



DEAN CLOSE
ST JOHN'S
CHEPSTOW

WELCOME TO RECEPTION





Hello!

Welcome to Dean Close St John's Pre-Prep. We understand that starting full-time school is an important milestone in your child's life, and one of their first big steps towards independence.

This booklet aims to provide an introduction to Reception and includes information which we hope you will find useful.

Our Reception pupils enjoy an exciting, play-based curriculum, with a balance of child and teacher initiated activities to stimulate and develop each individual child.



OUR DAY

8.00am	Doors to Pre-Prep open
8.20	Registration
8.30	Assembly/form time
8.50	Activity 1
10.15	Snack
10.30	Breaktime
10.50	Activity 2
12.00pm	Lunch
12.30	Activity 3
1.00	Lunch play
1.30	Register
1.40	Activity 4
3.00	Snack
3.10	Assembly/story-time, songs & rhymes
3.30	Home-time, clubs & late-stay begin

Early Years Foundation Stage

The children have daily maths and literacy lessons, alongside exciting topic work and child-initiated play in their dedicated play areas and playground. Pupils also have swimming, PE, forest school, music and French lessons.

French, music and physical education are taught by specialist teachers, giving the children an early advantage in experiencing and developing their skills in these subjects.



Our topic based curriculum offers a wide range of learning opportunities aimed at stimulating and nurturing your child's development, interests and natural curiosity.

Playing & exploring, Active Learning, Creating & Critical thinking

Activities in Reception are carefully planned and organised in order to provide a range of learning experiences. Individual records are kept by staff to record the activities your child participates in, as well as their progress in specific skills.

Planning for each week is carried out using a topic-based approach, following the children's interests and responding to specific events.

Every child learns in different ways, so by monitoring this and observing how children learn, we ensure that our activities and environment are tailored to meet each and every learning style.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Physical Development

Communication and Language

Literacy

Mathematics

Understanding the World

Expressive Arts and Design

Learning Journals

Throughout the year, staff will record your child's learning in books linked to Literacy, Maths and Topic work, and Wow moments are entered in their Topic Book. This will form a unique record of your child's learning and development throughout the year.

These records enable staff to track your child's progress and attainment, as well as plan future activities. We also value your comments about your child's progress and attainment and would encourage you to use the WOW sheets that are available at the start of term.

Tapestry

We make observations throughout the day to see where your child may need further support or greater challenge. Staff will record their findings and photographs on Tapestry, our online learning journal which will be available for you to see and interact with at any time.

Our Classroom



Our high teacher-to-pupil ratio ensures that each child is able to develop and learn at their own pace.

We encourage progress through immediate positive praise and rewards celebrating achievement

Teaching is extended outside as the Reception classroom has an integral outdoor area offering the children another learning dimension. In addition, our extensive grounds, forest school and adventure playground encourage activity and exploration in the exciting world around them.

Clubs & Activities

Swimming, forest school, music and French are part of the curriculum and are covered by your child's fees. There are also a variety of school clubs which run between 3.30pm and 4.15pm. Look out for the clubs letter at the start of term as these get booked up very quickly.

Educational visits support and extend our academic curriculum with trips to working farms, zoos, forests, museums, libraries and places of interest.



What will your child need?

Please ensure that everything brought into school is clearly labelled with your child's name. We recommend that your child comes to school with:

PE kit – navy school t-shirt, navy sports shorts, school tracksuit and trainers

Swimming kit – towel, navy swimming costume/trunks, swimming hat and goggles (if required)

Sunhat and sun cream for hot weather

Any creams they may require (prescribed - please note our onsite paediatric nurse oversees all medication)

School book-bag for bringing home their homework.

School waterproof coat

A pair of wellies to keep in Reception

School all-in-one for Forest School

Named water bottle

Each child will have a named peg and tray for their belongings. This helps them become independent and in charge of their own things. We encourage them to empty their bags at the beginning of the day and pack them back up at the end of the day.

Uniform

Our Reception children wear the Pre-Prep school uniform, which is available from the on-site school shop. A school coat and bag is also available should you wish. Uniform Shop opening dates and times over the summer holidays will be announced soon.

Girls

Summer

Blue gingham dress
Navy school jumper
White socks
Black shoes

Winter

White shirt
Navy school jumper
Navy pinafore
Navy socks or tights
Black shoes

Boys

Summer

Navy blue school shorts
White shirt
Navy school jumper
Black shoes
Navy blue socks

Winter

Navy blue school trousers
White shirt
Navy school jumper
Black shoes
Navy blue socks

Our food

We follow a routine based around the children's learning and developmental needs, offering a healthy and varied menu that includes vegetarian and vegan options. Our produce is high quality and sourced locally. Please let us know if your child has any dietary requirements so that we can cater for these. Fruit is offered as a snack and drinks are provided in named cups and bottles throughout the day.

Breakfast

8:00am- 8:20am in the dining room

Mid-morning snack

Fruit and milk

Lunch

12.00pm cooked meal in our school dining room. We offer family dining and sit with the children to help them eat a balanced meal

Afternoon Snack

Drink and a biscuit (please feel free to send in an additional piece of fruit from home if you wish). We are a strictly nut and sesame free school

Late stay snack

4:30pm in late stay, in Pre-Prep

Tea

5.30pm in the school dining room. This is a cooked meal and is at an additional cost

Medication

We are lucky to have a full time School Nurse on site. If your child needs a prescribed medicine, we'll ask you to complete a form giving us permission to administer this if appropriate.

If you have given paracetamol or ibuprofen to your child please can you inform us on arrival at school.



Health

Staff need to be aware of your child's medical background, in particular, any allergies (e.g. bee stings, dairy food), any dietary restrictions (e.g. vegetarian or Halal) and any medical conditions that are important for us to know (e.g. asthma or eczema). Ginny the school nurse will be in contact with you if we need any clarification.

Children can suddenly become ill and therefore it is important that we know we can contact you or another adult relative/friend at all times. Please ensure that the school is kept up to date with your contact details.

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please telephone us to let us know. In cases of vomiting or diarrhoea, your child should remain at home until 48 hours have elapsed since the last episode. In all cases of contagious diseases, the school should be informed immediately and medical clearance must be obtained before your child returns to school.

Please follow government guidelines if your child displays symptoms of Covid 19, keeping the school informed.

Wraparound Care

At St John's we know that working parents may have additional care needs for their children beyond the set school day. With this in mind we are happy to provide the following:

8.00am – 8.20am

Breakfast in the Dining hall

3.30pm – 4.15pm

Pre-Prep Clubs (see separate letter)

Or

3.30pm – 5.30pm

Late Stay with a member of Pre-Prep staff. Drink and biscuit provided, with bus children escorted to their bus at 4.25pm. Children may join Late Stay after their Club if additional childcare is required.

5.30 pm – 6pm

Late Stay continues in the Prep School and a cooked tea is provided if previously booked in (at an additional cost). Children await collection from the Prep-School.

Please note there is no after school care from 4.30pm on Exeats and 3.15pm at end of Half term and end of Term.

Please can you ensure that your child's form teacher is informed of requirements for wraparound care. This can be done on a daily, weekly or termly basis. Please use the Home/School Diary Book for this purpose or email/Whatsapp Mrs Ruddy.

We are aware that sometimes plans do have to change. If for any reason you will not be able to collect your child at the appointed time, or you have had to ask somebody else to collect your child, please leave a message on the school phone by text or WhatsApp. This means we can reassure your child and, of course, we will not allow any child to go home with anyone other than a parent or nominated guardian without permission.

Should you not be able to make it in time to collect your child at 6pm they will be taken to the Boarding House after tea.

Getting your child ready for Reception

Encourage your child to dress and undress themselves, especially coat and shoes (Velcro is easier for children to manage independently).

Encourage your child to use both knife and fork when eating.

Encourage your child to become more independent when using the lavatory and when washing their hands.

Play I Spy games – this helps listening for specific sounds in words.

Play memory games – tray game, pairs for example. These build up visual memory.

Sing rhymes and make up new endings. This develops aural discrimination and hearing sounds within words.

Share books and listen to story tapes – This builds up aural concentration and listening skills without a visual distraction.

Discuss stories and encourage prediction and recall. These are both important pre-reading skills.

Talk about school with your child, emphasising the positive and exciting aspects of school i.e. new friends, exciting things to play with, and new things to learn. Focus on those things that you know your child will enjoy and is familiar with. Use our 'This is St John's' booklet.

If your child shows an interest in either reading or writing please identify letters by sound as well as name. For example a as in c a t for the sound and A (ai) as in train for the name.

Encourage your child to correctly pronounce words, not by correcting them but by modelling the correct enunciation by repeating the word back to them, and encourage correct vocabulary such as train not choo choo.

If your child is writing at home, encourage them to hold their pencil correctly and to form letters in the correct way. (See sheet in pack for how we form letters with the children).

At this stage any marks made by children are praised.

The most valuable mathematical activities for parents and children are practical ones, which relate closely to everyday life. Every day experiences such as shopping, counting objects, looking for shapes and board games are full of opportunities to use mathematical language. At this stage it is not vital for children to be recording numbers.



Getting in touch

If you have any questions, concerns or simply need to get in touch about your child's day, we are available on:

School mobile

07471 350 704 (messages only please)

School office

01291 622045

Teacher & Head of Pre-Preparatory Department

Mrs June Ruddy B. Ed (Hons)

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Teaching Assistant

Mrs Vicky Davies – NNEB

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Headmaster

Mr Nick Thrower

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There is also a dedicated class Whatsapp group.