

Shipham
Church of England
First School

Handbook for Parents
2008-2009

PARENTS' HANDBOOK 2008-2009

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook gives parents information about day-to-day procedures at Shipham C of E First School. We ask you to read it carefully and to keep it for future reference.

Schools are busy places and good communication is very important. We will try to give you as much information as possible and we would appreciate your co-operation in reading and responding to any information you are sent in newsletters. Please check children's bags regularly and often to see if there are any messages from the school.

Reminders, urgent messages and updates are also left on the whiteboard outside school. If you do not come to school yourself daily, please could you make arrangements with other parents to ensure that you receive any messages.

Newsletters and other mailings are also posted on our website:
<http://www.shiphamfirst.co.uk/>

I look forward to welcoming you all for the 2008-2009 school year. Please do let me know if there is any other information that you feel would be helpful for parents.

A. Gwynn
Headteacher

THE START OF THE DAY

Parking outside the school is very limited. Please walk to school if possible. If you are driving please keep your speed down and take great care around the school. Please do not park inside the school grounds or on the yellow zig-zag marking. The Crossing Patrol's view of the road must be clear.

For safety reasons we ask that all children are brought in through the pedestrian gate near to the Pre-School and that they keep to the pavement. There are staff cars and delivery vans using this entrance at that time. All children must then walk through the gate between Pre-School and the school and walk around the back of the school building.

All children must go straight to the playground. They should not enter the school building until brought in by teachers.

All children crossing the road must use the crossing patrol.

Children should arrive by 8.50 am in time for Wake and Shake which is a compulsory part of every child's PE entitlement.

The playground is supervised from 8.40 am, and no children should be left unsupervised before that time. On wet mornings please bring children to the side door (Class 1 to their classroom door) but not before 8.40 am.

We welcome parents talking over any concerns with teachers but we would appreciate it if this can – except in emergencies – be done after school rather than before. Staff are very busy preparing for the day and may not be able to give full attention to your concern at this time.

The Office is available from the main school door. The office is open from 8.45 am on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays; and from 9.00 am on Thursdays and Fridays.

MID-MORNING BREAK

Children are encouraged to eat a healthy snack. The school participates in the Fruit for Schools scheme which provides fruit for Class 1 and Class 2 children. There are often extras which we distribute to children in Class 3. If children bring their own snack it should be fruit. Please do not send children with biscuits (even 'healthy' ones), crisps, sweets etc

Children are eligible for free milk until the age of 5. Milk is available for over 5's for a small charge. Forms to order milk can be obtained from the school office, but all administration and invoicing is through Cool Milk at School Ltd.

LUNCH TIME (12.15 – 1.15)

Children should bring a packed lunch, which must be packed in a suitable, named container. We teach children about healthy eating and expect this to be reflected in their lunches, keeping sugar, salt and additives to a minimum. We know that a well-balanced healthy lunch helps children to work and concentrate during the afternoon, so please do cut down on chocolate, crisps and highly coloured and processed foods. Drinks should not be fizzy or in a glass bottle. Parents are expected to provide any cutlery that is necessary for the meal eg spoons for yogurts.

Children are expected to eat quietly and show good manners to each other and to the dinner staff.

END OF THE SCHOOL DAY (3.15 pm)

To ensure the safety of the children we would ask that the following routines are followed:

- Please would parents go to the 'collection point' of their youngest child. Staff will ensure that siblings join them there
- Class 1 children should be collected from their classroom door
- Class 2 children should be collected from the side door
- Class 3 children should be collected at the Hall door.
- Children must return to their teacher if there is no-one to collect them.
- If parents are delayed the school should be informed.
- If a child is to be collected by someone who does not usually collect them, please inform the school beforehand.
- Please use the crossing patrol
- We expect all children to be collected by an adult. If you wish your child to make their own way home, please discuss this with their class teacher.
- **To ensure the safety of the children we will not allow any child to leave the school with an adult other than a parent unless we have prior parental permission.**

Once parents have collected their children at 3.15 they are then responsible for them, their safety and their behaviour, including in the school grounds. We expect children to continue to follow school rules in the school grounds. This includes the wearing of helmets when using bicycles, scooters or skateboards.

SCHOOL GROUNDS

The school grounds are a wonderful asset to the school and to the village. The Governors are happy to allow access to children, parents and other local residents out of school hours up to 7.30 pm.

We want to keep the area safe and well-maintained so during school time there are certain restrictions on children's activities outside for their own safety and to protect the school buildings and grounds. After 3.15 pm and during weekends and holidays, children's behaviour is the responsibility of their parents and we expect the same rules to be followed at these times. We advise that young children are accompanied at all times by an adult.

Children who cause damage will be banned from using the grounds out of school hours.

Our rules are as follows:

- Treat the plants and trees with care: no climbing trees, pulling off branches, picking flowers.
- Treat the fabric of the school with care: no climbing on walls and gates; use bicycles, balls and skateboards thoughtfully; keep out of the Class One play area; keep off planted areas.
- Keep safe: know your limitations on the adventure playground; keep within view of adults.
- Children using bicycles, skateboards or scooters must wear helmets.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Uniform is worn at Shipham C of E First School. The school colours are grey, white and royal blue. Most items are available from Deanes in Cheddar and from various chainstores. Items with the school logo can be purchased from the school office. A second-hand 'swap shop' is organised by FOSS.

White polo shirt

Grey skirt/pinafore/trousers/shorts

Royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan with logo

Grey or white socks/tights

Sensible and safe shoes or sandals (These should not be trainers, boots or opened-toed sandals) and should preferably be black or a restrained colour)

P.E. Kit – this should be in school every day

For hygiene and safety reasons it is important that children change for PE and Games. All children should have a PE bag with their name on.

White tee-shirt with school logo

Blue shorts

Black daps (Please check these termly as we find children have often outgrown them)

Children may wear tracksuit trousers in cold weather.

Please put your child's name on ALL articles of clothing. Named property which is found is returned to the owner. **We do not take any responsibility for unmarked lost property.** We suggest that woven name labels are used – names written on in ink disappear quickly. There is a lost property box in the cloakroom between Classes 2 and 3. Any item left in the box for more than two weeks will be disposed of.

Jewellery

Children should not wear any form of jewellery to school. Children with pierced ears should only wear studs, which must be removed by the child for PE, games or swimming lessons. Watches are the responsibility of the owner.

CHILDREN NEED TO BRING TO SCHOOL EACH DAY

- **A reading bag**
- **Their reading book and reading record book**
- **A named water bottle (available from school), with water (not juice or squash)**
- **Spelling, tables books as appropriate**
- **Coat/waterproof/sunhat as appropriate**

CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BRING

- **Pencils, erasers etc**
- **Large toys**
- **Valuable possessions**

Children may bring one SMALL toy (which will fit in their class drawer) to play with at break and lunchtime.

The school cannot be responsible for items brought in from home.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL

Children will often bring newsletters and other information home. The newsletters contain dates, information and reminders and are essential reading to ensure good communication.

Newsletters will be given to the youngest child in a family to take home. Please check bags regularly. A whiteboard outside the school also gives parents information and is used by both staff and FOSS. Any reply slips etc should be taken by a child into their classroom for collection.

Parents are always welcome to talk to members of staff but schools are very busy places (particularly before the session starts) and it would be appreciated if these conversations could take place after school. Class teachers will usually be available in their classrooms between 3.15 pm and 3.45 pm each day.

Mrs Gwynn is available on her office days (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday morning).

YOUR CONCERNS

If you have any concerns please do talk to us at an early stage. Contact your child's class teacher first – it may be better to make an appointment. This can then be followed up, if appropriate, with a meeting with Mrs Gwynn. Somerset LEA have produced a leaflet called 'How do I let the school know my concerns?', a copy of which is included in this Handbook.

ATTENDANCE

REQUESTING HOLIDAY LEAVE IN TERM TIME.

Parents are strongly advised not to take their children out of school: we do know that children's progress can be seriously affected by taking time out of school. Schools can now only grant permission in exceptional circumstances. A request form must be submitted at least two weeks in advance explaining why the holiday must be taken during termtime and cannot be taken during the school holidays. A copy of the request form is included in this Handbook – further copies are available from the office.

ABSENCES

If your child cannot attend school because of illness, please contact the school by telephone on the first day. If you know in advance about an appointment during school time, please let the school know by letter.

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

If your child has an illness or physical condition such as deafness, poor sight, asthma etc. which may affect progress at school, please let us know. There are Asthma record cards available from the Office and we would be grateful if you could complete one of these so we know what treatment your child is receiving. We also need to know about any allergies your child has. Please also let us know if your child is upset for any reason or if there are family circumstances which may affect them. If your child develops any problem, please let the school know.

MEDICATION

It is not the school's legal responsibility to undertake the administering of medicines on behalf of the parent. It is the opinion of the school medical service that if short-term medication such as antibiotics, cough linctus etc. are necessary during the school day it implies that the child is not sufficiently recovered and should not be at school. If necessary parents must make their own arrangements to administer medicines.

The medical service also states that a child who has suffered from diarrhoea or vomiting should be kept away from school for 24 hours after the last incident.

ILLNESS IN SCHOOL

If a child is taken ill at school we do our best for them and when necessary we send for parents so that children can be taken home as soon as possible.

Please ensure that we have up-to-date daytime telephone numbers and an alternative contact person.

SUPPORT WITH LEARNING AT HOME

At this stage of your child's education the most important support will be about reading – listening to your child read, reading to them, sharing a book with them, talking about their book and encouraging a general interest in books and reading. All children have a reading notebook and we value your comments. We give all parents a booklet with ideas to help with reading.

Children will also be expected to learn spellings at home. This involves working with your child to find ways to help them learn the words as well as 'testing' them. There may also be word games and other activities to extend vocabulary and broaden understanding of how language and spelling works.

As the children move through the school they will also need to learn and practise their multiplication tables.

We will give parents information each term about the topics being studied. Support with background 'research' is always valuable. We also appreciate loans of relevant objects and books and offers of expertise or experience. It is evident that the support of parents is of vital importance to a child's learning and we hope to work in partnership with all parents.

BEHAVIOUR AND DISCIPLINE

All parents are given information about the school's approach to Behaviour and Discipline. In September we ask you to read this and then sign and return the Home-School Agreement.

In order that the school can operate successfully as a safe and effective learning environment it is essential that children behave appropriately and we expect parental support in achieving this. In particular, as a school, we insist that children

- are courteous to each other and to adults, speaking and behaving politely at all times
- allow others to learn by not interrupting and calling out; and by not doing anything which distracts others or prevents them learning
- respect school property, both during and after school hours

OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

During the year a range of out of school activities will be available. A small charge may be made for these. Further details are sent out during the year.

PARENTAL HELP IN SCHOOL

We value help from parents in a range of different roles. Please see a teacher if you are able to give your time and skills in any way. We do now have to ask parent volunteers to sign our Code of Practice and go through the Criminal Records Bureau clearance procedure. A volunteering sheet is enclosed.

We would also be very pleased if any parent could help run any after-school activities. If you have a particular skill or interest please do let us know.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

As a school we believe that children learn from and are motivated through experience and their learning is enormously enriched and extended by visits and visitors. The main cost of visits is usually the coach and we are very grateful to FOSS for their help in funding this. Visits are also subsidised from school funds but we do ask parents to contribute to the cost of these visits, recognising what a valuable contribution these make to their children's education.

PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSURES

We hope it will never be necessary to close the school during term time. As a staff, we are committed to keeping the school open and making every effort to be here ourselves in all circumstances.

Nevertheless, the unexpected can happen so information about the procedures we have in place are set out below.

If the school needs to be closed during the day

If parents are aware that there may be a problem (for instance, deteriorating weather conditions during the day), ring the school answerphone to hear any message.

The school will contact as many parents as possible using the contact numbers we have. Please complete and return the form below so that we know who has your permission to collect your child in emergency situations, if you are unavailable. A member of staff will remain in the school until every child has been collected.

If the school is closed before the start of the school day

Again, if you suspect there may be a problem, ring the answerphone. Information will also be broadcast on these local radio stations:

Radio Bristol	95.5 FM
Somerset Sound	1323 MW
Orchard FM	102.6 FM

**School answerphone to hear messages about closures or re-opening
01934 842862**

HEALTHY SCHOOLS STATUS

We are proud to hold the National Healthy Schools' Award and wish to maintain this status. Please help the school do this by:

- providing healthy well-balanced lunches and snacks
- not bringing cakes or sweets into school to share with other children
- walking to school whenever possible
- ensuring that children are at school in time for Wake and Shake
- ensuring that children have correct PE kit in school at all times

DATA PROTECTION AND CHILD PROTECTION

As a school we have a responsibility for the safety of your children. We are required to obtain parental permission for various activities within the school and ensure that you are happy with the arrangements we have in place. The school has a policy to ensure that we conform with the Freedom of Information Act. This can be viewed by parents. We also have a Child Protection Policy which sets out the procedures in place.

USE OF THE INTERNET AND E-MAIL

The use of internet and e-mail is becoming more of a threat to all children. The children's use of internet sites is well-supervised within school and the school system is filtered. We ask parents to read the school's policy and return the acknowledgement slip.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PUBLICITY MATERIAL

We also need to obtain your permission to use photographs of your children in newspaper articles and other publicity material like the prospectus. We do not use the names of children with the photographs as a security measure and we would, of course, only use appropriate photographs. A permission slip asking for your consent to your child's image (unnamed) appearing in publicity photographs or on the school website will be sent in September.

VIDEOS

We do not permit the use of videos (or videophones) at school events. This is partly to help meet our Child Protection responsibilities and also because of the possible disruption to other members of an audience and the distraction it may cause to the children.