



Becoming reflective, independent and aspirational learners for life



Information for new parents

2019-20

We want to welcome you and your child to Amberley Parochial School where children are at the heart of our unique community. Our aim is to create confident, well-rounded and motivated children, who are guided by strong Christian values. We want to support them to become reflective, independent and aspirational learners for life.

We know that starting school is a very exciting, yet nerve racking, time for you and your child so we have prepared this booklet to help you settle in, get to know us and find out more about how we work. We are very pleased that you have chosen Amberley school and look forward to working in partnership with you over the coming years to ensure that your child enjoys their time with us and achieves their best.



Getting to know our school

Primary school is divided into Key Stages and you will often see these referred to in letters from the school and within educational information from outside agencies.

Early Years Foundation Stage: Reception (Dexter) taught by Mrs Penn
supported by Mrs A Smith & Mrs Lury

Key Stage 1: Year 1/Year 2 (Hereford) taught by Miss Holden
supported by Mrs Norris

Key Stage 2: Year 3/Year 4 (Friesian) taught by Mrs Crampton and Mrs Smith
supported by Mrs Apew

Year 5/ Year 6 (Belted Galloway) taught by Mr Beech
supported by Mrs Stevens

Despite being a relatively small school, you will find that there are a large number of people involved in your child's education. There is a collaborative effort between all members of the school community to support each and every pupil. We have a very caring team of lunchtime supervisors and peripatetic teachers, all of whom work closely with class teachers to ensure a safe and caring school environment.



Uniform

The school colours are as follows:

Shirt / Blouse	White
Sweatshirt/Jumper/Cardigan	Burgundy
T Shirt / Polo Shirt	White or burgundy
Skirt/Pinafore/Trousers/Shorts	Grey/black
Summer Dress	Red and white checks or stripes
Socks	Grey, black or white
Shoes	Black sensible shoes

School coats are available but not a necessity.

Uniform is available in local supermarkets and at Batemans Store, Stroud.

PE Kit

Black or burgundy shorts and a white T-shirt (both boys and girls)

Children's PE kits need to be in school all week and it would be helpful if they were kept in a named draw string bag. As you can imagine, the children take time to get used to getting changed for PE independently and tend to get themselves in a muddle taking things in and out of their bags. It is vital that all PE kits and uniform, including shoes, are clearly labelled. *Trainers/daps will be needed for the summer term. Please do not buy daps before this time as their feet grow so quickly!*

Children will also need a waterproof art apron with sleeves and a pair of welly boots to be kept in school as we take the children out for a 'welly walk' every week and would like to protect their clothes as much as possible as they get 'hands on' in their learning!

All children enjoy taking books home to share with the family. To protect books we do ask that books and letters are taken home in a suitable folder or bag. A school book bag is required and can be bought from Batemans Store in Stroud. These are strong and will last for a long time. Please get into the habit of bringing book bags to school every day.

Times of the School Day

Breakfast club starts 7.45am

Doors open at 8.45am

Registration 8.50am

Lessons begin at 8.55am

Break and snack is at 10.30am for Reception – Year 4, and at 11.00am for Years 5/6

Lunch 12.25pm – 1.20pm

End of the day 3.15pm

For safety reasons, the children are accompanied by staff to the main gates at the front of school where they are then handed over to parents. Please be patient, as we need to ensure that each child is with the correct adult, and in the early days, this can take a little time. If you are unavoidably delayed, please try to get a message to school as soon as possible to let us know.

We welcome the chance to hear about any important news or to discuss any worries you or your child might have, so please do come and talk to us. We are all available after school, or someone will be on the door for getting messages to the teacher in the morning. Alternatively, you can make an appointment through the school office.



Term Dates

Please refer to the attached calendar

Settling In

We appreciate that this is a very important step for you and your child and we endeavour to make the transition to full-time school as easy as possible. Children will start by attending for half days (mornings only) for the first two weeks in Reception, the third week will give them a chance to experience lunchtime before starting full time in week four. This enables them to get used to their new classroom and staff before staying for the full day. When your child first stays for lunch with the rest of the school they will be given lots of help from lunchtime supervisors, older children and their teachers whilst they settle in.

Buddies

All the children in Dexter class will be given a 'buddy' and the class teacher will arrange this well in advance of your child starting in September. Your child's buddy will be a Year 6 pupil who will offer support to your child during their early days and weeks. The buddies enjoy this as much as the younger children and take their responsibility very seriously!



The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

The EYFS curriculum supports an integrated approach to early learning and care. It gives all professionals a set of common principles and ensures a commitment to deliver quality early education and childcare experiences to all children. It is divided into two parts:

The Prime Areas

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

The Specific Areas

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

In addition, we promote the ***The Characteristics of Effective Learning*** which describe how a child learns:

Playing and exploring

Active learning

Creating and thinking critically

These characteristics are all interconnected with the prime and specific areas and underpin

everything that we do in order for us to offer a rich, enabling and engaging environment.

A comprehensive explanation of all the areas of the EYFS curriculum can be found at www.foundationyears.org.uk and on our school website www.amberleyschool.co.uk

Supporting your Child

Obviously children develop at different rates— they are each unique. However, the more time you spend talking with your child and answering their questions the more you will help them to learn when they are at school.

A good time to talk to your child is when you do things together. You can help your child by encouraging them to

- take care of their toys and share and take turns when playing with friends
- fetch things and put things away for themselves
- concentrate and persevere
- play with other children and encourage them to complete puzzles, games or pictures
- talk about feelings and emotions
- manage own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully including dressing and undressing
- use toilets/urinals properly, including flushing, and to always wash their hands afterwards
- blow their own noses and to throw tissues away afterwards
- develop and explore physical skills such as climbing and balancing
- use pens, pencils, crayons, scissors (it helps to make paper readily available)
- talk to you as much as possible
- read lots of stories, make up stories, discuss characters/settings/likes /dislikes
- listen to music and story CDs
- ask the meaning of new words
- be aware of and make the most of practical situations e.g. laying the table, cooking, shopping
- use correct mathematical language e.g. full/empty, more, less, least/most, high/deep/long/wide; bigger than/ smaller than; shape names (both 2D and 3D)
- play with real coins
- play games such as snap, dominoes, snakes and ladders
- count steps, objects, sounds etc.
- know their birthday

The 'themes' for our learning in our Reception class are led by the children's interests. We aim to make learning more meaningful and personal to the children by taking their interests and developing their learning through the themes/ ideas that they introduce. These will sometimes be the main leading 'theme' or may be more subtle. We use our ongoing observation and assessment to tailor our input and the challenges that are set, so that we can meet the individual needs of each child to ensure that they are learning at an appropriate level. There are many benefits to this type of approach to teaching and learning and the children make significant progress because they are interested and actively involved in their own learning.

We update our school website each week, and have a class blog, to keep you up to date with what we are doing, but if you have any questions, please feel free to come and ask us.

You can help your child at home by talking about their areas of learning, sharing books from the library or looking on the internet, and perhaps visiting related places of interest.



Once they have settled into school, the children will bring home reading books to share (these may not have any words at first!) and letter sounds to learn. The staff will explain this home learning to you and will be happy to suggest ways in which everyday activities can become learning opportunities.

School Lunches

All children in Reception and Key Stage 1 (Year 1 and Year 2) are universally entitled to free school meals. This entitlement 'for all' stops after Year 2. From Year 3 onwards, families who satisfy the criteria can continue to claim free school meals for their children.

We are lucky enough to have our delicious meals cooked by Star Anise at Nailsworth School and brought to Amberley and we encourage all children to take advantage of this. Menus are published each week in the Pink Letter for you and your child to discuss which meal choice they would like. During registration, your child will choose which dinner option they would like that day. They will then be given a colour band according to which dinner they have chosen.

If you would prefer your child to bring a packed lunch, this should be in a secure lunchbox, clearly labelled with your child's name, and should not include any sweets, chocolate bars, or fizzy drinks. Water is provided at school.

Further information about school dinners and menus can be found on the school website.



School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

Our school participates in the Schools' Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, which provides every child from Reception to Year 2 with a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable every day at no cost to parents. Children do not need to bring in a snack from home.

Each child is given a plastic water bottle that is refilled daily and will be available throughout the day in the classroom.

Other Useful Information

Absences

If your child is ill, please notify the office as soon as possible by telephone on 01453 873349

Following any sickness or diarrhoea, at school or at home, children should not come into school for a minimum of 24 hours.

Money

Please send all money/cheques, for cookery, trips etc. in a named envelope either directly to the School Office or to the Class Teacher.

Breakfast Club

The school does operate a Breakfast Club every morning from 7.45am until 8.35am. The children are offered a selection of breakfast cereals, yogurt, toast and jam, honey etc. together with a drink – milk or juice. The costs are £4.00 per child per morning if more than 24 hours' notice is given. Booking forms for the Autumn Term will be available at the start of the Autumn Term.

PTA

Our very supportive PTA organise a variety of successful social and fundraising activities throughout the year. This includes the locally renowned 'Cow Hunt', Christmas and Summer Events plus Hot Chocolate/Ice Lollies after school. Funds raised are used to buy additional resources and activities which benefit the children. The PTA is a great opportunity to make new links with other local parents and to play a part in continuing the development of our unique community. We are always looking for more help so please take an active part if you can by volunteering at events or by joining the team.

Car Parking

There is a voluntary one-way scheme in operation on the road in front of the school during the times immediately before and after school.

Please be considerate where you park. The access road immediately in front of the school, Blackwell Cottage, Rectory Cottage and the zigzags should be clear at all times.

The road opposite, which leads to the War Memorial, should also be kept clear to allow buses to pass and stop safely.

Parent Helpers

We are always grateful for help in the school, especially if you are able to help on a regular basis. You might like to help with computers, art work, hearing children read, playing games, after-school clubs, nature walks... or you may have some other talent you would like to share with us! Please let us know if you are able to help in any way.

Behaviour Policy

The children worked with staff and governors to create the Positive Behaviour Handbook. All staff, parents and children adhere to the statements. Please find one enclosed in your pack. We would appreciate it if you would sign the attached form and acknowledge that you agree to abide by the policy.

You will be informed of the strategies for reinforcing positive behaviour in the Reception classroom, in September, once we have met the children and have made adaptations to the needs of the class. Each week, children will be chosen, for their demonstration of our 'learning powers'. They will be celebrated in Friday's assembly and have their name placed in the Golden Book. Parents/carers are invited to join the Golden Book assembly, a few days' notice is usually given if your child is to receive a Golden Book award.

Communication

We hold Parents' Evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms. This is an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress. We also hold 'Fantastic Fridays' (or 'Terrific Tuesdays', 'Wow Wednesdays') each half term where you will be invited in to see your child's work.

Each week we produce a newsletter, The Pink Letter, detailing events of the week and notices of forthcoming events. It is available on the school website.

The school website is updated every week and Dexter class have their own blog, which gives information about what we have been up to during the week. All information regarding policies, curriculum, term dates, menus etc can be found on the school website.

In the meantime, if you have any concerns about your child at school, or there is anything that you feel we should know about your child, the class teacher is your first point of contact. Similarly, the class teacher will speak to you if they have any news or concerns that they feel you should be aware of.

Please let the teacher know as soon as possible of any home circumstances which may affect your child. This may include pregnancies, bereavements, hospitalisations, illness, parents being absent or children being cared for by relatives. All information will be treated confidentially. It will help us to understand and support your child.

We hope that we have answered many of the questions that you have about your child starting in Reception, however if you ever need to contact us we will always be happy to help.

More information is available on our school website www.amberleyschool.co.uk

You are welcome to pop into the office or contact us via

email: admin@amberey.gloucs.sch.uk

Phone: 01453 873349