

Starting School

Summercourt Academy

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Head of School Welcome

Welcome to Summercourt Academy.

My name is Louise Savage, and I feel very proud and privileged to be the Head of Summercourt Academy. On behalf of our amazing pupils, staff, parents and hub councillor I would like to welcome you to our school.

Our dedicated staff have the highest aspirations for all our children and are committed, in partnership with you, to nurturing and developing children's learning. Our aim is to promote a positive attitude towards learning and to provide a range of experiences through a broad and balanced curriculum. Each child is valued for their own talents, strengths and personality and we encourage the children to succeed and reach their potential, to have high self-esteem and a belief that they can achieve.

Our most recent OFSTED report carried out in July 2015 stated that the 'behaviour of the pupils, the role of the school in its community and the care, guidance and support of pupils, are outstanding'. We are a family school and we can only achieve our aims by working closely with you as parents. Your support is essential in your child's success at school, and we value your input and opinions. We consider ourselves at the 'heart of the community' and welcome visitors from the local area into school to work with the children and enhance their learning.

I hope that you find this booklet useful and we look forward to welcoming you to our school.

Louise Savage
Head of School



Aspire Academy Trust

Summercourt Academy is a member of The Aspire Academy Trust that comprises 28 primary academies across Cornwall. We have joined together in a unique and exciting partnership that will ensure better provision, richer resources, and higher standards for all our pupils.

For more information please visit our website <http://www.aspireacademytrust.org/>

Teachers and Support Staff in Class 1

The time your child spends in school up until the end of the Reception year is known as the Early Years Foundation Stage. All our Foundation stage children are in Class 1.

We have two teachers who job share throughout the week. Miss Keeley and Mrs Wykes are both experienced teachers with years of working within the Early Years Foundation Stage. Miss Keeley is the Early Years Foundation Stage Leader at Summercourt. Miss Reynolds is the main class teaching assistant and Mrs Norton teaches the class one afternoon a week delivering quality physical education.

What you need to know about the everyday routine

The gate will open at **8:45am** and the children will start their morning activities as soon as they arrive. The register is taken at **9:00am** promptly, after this time attendance is marked as late. Please be as prompt as you can in the mornings as it can be unsettling for your child and the class if there are late arrivals.

Class 1 have a healthy balanced snack provided every morning such as fruit, milk, crackers and cheese, biscuits, different breads etc. We also cook regularly as part of our learning. We ask for £1 a week to cover these costs please, payments can be made directly on Parent Pay (weekly or for the whole half term).

Lunch is between **12.00pm - 1.00pm**

For Class 1, the school day ends at **3.10pm**.

It is also important for you to collect your child on time as children can become upset if they are left. If you are late, please let the school know as soon as possible.

***Please note: for the safety of your child we must know who is picking them up. If you cannot collect your child yourself, please let the teacher or office know who is coming in your place. This person must know your child's password (which you stated on your application form) as they will be asked for it. We cannot let children go home with someone unless you have authorised us to do so.**

Attendance

If your child is unable to attend school, please phone and let us know as soon as possible. We now have attendance targets set by the Government. We do **not** authorise holidays during term time. A form requesting leave of absence must be completed for any exceptional circumstances.

Homework

We will provide the following for you to do at home to support your child's literacy and maths:

- Initially a Picture book to share at home, then once ready a Phonetically decodable Reading book for your child to read themselves (we advise reading a little every evening). Speed Read words to practice will be attached in the reading record
- Letter formation practice, then once confident simple spelling sheets
- Maths half termly

What will my child be learning?

The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is organised into 7 areas of learning. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

There are 3 prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

There are four specific areas:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design.



Your child's sessions will be organised to reflect each of these areas equally, often through a topic or theme. Children will mainly learn through practical activities as studies show that this is the most effective way for young children to learn. It may appear that they are spending most of their time 'just playing', but it is important to realise that their time in school is carefully planned. Children will also have more structured times to their day which are often adult initiated and/or adult led, e.g phonics and carpet times.

Personal, Social & Emotional Development

One of the most important things that your child will learn at school is how to work with others. Before starting school, they will already have begun to share toys with siblings and friends. At school they will have to share not just toys and equipment but the attention of the teacher and other staff. This means developing sensitivity to others, learning to take turns, listening, but also being able to express their own needs and thoughts.

We try to encourage children to be considerate and caring towards others and towards the school environment. We expect them to develop responsibility for their own belongings and for classroom equipment. We encourage them to organise themselves and to tidy up after activities—just as they would at home. Please support your child by ensuring that their uniforms and belongings are all labelled with their name.

We also expect that when they start school, they will generally be able to take care of their physical needs independently: be able to dress themselves, go to the toilet, flush it and wash their hands, be able to use a knife, fork and spoon.

Communication, Language and Literacy

Talking is our main means of communication and talking to children is one of the most valuable activities we can provide for them. Through conversations with adults, children learn about the world and about language itself. They also learn a lot about language through rhymes and songs.

Reading and writing are other forms of communication taught in school. Most of us learnt to read and write so long ago that we rarely remember how we did it. In fact, there are a whole host of skills that a child needs before he/she can begin to read or write. Eyes have to pick up small differences in letters (for example, between p, d, b). Ears need to hear separate sounds in words and often the difference between these sounds is very small (try saying the sounds made by the letters t and d). This is called discrimination. We use puzzles and matching games to encourage careful discrimination by looking.

We encourage ears to hear sounds in words through rhymes and by playing games which split words up in different ways. Gradually eyes notice smaller and smaller differences, ears begin to hear finer and finer sounds and the teaching of letter sounds or phonics can begin.

Children need a lot of hand control before they are able to write for themselves (Please see the section on Physical Development).

As hand control develops, your child will be taught the correct way to form letters. We teach lower case letters first and when they are ready, encourage the children to use a cursive script that can be joined easily. We encourage children to 'have a go' at writing right from the very beginning. Their earliest writing may look like scribbles or random marks, but as they gain confidence in their knowledge of letter sounds, letter patterns and words will become apparent. Children are also introduced to the correct way to spell common words to encourage them to develop knowledge of correct spellings.

Mathematics

We all know that maths involves learning to count and to match the number to the correct number of times or objects, but 'number work' is only one aspect of the maths your child will be doing at school.

In the early stages, children need to sort items into groups based on similar features such as shape. They also make patterns, learn the appropriate words to compare items (long/short, light/heavy, more/less etc.) and undertake comparisons by observing, feeling, weighing and measuring. Children need plenty of experience of doing and talking about what they have done to provide a sound foundation for later work.

Understanding the World.

This aspect encompasses Science, History, Geography, ICT and R.E. It starts with the child's own experience of the world and aims to gradually broaden their view. For example, they may be searching for mini-beasts, melting ice-cubes, playing with Victorian toys, making soup or designing boats for the water tray. Children will be exploring similarities, differences, growth and changes.

Physical Development

There are two aspects to this area.

- Fine motor skills are the small, fiddly movements with the hands, which are needed to manipulate tools such as pencils, scissors and paintbrushes. These are developed through a variety of activities which include construction toys, playdough, threading and tracing.
- Gross motor skills are all the movements you would expect to use in P.E. plus riding bikes, scooters, using the trim Trail and large play equipment. These develop the children's spatial awareness, agility and helps to keep them healthy.

Expressive arts and design

This aspect of the curriculum includes Dance, Music, Art, and imaginary play activities. Children will be listening and moving to music, singing, exploring musical instruments, painting, drawing and modelling. They will also be playing imaginatively in the role play area. This area is set up differently throughout the year. For example, it may be a house, castle or café.

How will I know how my child is doing?

- As soon as your child starts school, we will keep a Learning Journey. This records what they can do in relation to each of the seven areas of learning (listed above).
- Your child's Learning Journey will be available for you access online and we encourage you to contribute to these by commenting on things your child does at home. This gives us a complete picture of what your child can do.
- We will continue to assess your child, through everyday class activities. Their progress will be assessed against the Foundation Stage Profile.
- During the year there will be opportunities for you to come into school and discuss your child's progress, both at formal parent's evenings and informally with the class teachers.
- You will also receive a written report at the end of the Reception year (Foundation Stage). If you have any concerns about your child, please let the class teachers know as soon as possible.
- Class 1 also has a page on the school website with regular updates on learning.

What does my child need to wear and bring to school?

All children are expected to wear a school uniform. Your child will need:

- White polo shirt with school logo
- Red sweatshirt/jumper/cardigan with school logo
- Grey or black trousers (boys) - Grey or black skirt/trousers (girls) or red and white check dress in the summer months
- Black or grey socks/tights
- Black shoes—with Velcro/strap (**no laces**)
- Wellies and a sunhat (to remain at school)
- Waterproof coat

NB: Children must **NOT** wear trainers, open-toed sandals or flip flops etc.

Your child will need a P.E. Kit that stays in school in a drawstring bag, we will send home kits for a wash during holidays only. Your child will need

- black shorts and a red polo shirt with logo
- Trainers and socks (not plimsolls).

Your child will also need a red school book bag that comes to school with them every day. It must be a book bag rather than a back pack as your child's reading book and homework folder will need to be kept flat and secure.

Finally, your child will need to bring a water bottle to school everyday with fresh water in. It is essential for children's health and wellbeing that they keep hydrated throughout the day.

All clothing must be name labelled.

All uniform items are available online at www.PMGschoolwear.co.uk. You can also order by post or phone. All items are posted free of charge.

It is very helpful if your child is able to dress and undress themselves for P.E. lessons.

All About Me Box

Please provide a decorated shoe box containing photographs, objects and artefacts that are important to your child. This will help us to get to know your child and support the settling in process. This can be a great Summer project for you and your child to put together ready to show their new class. These will be returned to you once your child has shared their box. You can see a video on the school website of the staff sharing their own All About Me boxes.

School Lunches

Children are welcome to bring either a packed lunch or have a school lunch. We simply ask that packed lunches are as healthy as possible (no sweets or fizzy drinks allowed). All children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One (up to the end of Year 2) are entitled to a Free School Meal each day. School Lunch menus are available on the school website.

What can I do to help my child?

Your child is learning every day, no matter how young they are. It is never too early to share books, talk with children and count together during everyday activities.

You can prepare your child for reading by sharing books, reading to him/her, talking about what might happen next etc. Draw attention to the words so they begin to realise that the print tells the story to accompany the pictures.

If your child is used to handling mark making tools such as pens, crayons and pencils, you may wish to start writing their name with them (Capital letter followed by all lowercase letters). At first your child can trace or copy and then move on to writing alone.

Once children are ready, they are given a reading book, which we will change three times a week. You will also be given a little yellow reading record in which you can comment on your child's reading. You are encouraged to write comments about when you've read at home and how your child has got on. Please do, it helps the teacher to know which books you've enjoyed together, which you did not like and how well you feel your child reads.

Reading is one of the most valuable activities you can do to help your child. Children must practice the skills that they are learning at school. Reading needs to happen as often as possible.

Can I get more involved?

We welcome parents into school to help with just about anything: (subject to a DBS check)

There will also be an opportunity to join Friends of Summercourt Academy (FOSA) and become involved in fund raising through discos, sponsored and social events. If you feel that you can offer any help at all then please speak to your child's teacher or any member of staff. We would be pleased to see you.

Just a few last things:

When your child starts school, they will need to be able to use the toilet independently, wipe, and wash their hands. You can help them by ensuring that they can fasten and unfasten the clothes that they are wearing.

Head lice can be a real problem in any school. They spread very easily among young children. We ask all parents to check their child's hair regularly. (We all check our hair at least once a week!) If your child has long hair, please ensure that it is tied up for school. From time to time when we notice that someone in the class have head lice, we will text all parents or send home a letter asking everyone to check the whole family's hair. The letter also gives advice on how to deal with head lice if you do find them.

We hope you have found the information in this booklet useful.



If you have any further queries, please do contact us via the school email address.