

HANDBOOK
FOR PARENTS OF NEW
PUPILS

2023 - 2024



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STARTING SCHOOL

Welcome! We are very proud of our school and hope this handbook will provide you with all the details you need to know as your son/daughter joins us.

When your child starts school in September, they will enter the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) also known as their reception year. Their starting date will be later than that of the older children. This is to allow the chance for every child to be visited in their home by their teacher and a Learning Support Assistant. This is to help your child to feel confident with their new teacher as well as giving yourselves the opportunity to discuss any worries or concerns. We operate a 'staggered' entry system for our new entrants, so your child may start on a different day to other children you know. This system allows staff to help children to settle into school in smaller groups. You will be told your starting date when your child comes for their final visit in June.

For children starting in September, you are welcome to bring your child to the classroom through the side gate until **Thursday, 21st September**. After this period, we encourage the children to come in through the side gate by themselves from 8.40 a.m. Registers are taken at 8.50 a.m. when lessons commence. (For security reasons, outside of these times the side gate is kept locked). If your child continues to be anxious about coming into school, please talk to your child's teacher in order to try to resolve the problem. Alternatively, there are always staff at the entrance who will be happy to help.

ADULTS IN THE CLASSROOM

There is a Learning Support Assistant in each Early Years Foundation Stage class between 8.40 - 12.00 p.m. and from 1.15 - 3.20 p.m. to support the class teacher. On occasions students may also be working in the classroom. We encourage parent/carer helpers in YR from the Spring term. If you would like to help in school a form will be sent home with the first Newsletter. However, any helpers in school must have a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check through Moulsham Infant School. Forms are available from the School Office. There is a cost of £11 for each DBS check.

WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD NEED TO BRING TO SCHOOL

Equipment for the school day is provided for your child by us. However, there will be things that they need to carry in and out of school regularly. They will be bringing home a Reading Record book and a reading book to share at home, so will need to have a book bag (these are available to purchase from school). If you sign up for ParentMail all correspondence will be sent by email. Details regarding ParentMail can be found under the section **e-mail and text messaging system**. Please put your child's name on the outside of the book bag so children can quickly identify their own. Children will also need a P.E. bag to keep their P.E. kit in. **NO OTHER BAGS (SUCH AS BACKPACKS) ARE NECESSARY** as there is no room to store them at school.

All copies of recent Newsletters are available on the school website www.moulsham-inf.essex.sch.uk. Newsletters are sent home monthly.

NAMING BELONGINGS

At times your child will misplace their belongings. It is very important that all your child's clothing and possessions are **clearly labelled** to help us return lost items. Labels can become faded with washing or can come off, so please check regularly that items are clearly named.

Your child will also need to bring P.E. clothes (see uniform list further on in handbook) in a named P.E. bag. (P.E. bags are also available from school). **Please put your child's name on the outside of bag.** They will bring their P.E. things home at the end of each half term to be washed. Please also check that trainers still fit!

PRESCHOOL RECORDS

Please can you provide copies of any pre-school, nursery or play group records, as this will help us make our assessments quickly and meet the needs of your child. The staff in the school office will copy any records if you wish them to do so.

THINGS TO PRACTISE AT HOME

We will always help your child if he/she is encountering difficulty but it would be very helpful if you can practise the following with your child before starting school: -

- ◆ Dressing and undressing.
- ◆ Doing up zips on coats.
- ◆ Going to the toilet.
- ◆ Flushing the toilet.
- ◆ Washing hands.
- ◆ Putting their school things into their book bags.
- ◆ Doing up shoes.
- ◆ Hanging things on pegs.
- ◆ Recognising their name (written).
- ◆ Eating portions of fruit and drinking water regularly to prepare for snack time.
- ◆ Our school website provides further ideas and support for preparing your child for starting school.

LOST PROPERTY

There is a lost property box just inside the entrance, so please come and look before replacing anything which is 'lost'. If items are named, they will be returned to your child.

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please telephone the school on the **FIRST DAY OF ABSENCE** and choose option 1. This is known as First Day Contact. If you have not notified the school by 9.15 a.m. on the First Day of Absence, the school will contact you.

If your child has had **either** sickness or diarrhoea they **must** not return to school until 48 hours **after** the last bout of illness.

If your child becomes ill at school we will always care for them to the best of our ability. It is very important that we have up to date emergency numbers in case your child needs to be sent home.

We keep a small stock of spare clothes to use if your child soils his/her clothes. Please wash these and return them to the school office so they can be used again.

SCHOOL NURSE

If you have any problems you wish to discuss, please contact the school or the School Nursing team, on 0300 2470014.

E-MAIL AND TEXT MESSAGING SYSTEM

We use an e-mail and text messaging system called ParentMail. This system helps us to give you news and information in a more reliable and efficient manner. Further information and sign up details are available in your pack. For parents who do not have access to e-mail, paper copies of correspondence will be provided.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

Any emergency school closures, for example due to heavy snow, will be notified by text and email to those parents who have signed up to ParentMail. It will also be posted on our website www.moulsham-inf.essex.sch.uk and the Essex County Council website <http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Dates/Pages/Emergency-School-Closures.aspx>. Information will also be announced on local radio stations and be available on their websites. **Please do not ring the school office** as if the school is closed, staff will be unavailable to take calls.

ACCESS TO MOULSHAM INFANT SCHOOL FROM GLOUCESTER AVENUE

Access for parents/pupils through Moulsham High School is **not** permitted. Parents may access our site from Gloucester Avenue via the pathway running alongside the astro pitch on the Moulsham High School site. This is open from 7.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. daily.

HEAD LICE

Head Lice is a common infection amongst young children and we would recommend that parents check their children's hair on a weekly basis by wet combing. If you have any queries please contact the School Nurse.

PERSONAL INSURANCE

Moulsham Infant School does not have a personal accident insurance for pupils. You should make your own arrangements if this is felt to be necessary.

SNACK TIME

All children are provided with fresh fruit for snack as part of a funded government initiative and our healthy schools plan.

We encourage children to drink water regularly throughout the day. Drinking water is available in the classrooms however, we prefer children to bring water to school in a

named plastic bottle. It can be refilled during the day. **Squash, juice and flavoured water is not allowed due to allergies.**

LUNCHTIME

The lunch break is from 12.00 - 1.15 p.m. Early Years Foundation Stage children who are staying for dinner wash their hands before going for their lunch at 11.50 a.m. This is slightly earlier than the rest of the school so that they are seated before the older children join them at 12 o'clock.

If your child is choosing to have a hot school meal, they will line up in the hall and our kitchen assistants will serve their dinner onto specially designed trays. They can then choose where they would like to sit. Children are seated at tables of 16 and are provided with a choice of milk or water to drink.

As all children are eligible for free School Meals we request that you order your child's meals three weeks in advance. This is to enable us to gauge accurately the number of meals we need to provide. Menus are sent out on a three weekly cycle so you can choose which days your child would like a hot meal or sandwich option and there is an option to roll your choices forward. **For the first two weeks in school reception children can order lunches daily.**

We would be grateful if you could remind your child of their daily choice. All our menus meet new nutritional standards and are on display on the notice board in the foyer and our website at www.moulsham-inf.sch.uk.

If your child is bringing a packed lunch from home, he/she needs to bring their food in a named lunchbox which they can easily open themselves, to ease the work of the Mid-day assistants. Drink containers with a screw top lid have been found to be the most appropriate container. Your child is asked to put their lunchbox in a special area within the classroom when they come into school in the morning. Chocolate bars and sweets are also discouraged, in keeping with our and the Government's promotion of healthy eating and it is preferred that fizzy drinks are not brought in due to the effect shaking the container can have on opening!

Please be aware that we are a **nut free school** so children should not bring any form of nuts to school or have food items containing nuts e.g. Nutella, cereal bars containing nuts etc.

During wet or icy weather the children have activities and play games in the classroom with one of the lunchtime team - this may be an LSA or MDA.

HOME TIME

The children in Oak, Cherry and Tulip classes leave the school via the side gate at **3.20 p.m.** To ensure your child's safety, could we please ask you to adhere to the following guidelines whenever possible:

- Please try to stand in approximately the same place each day to allow the class teacher and child to know where to look for their parents.
- Above all else **please stand back.** This allows everyone to have a clear view of the gate/front door.

- If you need to talk to your child's teacher, please wait until you can see that they are not involved in supervising their class.

We ask the children to let us know when they can see their parent/carer before they exit the school. Whilst we make every effort to be out by 3.20 p.m. there may be occasions when we are delayed for whatever reason e.g. toileting, so please be patient!

You will need to let the class teacher know in writing or speak to the office or to an LSA at the school door in person if there is another named person who is collecting your child from school. If a person comes to collect your child at the end of the day that we are not expecting we will not allow them to take your child without speaking to you first. This would mean we would phone you at that time to seek your permission. If you or a named person are late collecting your child due to **unforeseen circumstances** please telephone the school if possible. Your child, accompanied by their class teacher will be taken to wait in the office until collected. If your child is taken out of school during the day or arrives after the front door has closed, or is collected late after school you will be asked to sign your child out and sign for late arrivals and collection. We have introduced this system to further ensure your child's safety by having an accurate record of who has collected pupils and reasons for late arrival/collection. This is in addition to the medical and absence forms you are asked to complete

PART TIME CHILDREN

If your child has a birthday between 1st May - 31st August and you have chosen for them to be part time, they will be taken by their class teacher or learning support assistant to the office at 12 o'clock. The children will be following the same curriculum as the full time children with emphasis on practical and social activities.

PARKING

Please help us to make the school grounds safe. It is important that everyone tries to follow the car parking arrangements.

1. Always park in the parents' car park, **NOT** on the turning circle. This gives you priority on exit.
2. Do not park in the staff car park. (Spaces are limited and the gate is locked at certain times of day).
3. If you are dropping off or picking up at Dovedales Breakfast/After school club **you must** park on the turning circle or the parents' car park. There is no parking availability in the staff car park.
4. There should be access for emergency vehicles to the schools at all times.

SO - PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN FRONT OF ANY GATES.

DOGS

Dogs (apart from the school dog) are not permitted on the school site beyond the gates leading from the turning circle, or down the path from Gloucester Avenue.

ASSEMBLIES

Children in EYFS will attend a daily assembly in class unless you specifically request otherwise on religious grounds. As the year progresses, the children are gradually integrated into whole school assemblies.

School Uniform - Winter

Grey Trousers/shorts (not ski pants)

Grey skirt/pinafore

White shirt/blouse or polo shirt.

Burgundy cardigan/jumper (not sweatshirts)

Tie (no tie with polo shirt)

Black school shoes of a suitable style (no high heels please).

School Uniform - Summer

Grey Trousers/shorts (not ski pants)

Grey skirt/pinafore

Pink/white gingham dresses

White shirt/blouse or polo shirt.

Burgundy cardigan/jumper (not sweatshirts)

Tie (no tie with polo shirt)

Black school shoes of a suitable style (no high heels please).

P.E. Kit

Black shorts

White tee-shirt

Trainers.

Tracksuits in winter - Any dark colour is suitable.

Ponytail bands as long hair needs to be tied back

Children work barefoot for all Gymnastics and Dance activities

All clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name and in a named draw string bag. (These are available to purchase from the school office).

Earrings, watches and all other jewellery should be removed for Physical Education activities for safety reasons and long hair should be tied back. Children will not be allowed to take part in P.E. wearing earrings, so please make sure that you either remove them at home, or your child knows how to remove them themselves. You will receive a letter notifying you of which days they will have P.E.

The following items are on sale at school:

Reversible waterproof/fleece Jacket (with logo)

Burgundy jumpers (with logo)

Burgundy cardigans (with logo)

Pink gingham dresses.

Elasticated ties

White polo shirts (with logo)

Book bags

P.E. bags & P.E. Kit

Hats (with logo)

THE CURRICULUM

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

In line with Government guidelines, children in the reception year follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, which is underpinned by the following four overarching principles:-

- ◆ A unique child
- ◆ Positive relationships
- ◆ Enabling environments with teaching and support from adults
- ◆ Learning and development

There are seven areas of Learning and Development:-

Prime areas:

- ◆ Communication and language.
- ◆ Physical development.
- ◆ Personal, social and emotional development.

Specific areas of learning:

- ◆ Literacy
- ◆ Mathematics
- ◆ Understanding the world
- ◆ Expressive arts and design

Each area of learning has a number of relevant early learning goals for the children to work towards. There is a strong focus on practical and social activities.

All areas of Learning and Development are underpinned by the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

OUR CURRICULUM

At Moulsham Infant School, we deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum based around the children's individual interests and fascinations. Using what the children are already deeply involved in, the teachers and LSAs interact with them to draw out their knowledge and to build on it. The teachers and LSAs observe the children closely to ensure that no learning opportunity is missed. Each day, teachers and LSAs work with the children as a whole class, in small groups and 1 to 1.

We follow the Little Wandle scheme to teach Phonics and this is taught every day through a structured 20 minute carpet session. During Phonics, we also model how to form letters correctly.

Reading is taught in a variety of ways in the school. In EYFS, each child is given a phonic book once a week to read both at home and in school. These books are linked to the phonics lessons.

Children start on picture books and are gradually introduced to books with more words and more complex story-lines and structures. In the Autumn and Spring terms children will have a 1:1 teaching session with the class teacher or LSA. In the Summer term children will be heard read in small guided reading groups twice a week. Children are encouraged to also read at home. We have an embedded reading culture in the school and children have access to a wide variety of books at all times.

In EYFS, Maths is taught daily through a structured 20 minute carpet session. At Moulsham Infant School, we have adopted a Mastery approach to teaching mathematics to ensure that children acquire a deep understanding of Early Numeracy skills, can apply their knowledge in a variety of situations, and can explain their ideas.

Throughout the week, we also teach P.E., Computing, Music and French.

READING AND PHONICS

We're teaching every child to read with Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised
A complete SSP validated by the Department for Education



At Moulsham Infant School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised**, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Moulsham Infant School, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Phonetic Alphabet

a - ant

k - kit

u - up

b - bat

l - led

v - vam

c - cat

m - mum

w - went

d - dog

n - nod

x - fox

e - egg

o - off

y - yes

f - fox

p - pig

z - zoo

g - go

qu - quick

h - hop

r - rat

i - ink

s - sun

j - jam

t - to

HANDWRITING

The children in the Early Years Foundation Stage initially use large triangular pencils to encourage correct pencil grip. The letter and number style we currently use in school are shown below. Further information including a video showing modelling of correct letter formation is available on our website www.moulsham-inf.essex.sch.uk. Alongside individual letter formation, your child will be encouraged to join their handwriting, which helps to develop correct letter formation, fluency in writing and the learning of spelling patterns.

Please encourage your child to write their name using this letter style with a capital letter at the beginning.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t
u v w x y z

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

CHILD PROTECTION

The Governing Body is legally responsible for ensuring that appropriate procedures are in place for the protection of children from abuse. The school has a specifically designated member of staff, Mrs Jane Landa-Arrese, Headteacher who is available to discuss concerns about suspected child abuse, and who takes responsibility for setting the correct procedures in motion, if required.

All staff undergo training in this area, and there are regular visits from support services. In addition the school takes seriously all safeguarding procedures, which includes for example, Safer Recruitment.

Thank you for taking the time to read this booklet. We are always striving to improve our induction arrangements so would welcome any comments that you have about your child starting school.

Please return any comments to the school office by October 2023.

Comments