



Serve Learn Challenge Love

Holy Trinity CE Primary Academy

Starting School Frequently Asked Questions

What will my child be expected to know/do when they start school?

Reception teachers expect to see a wide range of abilities in new starters so don't worry if your child is not yet able to write their name or recognise any numbers. The staff will carry out a detailed Baseline assessment of your child in his/her first 4 weeks in Reception to enable them to tailor the teaching to your child's needs. It's always a good idea to spend time reading books and playing learning games e.g. I spy with your child at any age, to help build simple literacy and numeracy skills in a fun way, but there should be no pressure to get your child to a certain level. The most important skills that children can have when starting school are self-help skills – getting dressed independently, putting on and taking off shoes and coat, independently toileting including wiping their own bottom and washing hands afterwards, blowing their own nose, using a knife and fork.

Does my child need to bring anything with them to school?

Your child will need a filled water bottle (water only please), school pumps, their purple book bag, a coat, a pair of wellies, spare underwear, a piece of fruit or veg in a named container or bag (optional). A PE kit (black shorts or joggers and white T-shirt) will be required after October half-term. Please ensure every item of clothing is clearly labelled with your child's name.

Can I stay with my child to help settle him/her?

Under normal circumstances we operate an optional 'play and stay' session for the first 15 minutes of the day for the first 2 weeks where parents/carers are welcome to stay and help their child to settle to an activity. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 we may not be able to offer this in September. We will update you as soon as we are able to on whether this will continue.

What should I do if my child gets upset when I leave?

It is perfectly normal for children to be anxious about saying goodbye to their adult and the staff in the Foundation Stage are very experienced in managing this. We recognise that this can be a very upsetting time for both children and parents. As hard as it is to leave your child crying, it is often best to leave promptly and avoid the prolonged goodbyes and final kisses. If you are worried, leave it for half an hour then ring school to check on how your child has settled. It is not uncommon for children who have come to school happily at the beginning to become reluctant to separate once they realise that they have to come to school every day.

Can my child bring a favourite toy/teddy to school?

We prefer children not to bring their own toys to school as we cannot guarantee to keep them safe. In exceptional circumstances e.g. when a child is struggling to settle beyond the first few weeks, we may ask for a familiar toy to be brought in but kept in the child's bag and used only as an initial comforter.

My child is a fussy eater, should I send him/her with a packed lunch?

Currently the government fund free school meals for all children from Reception to Year 2 and we encourage all parents to allow their child to try the school meal option initially. The dinner menu is displayed daily on the notice board at the front of school, on the school website and also under the canopy in the Reception classroom. Parents are encouraged to help their child choose from the menu each day and place their name card in a coloured box corresponding to their meal choice. The lunchtime staff will monitor your child's eating over the course of the week and the Reception staff will speak to parents if we have any concerns.

My child doesn't want to talk about what he/she has done at school. Does this mean he/she is not enjoying it?

Don't worry if your child is reluctant to talk about school, it is perfectly normal! It does not mean that they haven't enjoyed. Try not to bombard your child with lots of questions as soon as you pick him/her up. Children often like to keep their school and home world separate but you may be offered snippets of information when you are least expecting it. If you would like to find out more about what your child has been doing at school, log on to Tapestry our online learning journal to view your child's observations we update at least weekly. You will be provided with a letter and consent form for Tapestry within the first few weeks of starting school.

What Curriculum will my child follow in Reception?

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum begins in nursery and ends at the end of Reception. It is based around play and is broken into 7 areas of learning: - Communication and Language, Personal, Social & Emotional Development, Physical Development, Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding of the World, Expressive Art and Design. You can find out more about the curriculum on the internet by searching EYFS curriculum or visiting specific sites for parents e.g. www.pacey.org.uk

How will my child be assessed?

During the first 4 weeks of school, the Early Years staff will be carrying out a 'Baseline Assessment' for each child. The Government have yet to issue guidance about whether the new statutory Baseline Assessment will be rolled out this September as planned prior to Covid-19, we will keep you updated about this. A parent consultation evening later in the Autumn term will be offered, where you will have the opportunity to discuss how well your child has settled and how best to support their learning and skill development. A further consultation evening will be offered in the Spring Term and a detailed written report will be sent home at the end of the Summer term indicating whether your child is emerging, meeting or exceeding the Early Learning Goals.

When will my child bring home a reading book?

Our assessments will indicate when a child has reached a 'readiness' for reading stage and he/she will then begin to bring home a reading scheme book. Reading information sessions will be held at the beginning of October to explain our approach to the teaching of reading and phonics. We encourage all parents to attend one of the sessions.

Will my Reception child get homework?

Yes. We expect parents and carers to read regularly at home with their child and practise letter sounds and key words. We occasionally send home other learning challenges via Tapestry which are optional, but we would encourage you to complete with your child to support their learning in school.

I need my child to be collected by an adult other than those named on my contact list. What should I do?

Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do at Holy Trinity and we have strict procedures to ensure the safety of every child. If you know in advance that a different adult will be collecting, make sure that you let the teacher know. If the staff haven't met the adult before we would need to you to complete a form at the school office with a password which we will ask the collecting adult to provide. If you need to arrange for a different adult to collect in an emergency, ring the school office to let them know and provide a password over the

phone. We will NOT allow your child to be collected by an adult who is not on your contact list without prior notification.

My child has allergies and dietary requirements. How will school manage these?

Allergies or food intolerances need to be recorded on the Admissions form. This is then passed onto all relevant staff and the school meals service. The catering agency will contact you for further information and you may be asked to provide additional information in order that they can provide your child with an appropriate menu. If your child requires medication in school, this must be prescribed and a medicine consent form must be completed at the school office.

My child has asthma. Can staff administer his/her inhaler in school?

Any prescribed medication can be administered in school provided a medicine consent form is completed by an adult with parental responsibility. These are available at the school office. Reliever inhalers (blue) are kept in a named container in the classroom and will be administered as required by a Paediatric First Aider. We do ask for a copy of your child's 'My Asthma Plan' which are written by the asthma nurse following diagnosis. If you do not have an up to date plan, please speak to your GP or asthma nurse about this.

What do I do if my child is ill?

Children do not generally need to be kept at home with minor ailments such as colds. Please follow COVID-19 guidelines re high temperature and/or cough. If your child has a high temperature, sickness or diarrhoea, chicken pox or another infectious disease you will need to contact school for advice before sending your child. All absences need to be reported to the school office before 9am. A voicemail can be left on the school answering service.

If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to telephone your child's teacher or email at Reception@holytrinityce.co.uk or the school admin team at info@holytrinityce.co.uk any information will be passed on to the relevant staff.

Please note, all of the above procedures are subject to change due to COVID-19. We will keep you updated of any changes.