cooler throughout the day. The children are able to eat savoury snacks and biscuits for lunch (if they bring sandwiches).

Children can now choose between free school dinners for infant aged children, (Reception, Year 1 and 2), or to bring in sandwiches. They will eat together in the hall.

The children who choose hot school dinners will be given a menu from which they make their daily choices.

If your child brings sandwiches their lunch box will be checked by a member of staff before they leave the hall and if your child is particularly unsettled and not eating then we will let you know. Please label your child's lunch box and drink and inform us of any allergies or special diets.

Big friends, Little friends

We operate a 'buddy' system with the children from Class 5 whereby your child will be given a 'special friend' who will look out for them at playtimes, share reading times and special events.

After approximately 5/6 weeks in school your child will meet and get to know their 'big friend' and they will introduce themselves to you.



Preparing your child for school

It would be helpful if your child were able to do some (if not all) of the following:

Dress and undress himself/herself. School clothes should be easily manageable and all items clearly marked with your child's NAME.

Pack and unpack his/her bag.

Hang his/her belongings on his/her peg.

Use the toilet properly and know how to wash and dry their hands.

Use a handkerchief/tissue.

Be responsible for tidying and putting away his/her toys and equipment.

Play amicably with and share with other children.

Listen and make eye contact when being spoken to.

Draw freely with crayons/pencils –
Know how to hold a pencil correctly.

Know how to sit quietly and listen to a story being told or read.

Recognise and name colours.

Complete simple jigsaws.

Recognise their name.

Be encouraged to tell an adult when something is wrong or has upset them.

Activities to develop pre-writing and pre-reading skills.

Always have paper and pencils readily available for your child to draw, write, or scribble on. This need not be too expensive, keep your old cereal boxes, envelopes, birthday/Christmas cards etc. You could start with rhythmic patterns, which will help your child's movement and pencil control.

Play 'I spy' to relate letter sounds with words. It really doesn't matter if your child thinks 's' is for both 'settee' and 'ceiling' as long as they are making the sound relationship.

With your child's favourite books, leave spaces for him/her to fill in the missing words. You might also point to the words as you read them. Sing nursery rhymes/songs and play action games with your child and encourage him/her to join in with you. We all want children to see books as being a source of pleasure. Read to your child every day for enjoyment and as a way of spending time together.

With all the aforementioned activities, forcing your child before he/she is ready or when in an uncooperative mood will only do more harm than good. Try and tackle them in a fun way but stop when your child has had enough. A child's concentration at this stage is still very limited.



Writing

Some children are keen and ready to learn to write before coming to school. This is fine but please teach your child to form his/her letters and write in lower case not in capitals (please see below). Tracing letters helps with pencil control and formation. You could perhaps write in yellow felt tip pen for your child to trace over the top.

Please refer to letters phonetically, that is the sound which they make and not 'ay, bee, cee, dee'. This will help your child to learn to read and write. To help the children learn their letter sounds they will be introduced to and learn the actions that accompany the letter sounds in 'Jolly Phonics'.



One of the most difficult, yet important skills your child will have to learn is that of listening.

Conversation is of the utmost importance in not only learning to read and write but in every aspect of your child's learning. Talk to your child and expect him/her to listen.

Time spent with your child now engaged in talking and listening will reap many benefits. Answer your child's questions as simply and carefully as you can, as he/she need explanations to develop powers of reasoning.

Number work

When you are sharing books with your child or when out on a journey, count things with him/her. Ask your child to get you four plates out for dinner and four knives and forks to go with them.

Sing and play number rhymes, which will help your child become familiar with numerical order, eg '1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Once I caught a fish alive ...'



When the initial strangeness has passed the majority of children enjoy school. The photographs and illustrations in this booklet, provided by the reception children, involve them all, engaged in school activities with happy, smiling faces.

The most precious gift you can give to your child both now and throughout his/her schooling is your time, interest and support. The child who receives the support from home will enjoy the best from school. We believe education to be a partnership between home and school and we will do our best to further the education you have already begun and help your child realise their potential.

We are really looking forward to working with you and hope you have a great Summer.

