

# **HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS OF NEW RECEPTION CHILDREN**

*The one who gets wisdom loves life: Proverbs 19:8*



**Autumn Term 2023**

Charlton Mackrell Church of England Primary School

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We would like to welcome you and your child to Charlton Mackrell Church of England Primary School and especially to the Early Years (EY) at our school and to take this opportunity to answer some of the questions you may have concerning this important step in your child's life.

### **Will attendance be full or part time?**

Children may begin school in the September of the school year in which they turn five. All children may start school at the beginning of the Autumn Term. Children begin school by attending in the mornings and then build up to full time attendance. This depends on the child's age, maturity and family circumstances and Government guidance. We have found that most children will be attending school full time within the first few weeks.

All children entering our school in September will be in Rainbow Class. Rainbow class is a mixed Early Years and Year 1 class. Activities and learning opportunities are differentiated to meet the needs of all the children. We also find that the Early Years children gain and learn a lot from working and playing alongside their older peers.

Mrs Carter is the leader of our Foundation Stage and Key Stage One team, supported by support staff - Mrs Karen Thrippleton, Mrs Clare Benn, Mrs Debbie Rushworth and Miss Elizabeth Hookins.

### **How can I prepare my child for school?**

You, as parents, have the most important role in helping your child make the most of the learning opportunities provided by school. You can help them by:

- Being positive when you talk about school and don't make it sound too daunting.
- Talking to your child, encouraging them to express opinions, to ask questions and make decisions.
- Read and share books.
- Counting anything – (forwards and backwards) the stairs, the spoons, the socks, the tins in the shopping bag, the toys, etc; and be aware of numbers around us.
- Sorting objects such as the washing, the shopping, the toys as they are put away, etc;
- Providing play activities which encourage the development of the imagination, such as dressing up, puppets, dolls and outdoor play;
- Giving children plenty of crayons, felt pens and pencils for drawing and scribbling and opportunities to use scissors and glue;
- Teaching them and giving them time to learn how to dress and undress themselves, particularly in and out of P.E. kit, shoes and coats.
- Make sure they are able to go to the toilet without any assistance, including washing and drying their hands.



### **Will my child be able to cope in the playground?**

We are a small, friendly school and we encourage all age groups to play together at morning break and lunchtime. However, at the beginning of the Autumn Term, playtime will be staggered so that some time is spent on their own on the playground and some with the other children. If your child is anxious about this a familiar adult will be on duty every day until they are settled. Reception children soon enjoy getting to know the older children and look forward to going out to play with friends from their own class too. We have a '**Buddy**' system where the older children are paired with a reception child, who they look out for and bond with at playtimes.

### **Do Reception children go to Collective Worship?**

Once the children have settled in, they join the school for Collective Worship, either in the school hall or at St Mary's Church. Once a week, each class has their own time together with discussions and prayers appropriate to their level of development. Every Monday afternoon, the whole school joins together, in the hall, for Celebration Praise.



### **Can children bring toys to school?**

Children are not to bring toys to school as we cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage. However, some children may

need a 'comforter' toy for reassurance which will be kept safe in the class. There are also regular 'Show and Tell' times when your child is invited to bring something special in to share with the rest of the class which links with our current topic.

### **What will my child wear at school?**

Details of the school uniform and order details are on the school web site. The uniform has been chosen for comfort, easy care and smart appearance and it is expected that children will wear it from the time they begin school. Trainers are not part of the school uniform.

For physical activities, children wear –

Navy blue shorts

Blue t-shirts

Daps or trainers

Tracksuit bottoms

(Please also keep spare pants and socks in their P.E. bag)

Also, because we like to get outside as much as possible and also go for wellie walks, please provide your child with a pair of named wellington boots, which will stay in school all year.

**Please, please make sure that all articles of clothing, including shoes and PE kit are marked with your child's name. This saves your time searching for your child's missing uniform and means staff can return it to the correct child. Thank you.**

### **What arrangements are made for lunch?**

In the first week your child will not stay for lunch, as this extends their day for a further hour and can be an added challenge. When they do stay for lunch, the children usually eat in the hall, sitting with their friends and in mixed age groups, supervised by lunch-time staff. Children in Key Stage 1 (age 4-7) are entitled to a free hot meal for lunch every day. (Information enclosed). At breaktime, a healthy fruit snack is provided for your child every day, plus a drink of milk until your child is five. You must register at **coolmilk.com** to receive this. You may also wish to pay for milk once your child reaches the age of five.

Sip bottles: Children are encouraged to drink whenever they feel thirsty during the day. Please provide your child with a named bottle for **water** to be kept in the classroom. This can be re-filled during the day and then taken home regularly for washing.

### **Communication**

We have a busy, full school day and school life. There are regular events and changes to the day. We try to let you know these in a number of ways:

- ParentMail
- Website – Messages, timetable, clubs
- Newsletters (whole school)
- Class letters
- Twitter



### **How will I know how my child is progressing at school?**

Teachers are usually available at the end of the school day for brief discussions. If you prefer, you are welcome to make an appointment for a mutually convenient time. Parents Evenings are held termly and, at the end of the school year, you will receive a full report.

You have the opportunity to add your own comments. We would also like to know of any out-of-school activities and achievements your child has. You will also have access to an on-line Learning Journal called "Tapestry", which is regularly up-dated. You will receive more information about this in September.

If we are worried about your child in any way we will contact you. Please also tell us if there are any changes at home that may affect your child's emotions and behaviour.

We believe that children learn best through play. New starters in Rainbow Class follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. This begins in the pre-school setting where records and achievement are passed onto us in order that we can continue to provide for their individual and educational needs.

In September, we will invite you to workshops to show parents/carers how to help their child with the early reading and maths that goes on in school. It is an opportunity to learn practical steps that you can undertake at home with your child.

### **How can I be involved in my child's school life?**

We hope you will enjoy getting involved in the life of Charlton Mackrell School. There are various ways of becoming involved in the School, if you wish. All families are automatically members of the Friends of the School and there are plenty of opportunities throughout the year to help out. Other ways include making cakes for our regular cake sales, reading with the children or sharing a talent. You might like to be considered for membership of the Governing Body as a Parent Governor, which is a rewarding job.

You are always welcome to come into class to assist in a variety of ways. This may be a regular slot each week or an occasional visit. Please make sure you have completed and returned a CRB application for this purpose. Parents are also always needed to assist on outings. Grandparents are also very welcome to help.



### **Birthdays**

We have a tradition at this school where parents can buy a book for the class on their child's birthday. Teachers will give out a list of possible books at the beginning of the year if you wish to follow this tradition. Please do not bring in birthday cake, biscuits or sweets as this doesn't support our healthy schools status and we have children with allergies.

**And finally...** please remember that your child is at school for only just over six hours a day during the school week. The most important, and most influential people in their lives, are you, their parents. Children flourish and learn best at school when parents and school work together in partnership. By showing interest in school activities and supporting the school whenever you can, you will be helping your child to feel secure and build a happy and positive attitude towards school life.

Please come and ask at school if you have any further questions. We look forward to the next seven years!

Rebecca Cawley  
Headteacher

Maddie Carter  
Class Teacher

