



Starting School at Chacewater School 2023/24



Starting School at Chacewater

All of us here at Chacewater School extend a warm welcome to you and your family. For every child, the step from home, nursery or pre-school to school is a very important one. This booklet has been put together to help with your child's transition to school. Below is information regarding your child's transition, what is expected at Chacewater School and some key dates you need to be aware of.

Key Staff

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| David Hick | Headteacher |
| Mrs Laura Glanville-Thomas | Class Teacher |
| Mrs Danielle Morgan | Class Teacher Assistant Headteacher |
| Mrs Emma Law | Deputy Headteacher - SEND Lead & Safeguarding Lead |
| Ms Lizzy White | Higher level Teaching Assistant |
| Mrs Elle Booker | Teaching Assistant |
| Mrs Susan Hodgson | School Secretary |
| Miss Christine Ivey | School Secretary |

Term Dates 2023/24

Here at Chacewater School we have a staggered start period at the beginning of the term. This allows your child to get used to the routine of the school, making them feel comfortable and settled before full time education. Below is the staggered start timetable. Your child will be allocated to a group and at the beginning they will either attend a morning or afternoon session, this is then swapped around and built up until they all go to school in the mornings, then lunches and then full time.

This year your child will be in group _____.

| Session | Group A | Group B |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Monday 4 th Sep | Inset day | |
| Tuesday 5 th Sep | Inset day | |
| Wednesday 6 th Sep | Morning only | Afternoon only |
| Thursday 7 th Sep | Afternoons only | Mornings only |
| Friday 8 th Sep | Morning – 11.45am pick up. | |
| Monday 11 th Sep | Morning – 11.45am pick up | |
| Tuesday 12 th Sep | Morning and lunch – 1.15pm pick up | |
| Wednesday 13 th Sep | Morning and lunch – 1.15pm pick up | |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Thursday 14 th Sep | Mornings, lunch and story – from 2.15pm pick up |
| Friday 15 th Sep | Mornings, lunch and story – from 2.15pm pick up |
| Monday 18 th Sep | Full time |

Class Structure

Your child will start school in our reception class, otherwise known as ‘Acorns’. This year your child will be taught by Mrs Glanville-Thomas and Mrs Morgan. Mrs Morgan will teach the first half of the week and Mrs Glanville-Thomas will teach the second half of the week.

| | |
|-----------|----------------------|
| Monday | Mrs Morgan |
| Tuesday | Mrs Morgan |
| Wednesday | Mrs Glanville-Thomas |
| Thursday | Mrs Glanville-Thomas |
| Friday | Mrs Glanville-Thomas |

Partnership with Parents



We value our relationships with parents highly and will do our best to include you in your child’s exciting journey of education. You, as parents, are the child’s first and most important educators and you will continue to play an enormous part in their education over the next 12 years at least! The interest you take in your child’s education and the value you place upon it are vital to your child’s success.

There are regular opportunities throughout the year for parents to come into school and talk with teachers and other staff, but our day-to-day contact with parents is our most important means of communication.

Please talk to us immediately if you have any concerns. If you need more than a few words at the beginning or end of the day, we will arrange a convenient time. If you are working and do not bring your child to school, please send in a note or ring our office staff and we will telephone you to talk through any concerns you may have.

The Start of the Day

In the mornings all children enter the school via the main gates or the side gate at the top of the recreation ground. The school will be open from 8.30am from September. Parents of Reception children are welcome to bring them into the classroom and support their child in hanging up their coat, putting their water bottle in the bucket, lunchbox in the fridge and changing their book. Staff welcome children individually and are available to talk briefly with parents. The children are encouraged to settle quietly to an activity at a table or on the

carpet until the bell rings and we register the children at 8.45am (this is earlier than previous years). This is the signal for the start of the session and any remaining parents should leave the classroom at this time.

The end of the school day is 3.15pm

Children are dismissed from the double doors into Acorn's outdoor area. Please wait where you can be seen so that the teacher can send your child straight to you.

We take great care to dismiss children only to their parents or other regular carers, so if someone different will be collecting your child it is very important to let us know.



Toys

We have found that toys are best left at home. Our class has lots of toys for the children to play and learn with. There will be occasions where we ask children to bring in contributions from home for our displays, or will be allowed to bring in a toy for a special treat - a letter will always be sent home on these occasions. We are very grateful for your support with this.

Newsletters

Whole school newsletters are published every Friday throughout the term. These keep you informed about what is going on at school and tell you about ways in which you can help. They will be emailed to you weekly and published on our website. If you prefer a hard-copy please let the School Secretary know.

Uniform

1. Black or grey skirt, pinafore, culottes/ trousers
2. White shirts/blouses (Polo shirts are easier for children to manage independently.)
3. Royal blue knitted jumper or cardigan with school logo.
4. Black shoes not trainers (Velcro fastenings are easier to manage than laces.)

In summer the girls may wear blue and white check dresses and the boys may wear black/grey shorts with white polo shirts.

All school uniform is available from our chosen uniform supplier - Trophy Textiles.
<https://www.trophytextiles.co.uk/>

We do endeavour to keep the children clean at school but this is not always possible so please make sure that all clothing is washable.

It is also very important that all clothing is named to stop items getting lost.

PE Bags

All children need a drawstring PE bag (these can be ordered from Trophy Textiles). This is kept at school during term time. The bag should be clearly labelled with the child's name. Inside there should be:

- A pair of black shorts
- A blue Chacewater School T-shirt
- A pair of plimsolls with elastic or Velcro fastening
- A pair of socks



All these items should also be clearly named.

We send the PE kit home at the end of each half term so that it can be washed.

Big Bags and Rucksacks

The children do not need rucksacks or other kinds of large 'school bags' until they are older. Chacewater School book bags can be ordered from Trophy Textiles along with other uniform items they will need.

Snack Time

The children are provided with a mid-morning snack of fruit. Children under 5 also receive free milk. There is an option for parents to pay for milk for children once they are 5 years old. A letter will be sent home once they've had their 5th birthday about this option.



Cooking in Acorns Class

We try to provide opportunities for children to prepare, cook and eat food. **Please could you advise the teachers of any food allergies that your child has.**

School Dinners

All infant children are entitled to a free school meal. Our school meal provider, Chartwells, offers a wide range of meals to choose from. Initially your child will eat their meal in Acorn's classroom. In the first few weeks of term you will receive log-in details for ParentPay – the electronic ordering system. You can then create your own account to



pre-order your child's meals. See separate pack for more information and details about school dinners and ordering.

Packed Lunch

If your child prefers packed lunch, please include the food your child really likes. We want to avoid children saying that they don't like what is in their sandwiches! Most parents of young children can be tempted to send too much food and this can be a bit daunting. Try to send approximately the amount that your child would eat at home. We like to encourage children to eat healthily and would appreciate your support with this. Remember to pack a spoon for yoghurt, a water bottle (no fizzy drinks or juice).

Please note that uneaten and half eaten food, empty food cartons and packets are sent home rather than thrown away at school so that parents can monitor what has been eaten. Be aware, it can mean that lunch boxes can get a bit messy!

Health

When your child starts school, you will find that he or she is quite tired at the end of the day, even if they have attended a pre-school setting. This is quite natural and to be expected.

Please do not let your child make the decision about attendance. Adults must take that responsibility. At home is the best place for a child who does not feel well.



Here are some guidelines to help you:

- No child should attend school with a temperature. Gastric upsets need 48 hours for recovery after the last bout of diarrhoea or sickness. If children return to school too early they bring infection with them and their resistance is low
- Conjunctivitis and impetigo are extremely contagious and should be treated, and disappear before the child returns to school.
- Children on antibiotics should be at home unless the doctor advises otherwise. In some cases, medicines prescribed by your GP can be administered at school, but we have to follow strict procedures for this. Forms need to be completed at the school office and medicines handed in there. We do not keep medicines in the classroom

- The school should be notified of any infectious illness so that other parents can be warned
- If you find your child has head lice, please report the case to school and keep the child at home until you have treated the whole family

It is school policy to contact parents if a child is unwell at school or has an injury that may require medical attention.

If your child is not well enough to attend school it is essential that you inform us by telephone on 01872 560302, before 8.45am.

Asthma

It is important that children who suffer from asthma have access to their own, named, inhalers at any time and we arrange with each child where they will be kept.

Please keep us informed about your child's particular needs.

Glasses

If your child wears glasses please try to have a second pair that can be kept in school so that we can support regular wear.

Friends of Chacewater School

The Friends support the school community in many ways. They hold fetes, barbecues, sponsored and social events over the year.

Friends of Chacewater School meet regularly during a term to discuss forthcoming events. The meetings are informal and fun. The Friends are always delighted to welcome anyone who is interested in finding out more about becoming involved in activities and helping to raise money for the school. The Friends also offer a great opportunity for all parents, both old and new, to get to know the school and each other a little better.

Getting Ready for School

Starting school is a big step for your child and we hope to make this transition as smooth and problem free as we can. As parents, you can help your child become more independent and confident by helping them to master the following skills:

- Teach your child to dress and undress independently. We find that Velcro-fastened shoes, rather than laces and buckles, are very helpful. Practise with the PE kit so your child is familiar with getting it on and off independently.

- Show your child how to remove their coat without the sleeves turning inside out. Doing up a coat zip or fasteners is also a skill that takes time to master. Teach them how to hang it up using its hook so that it does not get knocked straight onto the floor. (If the coat does not have a hook it helps greatly if you can sew in a piece of tape or ribbon). Please make sure that the coat is named.



- Make sure that your child can use the toilet properly, flushing and then washing hands carefully afterwards.
- Once at school, it is helpful for children to organise their own belongings so that they know where all their things are. So please encourage them to be independent and step back when you can – for example encourage your child to hang up their own coat and place their book bag and water bottle into the correct boxes in the mornings.

The Curriculum

Play underpins all development and learning for young children and it is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.

In Acorns' Class, activities and experiences are planned to support children to learn with enjoyment and challenge. In the Acorns' class we follow a systematic phonics program called Read Write Inc (RWI). We also deliver Maths which is delivered in an engaging way, where children explore the composition of number. Our afternoons are underpinned by a reading book (hook book) and are planned for each child's interest. Our provision set up is based around our themes and the children in the afternoon sessions lead their own learning. The children have opportunities to learn indoors and outdoors throughout the day.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum for children from birth to 5 years. The framework was recently updated in 2021.

We will invite parents in for a discussion about how we teach in Early Years in the Autumn Term.



The curriculum is based upon each child being a unique learner with three ways of learning which are:

1. Playing and exploring – Engagement
2. Active Learning – Motivation
3. Creating and thinking critically – Thinking

There are 7 areas of learning:

3 Prime areas that are dependent on the developmental stage of the child:

1. Personal, Social and Emotional Development – including self-regulation.
2. Communication and Language
3. Physical Development; gross and fine motor skills.

4 Specific areas that are dependent on the Prime areas of learning being established:

1. Literacy – reading, writing and reading comprehension.
2. Mathematics – number and numerical patterns.
3. Understanding the World
4. Expressive Arts and Design

All children will have access to the whole curriculum but will develop at their own rates and in their own ways. The staff at Chacewater School endeavour to meet the needs of all the children by creating positive relationships with them and their parents and carers.



We provide a challenging and stimulating environment to enable each child to become an active, self-motivated learner.

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In addition, it is a requirement in schools that all children have some religious education unless their parents choose to withdraw them from these lessons.



Learning Journeys/Tapestry

During the year, we collate an online Learning Journey on Tapestry, which records the progress, and learning of your child through their first year at school. You will have access to your child's Learning Journey through a secure website named Tapestry. See separate details.

We value parents and carers sharing in their child's learning and we encourage you to contribute to the Learning Journey by letting us know about your child's interests, achievements and activities outside of school.

Foundation Stage Profile



Your child's progress is monitored throughout the year and you will have regular opportunities to meet with the teacher to discuss your child.

At the end of the year we use all the information collected about each child to complete the Foundation Stage Profile.

Parents will receive a copy of this profile at the end of the school year and will be offered a meeting with the class teacher to discuss it if they wish.

Reading

Children are given a Reading Record booklet which contains information about letter and numeral formation during their first few weeks at school. Your child will also be given a library book from the class library every week. We ask you **to read this to your child and talk about it with them.**



Please record the title of the book in the Reading Record Booklet and write down any comments you may have.

This is the start of a good habit of reading regularly with your child. Initially you will be reading to your child but quite soon your child will be reading to you!

During the first week or two your child will be given a wordless reading book. This is the start of their journey to becoming an independent reader developing a life-long love of books and reading for pleasure.

You can change the wordless reading book as often as you like. Just make a note of the title in the Reading Record.

Read Write Inc

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, we deliver phonics from soon as the children start school, immersing children with sound exposition from the start of their experience in school. During this period, we assess the children using our baseline assessments and teach the initial set 1 sounds following the Read Write Inc programme.



Common Questions and Concerns

Parents are often more anxious about their children starting school than the children themselves. The most reassuring thing for you to know is that, although we do have routines, they are flexible and allow for us to accommodate individual children's needs, especially in the first few weeks.



What shall I do if my child is upset?

Stay for a few minutes, but try to leave as quickly as you can, reassuring your child that you will be back in a little while. Children recover much faster when you are out of sight! We promise you that should your child continue to be distressed, we will contact you. You can also telephone the school if you are sitting at home worrying!

Where are the toilets?

There are toilets in the classroom area and the children can use them whenever they like. We ask children to let us know when they are going to the toilet so that we know where they are. 'Accidents' are bound to happen occasionally, and we deal with them with the minimum of fuss. We have spare clothes in school should they be needed. However, if your child regularly has accidents then you may want to consider putting spares in their bag. We are also always grateful for any outgrown items to add to our store.



Will my child have to spend the school day inside?

Acorns have an indoor and outdoor classroom which the children use throughout the day; passing freely from one area to the other as they wish. Our outside classroom has recently been updated and we have lots of new toys and resources to use in our outdoor learning space to support and enhance our learning.

Will my child have to go out to play with the 'big children' in the playground?

During the morning playtime sessions, the children share the 'big playground'. At lunchtime Reception age children spend their lunch playtime in our own outdoor area or on the school field with their own lunchtime supervisor with the transition of moving to the bigger playground during the Summer term.

Any other questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Glanville-Thomas/Mrs Morgan with any questions you may have. Our class email address is – acorns@chacewaterschool.co.uk

And Finally . . .

The day your child starts school is the beginning of an exciting journey but it is also an emotional day. It's only natural that you may have concerns about how your child is managing with school life and how they are coping without you. Please let us reassure you that it gets better! Try not to worry – we will always let you know either by telephone or by talking to you at the end of the day if there are any problems at school. We also need you to let us know if you suspect any problems, so that together we can sort them out quickly.



This is a very important time for you and your child. It is the start of a new adventure. It is vitally important to you and us that the years spent at school are happy ones and we try to do everything possible at Chacewater School to make them so.

Mrs. Glanville -Thomas, Mrs Morgan and all of the Acorns Team