

Holy Trinity CE Primary School –

Q&A for new parents September 2021

1. How do you support high/low achievers?

Teachers are very skilled at differentiating tasks to challenge the most able and to support those who need additional support. We aim high but appreciate some children may need learning adapted to help them access. We have many Learning Support Assistants (LSA) who are well trained and are deployed to help with specific learning needs across the school. Children are sometimes ability grouped to support learning but also children can learn from each other in mixed ability groups.

2. How can I find out about the progress that my child is making at school? Is there an open door policy, to speak to my child's teacher at short notice if I have any concerns/worries?

We are always happy to talk to parents about progress. If convenient, it may be an impromptu quick conversation at the end of the day or may be better to organise a specific appointment for after school. We organise Parents' Consultations in the autumn and spring terms and an end of year report is written in the summer term. A Home School Book / Reading Record goes back and forth each day, which is another way of communication.

3. What is the usual teacher/staff-to-child ratio?

There are two classes in each year group and most classes are full with 30 pupils in each class. We have made the conscious decision to invest in more staffing with the younger children to support building strong foundations so we are not playing catch up in the older years.

Reception class has one full time class teacher and two Teaching Assistants (TA) in the morning and one TA for the afternoon.

In Year 1 and 2, each class has a full time class teacher and one TA per class in the morning. For the autumn term, the Year 1 classes share an additional TA for the afternoon to support transition from Reception to Key Stage 1.

In Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 each class has a full time class teacher each day and share a TA between the two classes in each year group.

In addition to the class teachers and Teaching Assistants, some classes will also benefit from Learning Support Assistants (LSA) who focus on particular needs of children and intervention strategies.

4. Special Needs and Disability

If your child has already been identified as having specific learning needs we will build on the work of pre-schools and external agencies such as speech and language therapists, educational psychologists and hospitals. Our Inclusion Leader runs a large team of LSAs who are well trained and are used to providing specialist support. Please contact the school as soon as possible to discuss your child's needs if this applies to your child as we would like to work with you as early as possible to ensure we hit the ground running when your child joins the school.

5. Regarding school lunch - Is there a typical week's menu we could look at? Are the children encouraged to try different food?

ALL children of infant age (Reception, Years 1 and 2) are eligible to a daily free school meal. We expect all infant children to take up this opportunity as we feel it is a good way for children to try new things together and ease the peer pressure and burden for parents who make the packed lunches! There will always be a healthy sandwich bag option (provided by Surrey Commercial Services), alongside the hot meal choices. There is always a wide choice and the kitchen will accommodate any allergies. If you have any concerns please let the school know, but I hope - as we have found with the free fruit and vegetables scheme - that you'll find your child will try new things which before they may have rejected. In addition, you can be guaranteed that your child will be having a healthy meal.

School lunches for all children can be ordered and paid for on our school communication, Parentmail system. Reception and Key Stage One children do not need to pay for their lunches but they will need to be ordered. Lunches must be ordered before midnight the night before and can be ordered up to two weeks in advance. A menu for the week is situated on the outside notice board at the front of the school and on the school website. Free meals are available if on Income Support (confidential advice is available from the school office).

6. With regards packed lunches, are there certain rules about what kind of food and drink are allowed?

We expect all infant children to take up the free school meal offer, as there is such a good choice. The Food Standards Agency survey showed that in general children's lunchboxes contained too much salt, fat and sugar and too little fruit and vegetables. For those children in Key Stage 2 from Year 3 onwards where school meals are not free, we encourage parents to make a balanced meal with plenty of fruit and vegetables, bread and protein. Food not eaten in a packed lunch will be sent home to ensure parents are aware of how much has been eaten. As a Healthy and Eco School we encourage children to bring in a balanced packed lunch which uses as little packaging as possible and that can be reused. Please remember we are a nut free school and therefore no food in a packed lunch should contain any form of nuts.

7. What is the access to water/drinks throughout the day?

Children are expected to bring in a water bottle each day and are encouraged to drink regularly. Only water is permitted and bottles can be filled up throughout the day from the classroom sinks.

8. My child has a food allergy, how can you ensure they are safe at school?

We are a nut-free school. We have many allergies children are not allowed to bring in any foods containing nuts. Parents are asked to meet with the school catering team who will work with parents on a menu plan to ensure the needs of any child with allergies are catered for. Children with allergies are clearly identified to reduce the risk of any allergic reaction.

9. What is the school's policy on bullying?

Holy Trinity C of E Primary School is a caring community. All pupils, parent/carers, Local Academy Board and staff have a right to feel safe and a responsibility to follow school expectations. Bullying is regarded as unacceptable throughout the school. Through the ethos of the school and its Christian character, our aim is to prevent, as far as is possible, any instances of bullying before they occur by discussing the subject freely and openly.

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The four main types of bullying are:

- Physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- Verbal (name calling, racist remarks)
- Indirect (spreading rumours, excluding someone from social groups)
- Cyber (texting, social network sites)

We aim:

- To show that bullying is unacceptable behaviour and that firm action will be taken against it
- To create a safe and happy environment where children can learn and play
- To create a culture where children feel confident to talk about their worries, knowing that an adult will listen and will provide support and help
- To have a whole school approach to dealing with bullying
- To have a range of strategies to deal with incidents of bullying that provides support for both the child being bullied and the bully
- To work in close partnership with parent/carers to endeavour to overcome bullying problems

10. My child will only just be 4 years old when they start, should I be worried that they are starting so young?

Children develop at different stages and wherever your child is developmentally in September, we will work with you and your child to help them access the whole school curriculum. Our staggered start in September helps to build up stamina and by working together, we always ensure we do the best for every child.

11. How long have the staff/Headteacher been working at HT?

We are fully staffed at Holy Trinity and staffing is relatively stable. Most staff have been at the school for a number of years but as a school that is outward looking no year is the same. The Executive Headteacher and Head of School have been in post over 10 years; we have some new staff and some staff who have grown into senior leaders.

12. Do you offer before and after school clubs? If so, how do these work and what is on offer?

The Hive Wraparound Care provision exists to provide high quality out of school hours, childcare for our parents. We aim to provide a safe, fun and stimulating environment in which all children thrive. We offer a combination of planned play activities and free flow supervised play and understand the importance of consulting children on their preference of activities. We follow the principles of play and acknowledge that play is fundamental to the healthy development and well-being of children. We encourage the children to follow their own instincts, ideas and interests and adopt an intervention style that enables children to extend their play. We foster an atmosphere based on mutual respect.

Our Breakfast Club runs every morning from 7.30 until 8.45. The cost per session is £5.00 per child, which includes a healthy breakfast comprising of a variety of cereals, toast and fruit juice. You may drop your child off anytime between 7.30 and 8.30am. However, please arrive before 8.15 if your child requires breakfast.

The After School Club runs from the end of the school day until 6pm. It is split into two sessions:

- Session 1 runs until 4.30pm and includes a drink and a snack. The cost of this session is £6.50 per child.
- Session 2 runs from 4.30pm until 6pm. This includes a drink and a light meal. The cost of this session is £7.00 per child.

Our snacks include a piece of fruit and/or a biscuit. Our light meals include a wrap or a sandwich (fillings: tuna, cheese, ham or marmite) and one other meal option per day. This may be hot pasta with tomato sauce, beans/spaghetti on toast, crumpets, bagels or soup and bread.

In addition to our wraparound care there are several other clubs on offer throughout the year - although during Covid-19 restrictions the offer is not so extensive.

The school offers its own free clubs such as: choir, football, netball, athletics, dance and Cross Country

External providers offer paid clubs such as: basketball, football, gymnastics, dance, French, and Spanish.

Please note not all of these clubs are available to Reception age children.

13. We are not Christian and I would rather my child did not attend school assemblies. Is that ok?

We are a church school and as such, we would like all children to take part. For some pupils who are members of a faith community it can be a full expression of worship, for others it will be a learning experience and a window to faith. It is also a time when we come together as a school community and share success and achievements as well as information about current themes e.g. anti-bullying week. However if you feel very strongly then you can arrange a meeting with the Headteacher and discuss withdrawing your child from worship. Our school policy says:

The right to withdraw children from Worship.

Whilst it is expected that pupils will be present at acts of worship, the school is committed to respecting the integrity of the religious communities from which the pupils come, and it recognises that some parents may wish to exercise their legal right to withdraw their children from acts of worship.

14. What is behaviour like in the school and how do you manage it?

Behaviour at Holy Trinity is excellent and we pride ourselves on being known for having children who display good behaviours at all times – in school and when out on trips and with visitors. Our school behaviour policy is consistent across the school and we use a restorative approach; where we respect others, take responsibility for our own actions, repair harm caused through poor behaviour and support pupils to make the right choices in the future. Our aim is to help children to become self-disciplined and take responsibility for their own behaviour. We focus on positive acceptable behaviour and the personal fulfilment that this gives to the individual. Our School Values underpin all our expectations for pupil behaviour and are the benchmark for how we want our children to live out their lives here at school and in the wider world.

15. My child has a medical condition or needs to take medication, how can you ensure they are safe at school?

If your child has a medical need or needs to take medication parents should contact the school office and/or speak to our Inclusion Officer to ensure we can meet your child's needs.

If your child has an adrenaline pen (EpiPen, Jext or Emerade), we require two in school - one for their classroom and one for the School Office. We will create a 'Medical Action Plan' with you using templates provided by the 'Paediatric Allergy Group' (PAG). These plans have been designed to facilitate first aid treatment of anaphylaxis, to be delivered by people without any special medical training, or equipment, apart from access to an adrenaline pen.

16. How can I help my child become ready for school in September?

Parenting is not easy and every child is different but together we can help each other to do the best we can. The first thing parents can do is to reassure children, be positive and talk about the exciting things to expect in September - maybe even let them try on school uniform and start play dates with other pupils in the class. Encourage a 'can do' attitude, resilience and not to give up. The best thing you can do is get excited with your child about them starting school. Even if you do have concerns, never show or discuss them in front of your child.

Helping your child to be independent is an important part of preparing your child for school. With 30 children in a class, it really helps if children are able to use the toilet independently so that toileting does not take away from their class learning time. It is also useful if you can teach your child to dress themselves ready for PE lessons and be able to put on their own coat. Teaching your child to use a knife and fork is another skill to practise. While we do not expect children to be able to cut up all their own food, being able to put food on their fork and attempt to cut soft food such as fish fingers would be brilliant. Encouraging your child to be open to trying new foods will also help them feel more confident when staying for school lunches.

It is also useful if you can help your child to take responsibility for their own belongings, be organised and think about what they might need for the day. Encourage your child to carry their own book bag to and from school, to check that their reading book is in their bag and that they have their water bottle with them. Providing opportunities for your child to learn to work and play with others, to co-operate, listen to and think about someone else's feelings and to take turns will enable them to settle into quickly and be happy and confident at school.

Other positive things you can do to help your child become school ready are:

- Sharing books together to develop a love of reading and expand their vocabulary,
- Making marks with pens and pencils,
- Practising fine motor skills (like picking up beads with tweezers or threading buttons) and gross motor skills (like climbing or throwing, catching and kicking a ball),
- Providing opportunities to build, be creative and to problem solve.

It is also vital to establish good routines for sleep, meal times and ensuring TV and online time is limited. Setting rules and expectations when children are younger is far easier to continue rather than as they get older. Lastly try to be consistent and fair and ensure your child understands the importance of the things you are asking them to do

Please do not worry about whether your child knows their letters, numbers or can read and write before starting school, as these are things we can work on with you and your child

when they arrive. Being independent, willing to try new things, sociable, able to take turns and follow instructions are all skills you can help your child develop before joining us to give them a really good start when they come in September.

17. How do I apply for a Reception place at Holy Trinity School?

Applications can be made on-line through Surrey Admissions, link below:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/admissions/primary-junior-and-infant/apply>

Applications can be made from the 2nd November until the deadline of 15 January 2021. Application places are calculated in accordance with our Admissions Policy 2020/21 and will be ranked in the following order:

1. Looked after and previously looked after children
2. Exceptional social/medical need
3. children of staff who a) have been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission is made b) OR b) who have been recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skills shortage
4. Siblings
5. Children for whom the school is the nearest to their home address
6. Any other children

Full details of our Admissions Policy can be found on our school's website.

Should you have any other queries please do contact the school on 01276 858297.