

Useful Information

Parents and the School

We hope that our school is welcoming and 'open' to everyone. We feel that co-operation between home and school is of the utmost importance in the education of your child. We welcome parents into school whenever possible and are always delighted when parents offer help, whether with fund raising or working with the children. If you are interested in helping please speak with Suzanne Garner who will be pleased to hear from you. Regular volunteers in school require a DBS Check and references in line with our safeguarding procedures.

There will be an opportunity to find out more about your child in school each term:

- Autumn - 10 minute formal parent/teacher consultation with an opportunity to see children's work
- Spring - 10 minute formal parent/teacher consultation with an opportunity to see children's work and discuss their progress
- Summer - 10 minute formal parent/teacher consultation with an opportunity to see children's work and discuss their annual report

We endeavour to keep you up-to-date through our newsletters, which we send you periodically. These can also be accessed through our website. Please remember parents may visit or telephone school at any time if there is a concern or query however small they may seem. If it is a member of the teaching staff that you wish to see then immediately after school is the best time.

Please inform the school of any change in circumstances that may affect your child's health or welfare, such as hearing loss, change of address, parent in hospital, etc. The staff can then help to alleviate any problems that may arise.

Home Learning

After a day at school we feel your children need a change and a chance to follow other activities. However, weekly your child will be asked to complete a task at home, so your co-operation is invaluable here. Education, of course, does not just consist of work that is done at school - think of all the things that your child has learnt before attending school - it encompasses your child's whole life and there is much that you can do to help. Most effectively this can be by showing an interest and discussing with them the things that they are doing in school. In addition children are encouraged to take home their reading books and share them with you. The children will also bring home word lists (spellings) and when a little older tables which they are encouraged to learn.

Family - School - Child Agreement

In our efforts to continue working closely with parents and in accordance with Government legislation we have jointly produced a family school agreement. It is also endorsed by the Dorchester Area Schools Partnership. This outlines what we are working together on for the benefit of our children. It is shared with all parents at the beginning of our induction programme for reception children and on entry with those who join us further up the school. We hope you feel able to support it.

Photographs/Videoing

We do not object to parents taking photographs of their children at school events, as long as they are unobtrusive. We do ask, however that these are for domestic use only and if they include other children or adults they are not put on social networking sites on the internet.

School Times

School Times	
Morning Session	8.45 to 12.00/12.15
Afternoon Session	1.00 to 3.00
Morning Break	10.30 to 10.45



This allows us 22.5 hours (23.75 in Key Stage 2) spent on teaching during a normal school week. This excludes the daily act of collective worship (15 minutes daily), registration (15 minutes daily) and break time (15 minutes daily).

Please do not allow your children to arrive before 8.30am as important preparations are being made for the day. Following 8.30am, as they arrive children come straight into school when the teachers will then be ready for them. From 9.00am each morning the only access to the school is via the main school entrance which is controlled. All other doors will only allow exit. This is all part of our school safety policy.

At the end of the day parents or other responsible adults are asked to collect their children from the classrooms. Please inform us if you arrange for someone different to collect your child.

Car Parking: If you bring or meet your child, please do not park your car in the school entrance, staff car park or on the road directly opposite the school entrance as this creates hazards for the children. You may use the car park next to the school at Charminster Community Hall.

School Transport: The current qualifying distances for free school transport are as follows:

Under 8 years - Year 3 and younger	2 miles
Over 8 years - Year 4 and older	3 miles

However, Charlton Down has been deemed as a qualifying bus route as there is not safe path to walk to school.

Spare seats on regular school transport routes may be used on a concessionary basis. Application forms are available from the Local Authority and a bus pass issued on payment of the appropriate amount. Children are escorted onto their bus by members of staff and unless the school has been told of any change in the way a child is to travel home on a particular day, the child will always travel in the usual way. This will prevent any unnecessary anxiety on everyone's part. If you wish your child to be taken off the school bus list on occasions please inform the school office before the end of the day.

It is extremely important for parents to make sure that their children understand that they must remain seated and behave sensibly and quietly when using the school bus.

Emergency Closure of School: If the school has to be closed during term time you will normally be notified via a text message to your mobile phone through our SchoolComms messaging system. Every effort will be made to advise parents on the rare occasions of emergency closure, for example extreme weather conditions or power failure. We will also use the services of local radio when possible to keep you informed. If buses do not run in the morning due to inclement weather they will not run in the afternoon whatever the situation.

Equipment and Materials

All basic materials - pens, paper, books, pencils, etc are provided by the school. We would appreciate it if you could provide:

- ◆ A T-shirt, shorts and plimsolls for PE and games.
- ◆ A named drawstring bag to keep it in.



- ◆ A Book Bag (these can be ordered through our uniform provider)

We would prefer children not to bring toys to school unless specifically asked to do so in connection with school activities. We cannot be held responsible for items that get lost or broken.

PE Policy and Guidelines – Safe Practice

The Dorchester Area Schools Partnership agreed a PE policy and guidelines for all schools across the pyramid. The health and safety measures outline that:

- Long hair must be tied back for ALL physical activity. Alice bands and loose fitting slides should be removed.
- ALL jewellery must be removed before participating in PE lessons. This includes watches, rings, necklaces, bracelets and earrings and any other body piercings.
- Pupils with pierced ears **MUST** remove earrings wherever possible for PE lessons. If stud earrings cannot be removed, they should be taped up using medical tape. **FOR SAFETY REASONS** pupils may **NOT** do PE with earrings other than studs at all.

Midday Meals

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free lunch meal from September 2014, this is known as Universal Free School Meals. Payment for meals will be required for children in Years 3 and 4. All meals must be ordered in advance and could be for every day or for odd days now and again. Further details about our meal provider and their website for ordering are provided in a separate leaflet. Alternatively



children may either bring a packed lunch or go home for lunch. Most children stay at lunchtime and are supervised by lunchtime supervisors. It would help if packed lunches are packed in clearly named plastic boxes with non-fizzy drinks in a non-breakable leak proof container.

Parents of children who might be entitled to Free School Meals because they are in receipt of qualifying benefits are strongly encouraged to check eligibility. This is because, even though your child will automatically get a meal, it enables the school to access additional funding for the Pupil Premium which is used to provide additional support for your child. You will also qualify for assistance with your child's uniform.

Children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 will be provided with fruit for their mid-morning break through a Government scheme. Children in Years 3 and 4 may bring their own if they wish.

School Gateway

All bookings and payments for Afterschool club and Breakfast Club are made via our School Gateway app which can be downloaded onto your mobile phone. Also any other extra-curricular clubs are also booked via the School Gateway app. Further information about this will be provided to you.

School Uniform

We have a policy for encouraging children to wear school uniform. We like our children to wear the following:

Grey trousers

Green sweatshirt

Grey pinafore or skirt in the winter, green and white or yellow and white check dress for the summer.

Yellow polo shirt

Uniform can be ordered directly from our supplier, Kitz UK, either on-line or by telephone as follows:

- Sweatshirts
- PE t-shirts
- Book bags
- Yellow polo shirts
- Beanie hats
- Caps

Naming everything is essential! Items of school clothing all look alike. Unmarked items will only be kept for a short time before being sold to raise money at school fundraising events.

Any parents who have successfully applied for free school meals will qualify for an allowance for school clothing. Please see Jane Dixon in our school office for an application form.

School Health and Welfare

School doctor	Dr Summers (01305 255206)
School nurse	Maria Waters/ Karen Cains, (01305 255215)
School educational welfare officer	Education Social Work & Attendance Service, Winfrith Technology Park, Building C51F, Winfrith Newburgh DT2 8DH (01305 851300)

All children are medically examined during their first year in school. This includes hearing, height and weight checks. You will be notified when this examination will take place, although it isn't necessary for you to be present. If you are at all concerned with your child's health and feel the school may be able to make arrangements to help please speak with your child's class teacher or Karen Bennett, Parent Support Advisor. Our school nurse, Maria Waters carries out half-termly drop-in sessions here in school for parents to seek advice confidentially. These are advertised in the regular newsletters.

The school health service no longer carries out regular inspections for head lice, so we advise parents to check their child's hair each week. Should you find any evidence of head lice we ask you to treat with lotion available from your doctor or chemist as soon as possible. Please feel free to ring Maria Waters at any time for advice.

Please do not send your child to school if she/he has been unwell the previous night or prior to coming to school in the morning. We have no facilities for looking after sick children and it is unfair to your child and the other children in the class. Likewise please encourage your child to have good attendance as missing school does impact upon their performance. **Children must not return to school for 48 hours after being sick or suffering from diarrhoea.**

If your child has an accident or becomes unwell during school hours we shall contact you immediately. Please ensure that we have your current emergency telephone number.

Our first priority is your child's welfare and we will usually discuss any concerns we might have about your child with you. There might be occasions, however, when we have to provide information to or consult other agencies such as Social Care and Health before we contact you. Our responsibility to do so is determined by Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures. If you want to know more about these procedures, please speak to Suzanne Garner, Headteacher.

We would appreciate notification in advance if your child is to leave the school premises during school hours, for example to visit the dentist or doctor. He/she must be collected by an adult and signed out at our reception.

If your child is absent through illness please telephone the School Office on the first morning of absence to notify us. There is a designated answer machine for absence also. A note of explanation should be brought on his/her return if away for longer than a couple of days. Schools are required by law to keep a careful check on the attendance of all pupils.

Parents wishing to withdraw their child from school due to a special circumstance should request a form from the school office. The Headteacher will then make a



decision as to whether or not the absence can be authorised. **Family holidays will not be authorised and you are discouraged from booking holidays during term time.**

In line with Dorset County Council Policy, if a child has 5 days (or 10 sessions) of unauthorised holiday within a period of 12 weeks, a penalty notice of £60 per parent may be issued by Dorset Council, which if not paid within 12 days will double to £120. If this remains unpaid, parents will be prosecuted in the magistrates' court.

Please note all DASP schools, including us here at St Mary's, have been consistently applying penalty notices from 31st October 2017.

Medicines in School

It may occasionally be necessary for children to receive medicine during the school day. In the interests of safety the school must have a written request from the parents stating:

1. the name of the medication
2. the dose to be administered
3. the time the drug needs to be administered.

The parent should take the medication to the office, clearly labelled with the child's name and the dosage to be given and complete the appropriate form giving permission for a member of staff to administer. The medication should be in a child-proof container. Children should not be responsible for carrying medicines to school. Medicines should never be sent with a child on the school bus.

Our school welcomes children with asthma. Parents are asked to inform us on admission. We have a clear Asthma Policy and all our staff recognise the need for medication to be close to hand at all times. We fully support the integration of children affected by asthma into the full life of the school as far as they are able.

Dorset Health Authority has issued the following guidelines for the exclusion of children with infectious diseases. It states the minimum time a child must be kept away from school:

Infection	Exclusion from school
Chicken pox	Until the last spots have crusted over
Conjunctivitis	Until treatment has been commenced
German measles	Until recovered from the symptoms
Impetigo	Until treatment has cleared up the condition
Measles	At least 4 days from the appearance of the rash
Mumps	9 days after swelling subsides
Scarlet fever	24-48 hours after starting antibiotics - if they feel well
Scabies	Until the day after treatment

Policy on Charges and Remissions for School Activities

a) The Governors will recoup the costs for board and lodging from the parents of pupils incurred by their attendance on residential activities with a night or more away from home and whether or not the residential trip is deemed to have taken place in school hours. All parents will be given the opportunity to talk with the Headteacher in confidence should they find the cost prohibitive. Those parents wishing to ask for a reduction will be required to have successfully applied for free school meals from the LA in order to be considered for this. Recent documentary evidence of benefit will also need to be seen by the Finance Officer or Headteacher.

b) The Governors will charge for instrumental music tuition in line with DASP Music Service policy.

No charge will be levied to cover the cost of activities such as swimming or educational visits. Where voluntary contributions are requested to meet part or all of the cost of such activities it will be made clear to parents that:

- i) there is no obligation to contribute, and
- ii) pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to this request.

The school may ask for voluntary contributions to help pay for any ingredients, materials, equipment etc needed for practical activities, such as cooking. Where contributions are requested to meet part or all of the cost of such activities it will be made clear to parents that:

- i) there is no obligation to contribute, and
- ii) pupils will not be treated differently according to whether or not their parents have made any contribution in response to this request.

Any charge made in respect of individual pupils may not exceed the actual cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils willing to participate. It may not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge. Any subsidies of this kind must come from funds available to the Governing Body or from fund raising.

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