

## Putting your mind at ease...



It is normal to feel a little anxious about your child starting school, especially if they are your first child to do so.

We have prepared answers for concerns that parents frequently share with us, in the hope that they might help put your mind at ease.

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*My child is the only one from their previous preschool/ nursery. Will they make any friends?*

Yes!

During the Autumn term, we focus on ensuring that the children are secure in the 'Prime' areas of learning. These are Personal, Social and Emotional development, Communication and language, and Physical Development.

We will work closely with the setting that your child is currently attending, and with you, to ensure that we are aware of your child's interests and needs before they start with us.

This will enable the staff to recognise interests and support the forming of friendships during play as well as during adult led activities.

The children will very quickly make the best of friends, leaving you to try to work out who they are talking about and which parent belongs to which child!

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*The class size is bigger than at preschool, will my child be noticed and get enough support?*

Yes!

During the settling in period we make observations of all children's learning needs, this will then support developing the next steps for each child.

As well as whole class lessons, we work in smaller groups throughout the day or one-to-one with your child when needed.

The Reception class has a teaching assistant in the classroom as well as the teacher, and normally voluntary helpers and parents are encouraged to come in and support in many different ways... *We will be encouraging this again once it is safe to do so.*

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*What if they don't like school?*

New experiences can affect children in different ways. Children are still learning how to portray their feelings as well as understand what's going on.

The majority of the time, children surprise their parents and take this change in their stride. You may find there is a period of time where they are a little clingy or appear upset, but this is not something to worry about. It doesn't mean they are not happy in school, it just means they love you very much and that they are used to you being their safe place.

Although your child might have been full time in a previous setting, school is different. Your child will need to become more independent, as well as learn new rules and routines. The expectation of adult led learning will also be more. Some children find this hard and get tired after a few weeks. Again, nothing to worry about.

The important thing is to speak to us should you be worried at any time.

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*My child is a fussy eater. What if they don't like the lunch provided.*

The menu is shared with you in advance. There are options of a main meal, a vegetarian option and a jacket potato option, on a 3 week rotation. There is also a salad bar every day, including bread and pasta.

You can pick and choose which meals your child has or send them in with a packed lunch from home. You do not need to let us know in advance, your child will be asked during the morning register what they would like that day. *If your child has any food allergies please inform us so that we can make necessary arrangements.*

Every day, your child will be provided with a piece of fresh fruit for a morning snack, and some milk if they would like it. They have free access to their water bottle all day.

The children are not forced to eat their lunch or fruit but are encouraged to eat as much as possible. If they are not eating the school meals a member of staff will inform you at the end of the day.

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*I don't think they are ready for school.*

Your child doesn't need to be ready for school. We are ready for them! Your child will learn at their own pace and will get the support they need along the way. Most children don't seem 'ready' when they first start but you will be surprised how quickly they develop. Our curriculum is still very play based and the structured learning is gradually introduced as the weeks progress. Adult led learning is kept as active and as fun as possible.

*Please see our 'Getting ready for school' information for ideas of how you can help prepare them should you want to.*

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*My child is very ready for school. How will their learning needs be met?*

Exactly the same answer as the question above. All learning opportunities will be introduced at the appropriate level for your child and all children will learn at their own pace.

We are passionate that we help your children access a well rounded education, so they will be developing their skills in many new areas, as well as things they are already good at.

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*My child has special educational needs. How will they be supported?*

We will work closely with you and your child's previous setting, to get a full understanding of any support that may need to be put in place before your child starts school.

Our SENCO, along with the classroom teachers, support staff, and outside agencies where appropriate, will all work together to do what's best for your child.

We ask that you make us aware as soon as possible so that we can start getting plans into place to best support your child.

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*What does my child need for school?*

Your child's PE bag will stay in school. It will be sent home for washing periodically.

**Every day** they will need to bring:

- Their red school book bag. Please check inside this every day.
- A named bottle filled with water only.
- In cold weather, a coat or waterproof jacket as we spend a lot of time outside no matter what the weather!
- In hot weather, a sunhat, and sunscreen applied before school.

If your child is prone to toilet accidents, you may also want to send in a change of clothes.

A uniform list and all ordering details have been emailed to you, and can also be found on the website.

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***If there is anything you are worried about that we have not answered, please do contact us at [reception@stockessex.co.uk](mailto:reception@stockessex.co.uk)***