



## St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### FOR STARTING SCHOOL

#### **Can my child attend St. Josephs if they are not a Catholic?**

94% of children at St. Joseph's Catholic Primary are Catholic. We welcome children from other faiths, but Catholic children are given preference in our Admission Policy. If you have any concern, please contact the school who will be glad to help.

#### **Where do I apply to come to your school?**

You need to apply via the [Bracknell Forest Local Authority](#) website by completing the Common Application Form (CAF). The Supplementary Information Form (SIF) should also be completed if you wish to apply for a place under categories 1,2,3,4, 5 or 7.

#### **Do I need to fill in the SIF form?**

The SIF should be completed if you wish to apply for a place on the grounds of the child being a baptised Catholic or another Christian faith. The SIF and Baptismal Certificate can be either sent to the LA or the school. The School may ask to see the original Baptismal Certificate.

#### **Can I arrange to visit the school before submitting my application?**

Due to the current pandemic, the Government guidelines and school's risk assessment do not allow for external visitors into the school and we do not expect this to change before the deadline for applications. We would recommend taking a look around our website and on our Twitter feed ( @stjosephsbrack ) as well as watching the virtual tours.

#### **If my child is not offered a place, will I automatically be put on the waiting list?**

If you have been offered a lower preference school, then your child will remain on the waiting list. However, we always advise families to confirm with [Bracknell School Admissions Office](#) that you wish to be placed on our waiting list, if your child does not receive an offer.

#### **What are the school times?**

For Reception Year:

During Covid times : Doors open from 8.30am and finishes at 2.30pm.

Prior to Covid times : Doors open from 8.50am and finishes at 3.15pm.

Please refer to Covid Risk Assessment for all other year groups.

#### **What can I do to help my child prepare for school?**

Toileting - we would expect all children to be able to use the toilet independently and be clean most of the time when at school. We do know that accidents happen sometimes so please pack some spare clothes just in case.

- Dressing – Practise dressing and undressing in school uniform (including shoes and socks), this will help when we start PE.  
Don't forget to practise taking your coat on and off (including zips and buttons).  
Top tip – Velcro shoes are much easier for children to use!
- Sharing stories – This is a fantastic way to develop listening skills and language. Ask questions as you read, talk about the pictures and encourage your child to join in with repeated refrains.
- Name recognition - This will help your child to recognise their peg and drawer label.

- Counting – You can do this in so many ways, counting stairs as you go up, counting plates for dinner, counting items in your shopping bag etc. Exposure to number and counting will support future learning.
- Letter writing – You can encourage your child to write their name in lower case with the initial letter a Capital letter. It is also important that the child holds the pencil correctly and starts the letter in the correct place as shown in this [video](#).

### **My child doesn't know anyone else; will they be ok?**

We are aware that starting school can be a little daunting if you don't know anyone else but please do not worry. Although the majority of children come from Footsteps@St Josephs, we have children join us from different preschool settings. At St. Joseph's we ensure that all staff are aware of children who have joined us on their own, so that we can give them a little bit of extra support when settling in and making new friends.

### **What if my child has trouble settling in?**

We understand the importance transition is for children and we take the time your child needs to settle into school life. We have a wealth of experienced staff that will ensure we make the experience as positive for your child as we can. Please feel free to speak with your class teacher if you are at all concerned.

### **Do I need to provide a snack?**

No... unless your child has a specific allergy. Children in reception have milk and a piece of fruit provided every morning – apples, bananas, pears, oranges, strawberries, raisins. Milk is provided until your child's 5th birthday. You can then pay for milk – chat with the office staff if you would like further information.

NB: All children should bring a named water bottle to help themselves to water throughout the day.

### **What happens at lunch time? Do I have to pay for school dinners?**

Currently all infant aged children (4-7-year olds) are entitled to a universal free school meal every day. Our school Catering Team provide a choice of healthy meals usually including a meat choice and a vegetarian choice –they are all delicious!

Children are also able to bring in their own packed lunch from home if they wish. We ask that no nut products are included in the children's lunch.

### **What should I put in my child's packed lunch?**

We are a **NO NUT** school.

We encourage healthy eating and expect parents to choose healthily when creating a packed lunch.

An example of a healthy packed lunch:

- A sandwich (no peanut butter)
- Baked snacks e.g. Baked crisps, cheddars.
- A wafer biscuit e.g. Twix, kit kat, blue ribband.
- Yoghurt and a piece of fruit.
- Bottle of water or juice.
- No sweets, fizzy drinks, nuts or chocolate (unless covering a wafer/biscuit)

### **My child has allergies, what should I do?**

We have several children at St. Joseph's who have range of allergies so please do not worry. When you receive your welcome pack there will be a medical form to complete where

you can put all the information about your child's allergy. We have specialist a school menu, so your child will still be able to have school dinners. Once your child has started school, we ensure that all staff are aware of them. In the majority of circumstances children with allergies still sit with all their classmates at lunchtime and just take part in daily routines the same as everyone else. We are also a nut free school, so no nut products are used at lunch time or in class cooking lessons.

If your child has an epi pen or inhaler, we do ask for one to be kept at school in case of emergencies. During your home visit your class teacher will chat to you about any concerns you have regarding your child's allergies.

### **My child needs medication or cream do I have to come to school to apply it?**

If your child needs medication at any point when they are at school, you will be asked to complete a medical form. Once this is completed and signed, staff at school will then be able to give your child the required medication or support them with cream for things such as bad eczema.

### **What if my child still has accidents?**

Please don't worry! Starting school is a big change for lots of children. All we ask is that you bring a change of clothes in a named bag and we will ensure your child is changed and dry. We have lots of time in the day where we encourage children to use the toilet and they are free to go whenever they need to. If you are concerned at all, please speak with your child's class teacher.

### **When will my child have PE?**

Formal PE lessons start in the summer term where the children have a PE lesson twice a week. Please refer to the following link to view the PE kit: [PE uniform link](#).

### **What do I do if my child has lost a piece of clothing?**

Parents must either sew a name label into all clothing or write the child's name in indelible ink. If an item goes missing your child must inform the class teacher and class teaching assistant and look in the lost property. We will do our utmost to find lost items, but we are unable to provide a replacement. Lost items are stored in the 'Lost Property Bin'.

### **What if my child is sick?**

Please ring the office on the first morning that your child is sick. If your child is ill in school, we will contact you directly.

### **How are Parents communicated with?**

All parents download a Parent Mail app, and the school communicates with parents through this medium. The class teachers also have a designated school email which may be used. For any emergency, the school will contact the parents using the school phone.

### **What is the best time to talk to the teacher if I have a question?**

We would discourage parents from trying to talk to a teacher in the morning as they are busy preparing for the school day. Messages can be left with the school office or you can email the class teacher directly. We would advise you to speak to the teacher at the end of the school day after all the children have been dismissed. We can also make appointments in the school office for parents to see the class teacher or another member of staff.

### **When are reading books sent home and changed?**

Due to the current pandemic, reading books are changed once a week on Monday. Extra reading material reflecting the school's scheme is available online - Oxford Reading Buddies. A login will be sent home for your child.

### **Are there any extracurricular clubs my child can join?**

At the start of each term a list of potential extracurricular clubs is sent home via Parent Mail. The school also has an After School ( 3 – 6pm) and Morning Club (7.45 – 8.45am) which your child can attend. The cost of the morning club is £2 and the ASC is £5 (finish at 4.30pm) or £10 (finish at 5.30 or 6pm).

### **My child will be attending before or after school club, how do they transfer from club to class and club to class.**

At the morning club, when your child's class is due to start a member of staff will walk your child to class and ask the class teacher to sign them in and acknowledged that they have been seen.

At the After-School Club, one of the class's adults will walk your child to the club and ensure your child is signed in.

### **Where can I buy the school uniform?**

School specific uniform items can be bought from Stevenson, Reading or online through Brigade. Please see the school link – [uniform](#). Other general items i.e. white shirt, grey trousers, light blue gingham can be bought at any retailer.

### **How can parents get involved?**

We encourage parents to get involved in various ways from attending trips to individual reading. We are in the process of rebranding our PTA and would welcome new members with new ideas and contacts. If you work for a company that is able to sponsor or donate to fundraising in the school please email [secretary@stjosephsbracknell.co.uk](mailto:secretary@stjosephsbracknell.co.uk) subject: fundraising.

### **Where will my child go when they finish St. Joseph's in Year 6?**

Due to our geographical location, our pupils go on to various secondary schools across Bracknell i.e. Garth, Brackenhale, King's Academy, Easthampstead, Emmbrook and indeed as far as Surrey - All Hallows Catholic Secondary School. A few children each year are successful in the 11+ and go to St. Bernard's, Slough or the grammar schools in Reading.

If have a question you haven't answered, please email us on [secretary@stjosephsbracknell.co.uk](mailto:secretary@stjosephsbracknell.co.uk) or telephone 01344 425246 and we will be happy to help.