

## **Welcome Pack for ‘New Reception Parents’**



## How can I help my child to be ready to start school?

### • Keep them informed

Talk with your child about the changes that might happen when they start school. September's new school should not be a shock for them but at the same time, do not over talk about it so as they are anxious. You know your child well enough to make this judgement.

### • Promote independence and dependence

Your child will benefit from being independent when they start school. This includes dressing and undressing, putting their coat on and zipping it up, approaching new activities and people, as well as identifying their own belongings. The more opportunities you can give them to develop this independence, the better. At the same time your child will need to be dependent on adults; we want your child to know and feel comfortable that they can ask a school adult for help when they need it.

### • Develop their communication skills

The online tool at <http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk/progress-checker> can be used as a tool to help you identify the communication skills your child may need help with. For example, if your child does not know their colours, they may find it hard to describe an object when sharing with another child.

- Try listening games, for example when out walking, ask your child what they can hear. Another example could be to ask your child to recall 3 items from a list; "*I bought an apple, a pear and a teacup. What did I buy?*"
- Understanding instructions: Play '*Simon says*' and introduce several instructions as you build up the game, for example "*Simon says touch your nose, tap your foot and turn around.*"
- Develop vocabulary by using similar words and briefly explaining them, for example instead of "*he moved*" say "*he dashed*". Play a game where your child can find as many round objects in the garden, and extend this "*Find a dark and curvy object...*"
- Reading: Do not feel you need to teach your child to read. Enjoy books with them by reading and telling them stories. If they can read, explore stories by asking them questions about the stories, such as "*what do you think the 'character is thinking?'*" or exploring the background illustrations such as "*where might that door go?*"
- Writing: We will teach your child to write. Helping them develop their large muscle groups will help with their coordination; give them opportunities to balance, climb and run. Helping your child develop their fine motor skills (hand and finger skills) will help them; give them opportunities to play with play dough, build sand castles, scribble with chalk or pens etc. If they can recognise their name, this is helpful. If you have already helped them to write their name or other words, we would encourage you to ensure their speech is clear; we will help them and you learn phonics, which will help them to write more words.

### • **Mathematical understanding**

We will teach your child to understand numbers and other mathematical concepts. By all means, count with them, sing counting songs with them and help them to understand numbers around them. Point out shapes and explore shapes by spotting them in real life; talk about shapes and give them opportunities to make and draw their own shapes. Encourage their use of mathematical words (more, less, first, taller, round) and be careful not to over correct as you enthuse their interest. Activities you could try include: Sorting blocks by colour and size; jigsaws; learning number songs like '5 currant buns'; play games that use a dice, talk about time using words such as morning, night; yesterday, tomorrow and next week; setting the table for the right number of people; when you go shopping you can look at the numbers in the shop; the shape, size and colour of the boxes and help to count out the right coins

### • **Be prepared as adults for your child**

Parenting is challenging and there is no manual to help. However, there are lots of people who you know or could know that are parents and have worked with parents; you too have experience of your own and friends' parenting. As your child starts school, your life as a parent and your routine is about to change and we urge you to be ready for this: Talk to others and discuss changes with each other. We hope that by sharing your anxieties, expectations and hopes with others, you will be able to remain calm and organised for your child.

Look at the Reception transition arrangements document on the website, check back for news or events to help yourself to be aware of ways in which we are trying to help your child settle into school.

### • **Be honest with your child and us**

As you approach the gate on the first day you drop your child off, embrace the moment and do not be anything other than the person you know your child wants you to be. Hug, cuddle and kiss them before you wave good bye, if that is what you normally would do or wave goodbye with absolute confidence if they are used to this. Tell us how they have been feeling prior to the day if you feel it will help us support your child; inform us of any change in circumstances or important information.



**Dear Teacher,**

I know you're rather busy  
First day back, there's just no time  
A whole new class of little ones  
And this one here is mine

I'm sure you have things covered  
And have done this lots before  
But my one is very little  
He hasn't long turned four

In his uniform this morning  
He looked so tall and steady  
But now beside your great big school  
I'm not quite sure he's ready

Do you help them eat their lunch?  
Are you quick to soothe their fears?  
And if he falls and hurts his knee  
Will someone dry his tears?

And what if no-one plays with him?  
What if someone's mean?  
What if two kids have a fight  
And he's caught in between?

You're right, I have to leave now  
It's time for him to go  
I'm sure he'll learn so much from you  
Things that I don't know

Yes, I'm sure they settle quickly  
That he's fine now without me  
I know he has to go to school  
It's just so fast, you see

It seems like just a blink ago  
I first held him in my arms  
It's been my job to love, to teach  
To keep him safe from harm

So, when I wave goodbye in a moment  
And he turns to walk inside  
Forgive me if I crumple  
Into tears of loss and pride



I know as I give him one more kiss  
And watch him walk away,  
That he'll never again be wholly  
mine  
As he was before today.

*By Emma Robinson*



## **Dear Parent,**

*I understand that you are scared  
to wave your child goodbye  
and leave him in a teacher's hands  
don't worry if you cry!*

*I'm used to weeping parents  
It's hard to leave I know.  
But it's time to share him (just a bit)  
To help him learn and grow.*

*Let me reassure you  
That I'll give your child my best  
I'll wipe his tears, soothe his fears  
And change his dirty vest!*

*If your darling child is full of cold  
I'll blow their nose all day  
Just like you, I'll care for them  
In a special way.*

*I'll treat him like I would my own  
I'll catch him from a fall and  
If there is ANY problem  
I'll be sure to tell you all.*

*It's true he'll grow to love us  
They'll talk of school a lot  
It doesn't mean they hate you  
And that you should lose the plot!*

*I'll tell you a secret...  
That when your child is here  
They talk to me as much of you  
Of this please have no fear.*

*You'll always be their mother  
Whilst teachers come and go  
To them you are their number one  
This I truly know.*

*Soon you'll see some changes  
In your little girl or boy  
They'll become more independent  
And to see this, it's a joy!*



*I'll teach them all I have to give  
To share, climb and to write  
But to you they safely will return  
To tuck them in at night.*

## School day Information

### Timings:

8:45 am - 3:20 pm Monday – Friday

8:35 am Parents and children are welcome onto the playground

8:50 am Children to come into class for registration

9:00 am Registration ends

12:00 Lunch time

1:00 pm Afternoon session

3:20 pm School day finishes

The office is open from 8:15 am to 4:00 pm each day. The playground entrances open at 8:35 am, with pupils entering their classrooms by 8:50am for registration. Parents are welcome to wait with pupils in the playgrounds from 8:35 am but unsupervised children should not arrive until 8:45 am.

### Absence:

Please contact the school office before 9:30 am to notify us of any absence. Sickness – No pupil should be sent to school if they are clearly ill or infectious. If a pupil comes into contact with certain infectious diseases, the family doctor will advise about exclusion from the school. If a pupil is absent due to sickness or diarrhoea, they must remain absent for **48 hours** following the final episode.

If you are considering taking your child/ren out of school during term time you will need to complete an 'Absence in Term Time Request Form' and send it in 10 days prior to the absence. Forms are available from the school office or can be downloaded from our website.

### Lateness:

Please note, the main gate closes at 9:00 am and you will then need to take your child to report to the school office and they will be signed in late. Children collected after 3:20 pm will be waiting by the school office. We thank you in advance for being punctual and ensuring your child gets the best possible start to each day of learning.

### Medicines:

Please refer to Administration of Medicine Policy which can be viewed on our website.

There is no legal duty which requires school staff to administer medication; this is a voluntary role (The Department for Education and Employment, 1996).

Parents are encouraged to ask their doctor to prescribe medication in dose frequencies such that it can be taken out of school hours. If this is not possible then the medication must be brought into school in a container labelled with the child's name, the name and dose of the drug, the frequency of administration and, if necessary, an appropriate spoon. A consent form must also be completed and signed by a parent, this form can be collected from the school office. Some members of staff at Haywood Village Academy have volunteered to give prescribed medication. However, if the school staff do not volunteer or it is not practical to support administering the prescribed medicine, then parents will need to make arrangements to come into school to administer. Please note 'over the counter' medicines will not be administered by school staff and again parents will have to make arrangements should they wish to administer these non-prescribed medicines e.g. Calpol and throat sweets.

Asthma: If your child suffers from asthma please ensure there is an inhaler (named) in school at all times, remember to ask your doctor for an extra prescription. The inhalers are kept in each classroom and parents are asked to check regularly that there is sufficient medication

in the inhaler and that it is in date. You will be required to complete a Health Care form which you can collect from the school office.

### **School meals:**

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children are entitled to free school lunches and will have to choose a meal from a menu as supplied by Aspens Catering.

We will provide a menu in advance for you to complete every 3 weeks.

### **Drinks:**

We ask that pupils only bring water into school. Ideally this is brought into school in a refillable and reliable water bottle. Sweetened drinks will be returned to parents and pupils will be offered water as a substitute.

Cartons of milk are available. All children under the age of five and those in receipt of free school meals are entitled to free milk. When children reach five parents can choose to purchase milk for their children. *Cool Milk* registration forms can be collected from the school office or parents can register children online at [www.coolmilk.com/register](http://www.coolmilk.com/register). For children over five all orders and payments are made directly to *Cool Milk*.

### **Uniform:**

Please refer to the school uniform policy, which can be found on the policies section of the website.

Book bags should be brought into school daily especially when reading books are being taken home. We will place all communication letters into your child's book bag so please check daily. If you need to send a note into school please can you either give it directly to a member of staff (office or teaching team) or put it in your child's hand so they remember to hand it in.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays will be celebrated in school but please do not send in sweets/cakes- with food allergies this can become extremely difficult to manage. We make sure that children are made to feel special on their birthdays and in addition, your child can wear their own choice of clothes (non-school uniform) to school on their birthday.



## What should my child bring to school?

### Every day you should bring:

- A coat (we will go outside every day)
- Your book bag

### You might need to bring:

- a bottle of water
- a sun hat, if it is sunny

### You can leave in school:

- a pair of wellington boots
- your PE kit



We do not allow childrens' own special toys from home unless we have asked for this. We do not want any special toys becoming lost or broken.

Label everything: Please make sure that everything you bring into school has your name inside of it.

## If you have questions, how can you contact the school?

Website: [www.haywoodvillageacademy.clf.uk](http://www.haywoodvillageacademy.clf.uk)

Twitter: @HaywoodVillAc

Haywood Village Academy  
20 Whitney Crescent  
Weston-Super-Mare  
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Principal: Craig Jones  
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