



Settling your Child into School;

**The part-time period
Wednesday 5th September 2018
to Wednesday 12th September
2018**

A warm welcome to West Jesmond and our school community. We hope that this information clarifies exactly how the first few weeks in Reception will run, and give you an explanation into why we structure the first two weeks differently as the children make their transition into school.

During the first term our priority is to settle the children into school life. We will support our children to build relationships with their classmates and staff, to learn and familiarise themselves with routines and encourage children to become happy, confident and secure in their new learning environment.

Even for children who have attended Nursery and playgroup, starting full-time school is a huge transition. As such we have some time at the beginning of term where your child will attend school part-time to allow the children to become familiar with and confident in their new environment as a smaller group of 15, rather than a whole class of 30. We build our whole curriculum around the children, their individual likes and needs, so getting to know them in these first weeks is incredibly important, and doing that in a quieter atmosphere helps the children build relationships.

Within this first term, there will be a chance for you to come in and visit your child at school, observing how we teach and how they are settling in.



What is in your welcome pack?

ALL ABOUT ME POSTER

Within the welcome pack, there is an All About Me Poster for you to fill in with your child. This needs to be returned to the class teacher on your child's first day. The Reception team enjoy sharing these posters with the children during their first week of school. It is a great opportunity for us to get to know each of the children as an individual and for the children to get to know the staff too. We use these posters to create a display, so that the children have something familiar around them as they come into school.

CONSENT FORMS AND INFORMATION RECORDS

Within your packs, there are a number of forms that need to be read, completed and returned to school. These cover information like emergency contacts, medical and dietary needs and ordering school uniform, as well as giving consent for milk, fruit, photographs and local visits. Please return these forms back to school **before your child starts in September**. They can be given to the class teacher on the day of the visit, or handed into/posted to the school office.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

In your pack we have included a useful booklet produced by PACEY (Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years), which is full of useful advice and tips on how you can support your child between now and September in preparing for school. It very much focuses on things you can teach your child to help them be more independent – such as putting on their coat, washing their hands or asking an adult for something if they need it. It also suggests lots of good books to read and talk about with your child to help them feel positive and more at ease about the transition. Of course, all children are unique and are at different levels of development. If your child is not ready for some of these things, that is absolutely fine, we will of course support them whenever they need it.

FAMILY FUN DAYS

In feedback from our parents this year, one area they felt we could help with more is supporting the families to get to know each other before starting school. So, we have arranged to open the school grounds for two days over the summer, for families to bring a picnic, and spend some time together in the hope that both you, and your child, can build new friendships. We will have the climbing frame open, some toys and hopefully some sunshine! The poster in the pack gives more information.

If you have any questions about any of the forms or information within this welcome pack, please do not hesitate to ask

VISIITING YOUR NEW CLASS

As part of the transition into school, we would like to invite all children for an afternoon visit before they start in September in order to meet their new teachers, explore the Reception environment and to play with their new classmates.

We will be holding two afternoons for each class, with half the children visiting on one afternoon, and the other half visiting the next. This will make sure that the teacher gets the chance to play alongside all of the children, and has a chance to speak to all the parents.

Parents are invited to stay with their child during this visit, as it is also a chance for you to become familiar with the new classroom, and to chat to the class teacher, as well as supporting your child in this new environment.

The dates for the visits are:

R1 – Tuesday 19th June 2.00pm-3.00pm OR Thursday 28th June 2.00pm-3.00pm

R2 – Wednesday 20th June 2.00pm-3.00pm OR Tuesday 26th June 2.00pm-3.00pm

R3 – Thursday 21st June 2.00pm-3.00pm OR Wednesday 27th June 2.00pm-3.00pm

You will have been informed the dates of your visit in a recent letter.

During the afternoon of the visit each child will have their photograph taken so that we can begin to make personalised coat pegs ready for September.

Please come to the main school entrance just before 2pm on your visiting day, and staff will bring you along to your new classroom.

Please feel free to bring in any completed forms from the pack on this visit and hand them to your class teacher.

Starting School; the part-time period
Wednesday 5th September to Wednesday 12th September

All children will attend 3 days of morning sessions and 3 days of afternoon sessions, before all of the children will start full time school on Thursday 13th September.

- **Morning Sessions are 8.50am-11.50pm**

Reception staff will open the glass classroom door at 8.50am. Until the door is opened, please wait behind the black railings.

- **Afternoon Sessions 1.15pm-3.15pm**

Please arrive via the large gates round the side of the building, beside the Reception classrooms. A member of staff will open these gates for you at 1.10pm when the class teachers have opened their outside classroom door.

On the last of your child's morning sessions they will stay for lunch to get used to routines and the dining hall as part of a smaller group. On these days the **pick-up will be at the later time of 12.15**.

If your child is coming from a nursery or playgroup with other children, we will ensure that there is at least one familiar child in their sessions to help them feel happier as they start school life.

The classrooms will be set out in a similar way to playgroups and nursery schools to help the children with transition between the two. During the part-time period, the children will come into the classroom and choose an activity they wish to do and start playing straight away. The teacher will bring the children together for short periods to listen to stories, sing songs and play games.

For each session, please drop-off and collect the children from the glass classroom doors. When you are collecting your child at 11.50 or dropping off at 1.15, please note the school gates will be locked as the other children are all in school. Please come to the Reception Gates around the side of the building, and a member of the Reception team will open the gates for you 5 minutes before drop-off or pick up time. You can then wait behind the Reception black railings until the teacher opens the glass doors.

Starting school at 8.50am during this time allows you to drop any older siblings off first, then you are free to bring your child into their new classroom, helping them to find their peg, drawer and to choose an activity to play with. You are very welcome to stay with your child and play alongside them until they have settled and are feeling comfortable. We do however recommend that all children are left for at least a short time from the first day so that they can become familiar with school routines and form relationships with the staff and their peers.

Please feel reassured that in most cases, if a child cries when their parents leave, they have usually stopped by the time you have reached the school gate! Please know that they will be well looked after and staff will engage them in exciting activities to help them become involved, and give them lots of reassurance to help them feel safe. If your child did cry for a prolonged period of time this would be sensitively addressed and discussed with you.

FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL

Wednesday 5th September 2018 –8.50am for morning session, or 1.15pm for afternoon sessions.

The exciting day has arrived...for children, parents and staff!

Please feel free to come into the class with your child and help them settle into class. For each child, there will be a drawer with their name on, and a peg with their name and photo. They will be able to hang up their coats and put their bag into their drawer. There will be a spot to put their water bottle too. We will ask the children to self-register, by finding their photograph and placing it on the 'Who's Here Today?' board. There will also be a name sticker for them to wear on the first few days, just to help us learn names quickly.

The children will then be able to choose something in the classroom they would like to play with. You are welcome to stay with your child until they are settled. We do however recommend that all children be left for at least a short time from the first day so that they become familiar with school routines and form relationships with staff and their peers.

The first day will be very relaxed for the children, with staff playing alongside them and spending time singing songs and playing circle games. We spend time talking to each child, making sure we begin building relationships from the very first day. During the session we will have Milk and Fruit time. If you would like your child to have milk and fruit, then please make sure you have completed the forms.

What will your child need on their first day?

- Full school uniform - please ensure all jumpers, cardigans and coats are named clearly.
- Named school book bag (please, no rucksacks or other character bags as they do not fit in school drawers). If your book bag has been ordered but not arrived, please use the clear carry bag used for these booklets.
- Named Water bottle
- If it is a sunny day, please bring a named sunhat and apply sun cream prior to the session for your child.

Children will not need their PE kit on the very first day, but we will be starting our PE sessions within the first two weeks, so as soon as it is ready, please bring it into school in a school drawstring bag and leave it hanging on your child's peg.

At the end of the session, class teachers will open the glass classroom doors at either 11.50am or 3.15pm. Again, please wait outside of the Reception railings until the classroom door is opened. We ask the children to remain seated until we call their name and match them to their adult. Please can we ask that you are patient as it may take us a little while to match adults to children and it is paramount that the children leave school safely and with the correct adult.

FULL-TIME ARRANGEMENTS
Thursday 13th September 2018

On Thursday 13th September, all the children will start full time school. There will be a slight shift in the timings, as we fall in line with the rest of the school. This will be a slightly busier morning than the children have experienced, as all 30 children will be arriving, but having had time to learn routines over the part-time period, the children cope very well.

The School Day

Once the full-time period starts, please be aware that classroom doors will open at 8.45am ready for school to start promptly at 8.50am and finish at 3.15pm

Each day the children will need to bring in their school book bag, their Home School Diary and a named water bottle. It is good for the children to get into these routines quickly, and they are always very good at emptying their bag when they come into class and placing everything into the correct basket. PE kits should be in a named draw-string bag, and will stay on the child's peg throughout the term.

During the autumn term when parents and staff feel that the children are well settled we will ask parents to say goodbye to children at the classroom door, rather than continuing to come into the classroom. We will let you know when this change will happen and prior to it happening we will talk to the children about it.

We hope this information is clear and helpful. If you need to ask any additional questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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