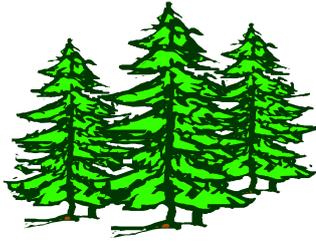


# **Black Firs Preschool**



**Prospectus**

**2021 - 2022**



## Black Firs Preschool

Longdown Road, Congleton,

Cheshire CW12 4QJ

Tel: 01260 272935

Web site: <http://www.black-firs.co.uk>

mail: [parents@black-firs.co.uk](mailto:parents@black-firs.co.uk)

Foundation Stage Coordinator: Jen Harrison

Dear Parents,

This prospectus introduces the life and work of Black Firs Preschool.

The Preschool opened in 1994; our Preschool has firm foundations of which we are proud. We use the principles of the Early Years Foundation Stage and believe that every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their future life chances. We are fully inclusive in our philosophy and welcome all the children in our community.

We aim for high quality in every aspect of our 'learning community'. We are forward thinking; our aim is to prepare your children to value and embrace their future. We endeavour to create a purposeful and friendly environment in which everyone is assured of individual care and attention. We motivate children through praise and encouragement. Black Firs is a place where it is safe to make mistakes; it is safe to succeed; it is safe to be yourself.

We look forward to welcoming you to our Preschool. We believe that a close partnership with parents is essential for your child to develop a love of learning and for life. I would be delighted to talk to you about your child's education and show you and your child our Preschool. Please telephone for an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Casserley.



### **Black Firs Mission Statement**

We believe that learning is a lifelong activity, which engages everyone in our School community. To kindle this love of learning, we engender enthusiasm and strive to be the best we can be.

We see every activity as a learning opportunity.

We are collegiate in our approach; we enhance everyone's self-esteem and stimulate a growth mind-set.

We endeavour to create a happy, purposeful atmosphere throughout our School.

As individuals, we make a positive, responsible contribution to

- The life of the Preschool,**
- The well-being of the external community**
- Shaping our own future.**



Black Firs is a big family. Children need to feel valued and protected by others; to feel comfortable and welcomed within Preschool, School and Out of School Club. The family and school community are the most important influences on developing a child's self-esteem. Every child deserves the best possible start in life. We support and encourage them to develop a 'can do' attitude, what we call a growth-mindset. A child's experience in the early years has a major impact on their

future life chances.

Black Firs Preschool follows the Statutory Framework for the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' (EYFS). This is the stage of a child's development from birth to the end of the Reception year at school.

The EYFS is underpinned by three core ideas:

- **Every Child Matters** – it is our responsibility to help children achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes of Staying Safe, Being Healthy, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Achieving Economic Well-Being.
- **Children are both *being* and *becoming*** – all children have a right to happy childhood, and their early experiences lead to their development in ways that affect their future life chances.
- **Parents are the most important support to children's development** – high quality learning in settings is most effective in partnership with parents.

The EYFS principles which guide the work of all practitioners are grouped into four distinct but complementary themes:

### **A Unique Child**

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.





### Positive Relationships

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships.



### Enabling Environments

Children learn and develop well in enabling environments, in which their experiences respond to their individual needs and there is a strong partnership between practitioners, parents and carers.



### Learning and Development

Children learn and develop in different ways. Black Firs Preschool embraces and encourages this by providing enabling environments, cultivating positive relationships and valuing the unique child.



As you can see, 'play based learning' is valued throughout the EYFS. Children must have the opportunity to play indoors and outdoors, as it is through play that children develop intellectually, creatively, physically, socially and emotionally.



## ***Our Aims***

*At Black Firs Preschool, all Staff share the following aims:*

1. To provide a broad, balanced & relevant curriculum, this enables children of all abilities to reach their full potential.
2. To nurture a love of life-long learning.
3. To support children who find learning difficult & challenge able children, so that everyone maximises their full potential.
4. Create an attractive, secure environment within our buildings and be aware of environmental issues within our grounds.
5. To provide a caring environment based upon trust and mutual respect, which fosters self-worth.
6. Ensure that each child is valued as an individual, is aware of their fellow beings
7. Each child assumes responsibility for their own actions and is prepared to make a worthwhile contribution in life
8. To praise and celebrate children's achievements.
9. Make efficient use of all resources to ensure each child develops to the best of their potential.
10. Develop a curriculum that develops a child's creative thinking and lifelong learning skills

These aims are achieved through a committed team who embrace our values:

- Respect for each other's individuality
- Maximise and encourage potential
- Maximise and encourage quality
- Collegiality – shared responsibility
- Independent thought
- Honesty and trust
- Ethical mentality
- Self-esteem – praising achievements
- Lifelong learning
- Self-discipline
- Enthusiasm
- Humour



## ***Statement of Philosophy***

**“A vibrant and innovative Learning Community where Child focused exploration, creativity and collaboration inspire the curriculum”.**

We believe that education empowers children to make informed choices about their life and to choose their future. We prepare children to value and embrace lifelong learning.

We are in every sense a community Preschool. We endeavour to create an inclusive, open and friendly environment in which everyone is assured of individual attention and equal opportunity. Our Preschool is a Learning Community building positive relationships with all children, parents, staff, the church and the wider community.

## ***The Neighbourhood***

The Preschool serves the West Heath area of Congleton, to the south-west of the town. The intake comes largely from a private housing estate close to the School and some from further afield. At this time there are 47 children on the Preschool roll with approximately equivalent numbers of boys and girls.





## ***Preschool Staff***

*We are blessed with a very motivated and enthusiastic team of staff.  
All of our staff have attained Childcare Qualifications and a Paediatric First Aid  
Qualification.*

*Meet the team! –*



Jennifer Harrison

EYFS Manager



Dan Lovatt

Reception Teacher



Bev Webb

Reception Teaching Assistant



Kirsty Bibby

Preschool Teacher



Lou Lansley

Preschool Teaching Assistant



Clare Hill

Preschool Teaching Assistant



Debbie Couchman

Preschool Teaching Assistant



## ***Toddlers***

We offer a toddler session to younger children who are not yet part of our preschool family. During the sessions children get to experience preschool and join in the activities within our setting. This is a great opportunity for your child to get to know the team before starting with us.

It operates weekly in Term Time only on Tuesday mornings from 9.30 – 10.45am in the Foundation Stage (Reception and Preschool) building.

Toddler sessions recommence in the second week of a new term. This gives us an opportunity to settle new starters before welcoming our toddler friends. If you would like more information, please contact Clare Hill, who runs the group (via the school office).

We ask that you sign in at each Toddler session, and complete a contact card so we can get in touch with you should we need to.

Toddler sessions cost only £1 and include a hot or cold drink and a biscuit.



## ***Learning in the EYFS***

*‘No adult plan written weeks before can include a group’s interest in a spider’s web on a frosty morning’*

*Early Years Foundation Stage 2006*

There are three prime areas of learning underpinning the EYFS. These are:

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

These are fundamental to the learning and development of your child.

If these areas of learning are not securely in place between 3-5 years of age, it will be more difficult for your child to acquire them and their absence may hold your child back in other areas of learning.

There are four specific areas of learning as well as the prime areas in the EYFS. These are:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These are skills that your child will develop and are less time sensitive. These bodies of knowledge can be acquired at various stages of life.

These areas of learning are dependent on learning in the Prime Areas – specific learning cannot take place without the prime.



Adult’s record and use daily observations of predominantly child initiated activities to inform the planning, allowing us to follow the children’s interests with the activities we provide. This also allows us to assess your child and record their learning and development.

We have a balance of adult planned and child initiated activities that enable children, at all developmental stages, to participate and succeed. Value is placed on children’s individual learning and development. Adults encourage and support this process.



## ***Outdoor Play Areas***



We allow free flow of play between our indoor and outside areas, children choose if they want to play inside or out. We take advantage of ‘spontaneous learning opportunities’ - snow, ice, wind, sunshine etc.

During very bad weather children stay indoors, however we ask that children have wellies and waterproof coats in the setting at all times. This allows the children to play outside even if it is rainy and wet!



In the summer months we have gazebos to provide shade and ask that children are sent with a sun hat and that sun cream has already been applied **before** arrival at Preschool. We are happy to re-apply sun cream in the afternoon if a labelled sun cream is provided and permission is given on the Enrolment form.

We also make as much use as possible of the school grounds, both playing fields, playgrounds, wildlife garden and school hall and P.E. equipment.

## ***Information Communication Technology***

We consider ICT to be a basic skill alongside literacy & numeracy. The children have access to a computer and ICT toys at all times and we have a large touchscreen that the children enjoy using throughout the day.



## ***Health Education***

Throughout the day the children’s attention is drawn to the importance of personal cleanliness, healthy eating, dental care and hand washing. This is supported by visits from dentists, doctors and teachers.

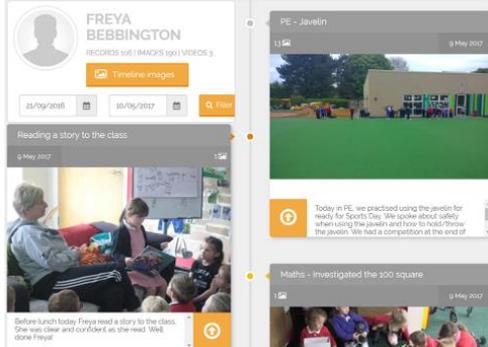


## ***What is a 'Key Person'?***

All the commitments of the EYFS expect practitioners to 'tune in' to children as unique individuals. These commitments are for everyone your child works with.

In addition to this your child will be assigned a 'Key Person'. This is a member of the team your family will have a 'special' relationship with.

Their role is to ensure that your child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help your child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for your child and to build a relationship with you, the parents or carers.



Your Key Person will also monitor and track your child's progress against the Early Years Foundation Stage, using an online system called 'Earwig'.

You will have unlimited access to your child's Earwig timeline and receive email updates when evidence has been added or been tracked. This will be collected in photographs, quotes and samples of work etc. Your

child's timeline will be a reflection of their time with us at Preschool and the progress they have made. This timeline will follow your child through their Black Firs journey.

## ***School Dinners***

During lunchtime, all the children are taken to the school hall to eat with the Primary School children.

Before your child is due to start preschool, the School Office will email you your log in details for your Parentpay account. If you would like your child to have school dinners, please log in and access to our online menu system through ParentPay ([www.parentpay.com](http://www.parentpay.com)). Meals can be ordered in advance and are included in your preschool fees. All of our meals are cooked fresh on site daily and include a vegetarian option every day. Please let us know of any dietary requirements we may need to be aware of

## ***Packed Lunches***

Alternatively, you can provide a packed lunch for your child. Please ensure that the lunch is in a suitable and clearly named container with a lid.

We are proud of our 'Healthy Schools' status at Black Firs and would encourage you to ensure you are providing a healthy, balanced lunch for your child.





### ***Special Needs***

Mainstream children with learning difficulties are given as much extra attention as can be afforded within the constraints of teaching resources available. If the need is too great for these, the authority's special education services are called upon for guidance and help. Parents are always consulted about such moves.

The Preschool has a good reputation for successfully integrating children with Statements of Specific Educational Needs. We are a fully inclusive Preschool and welcome everyone within our community we are equally concerned to provide for the most able children and have many strategies to extend and challenge these pupils.

We take advice from a number of Professionals – these may be a speech therapist, teachers, special educational needs advisors and specialist early years advisors. These professionals advise about training and support ideas for individual children in our setting. Confidentiality is maintained between the individual professionals about any information we share.

### ***Staff Training***

All staff have a training and development plan and regularly attend courses to update and improve their knowledge and skills.

We currently have staff that are completing their child care qualifications. There may be times when they will need to include photographs and observations in their training portfolios. Photographs would be of the children taking part in activities. Observations are strictly confidential and may only be seen by the staff and the parents of the child being observed. Names of children would not be used in training portfolios.

### ***Absences***

If your child is absent from school please let us know as soon as possible; we will need to know before 9.30am to cancel an ordered school dinner. If your child is likely to be absent for any length of time (due to illness, for example) please keep us informed. We follow the advice from Cheshire East regarding the exclusion time for children following sickness or diarrhoea, which is 48 hours since the last bout.

### ***Pastoral Care and Behaviour***

We are aware that we share responsibility with parents for the children in our care and make every effort to provide the care which any responsible parent would be expected to make.

We control movement about the Preschool and school, supervise children when at play, and encourage a sturdy, sensible independence. During very bad weather children stay indoors.

### ***Out of School Club***

The club operates during term time only. Children from the age of 3 can attend on a regular basis, or pattern to suit parents working shifts. We also accept children on an



ad-hoc basis should parents be experiencing difficulty in collecting after school, please contact the school office to check availability of spaces.

All sessions can be booked via the Parentmail app, instructions are included in this booklet.

### ***Preschool Times***

Preschool welcomes children from the term **after** their 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday. For example if your child is 3 in October, they can start Preschool in January.

Preschool is open Monday to Friday during term time as follows:

- 08.50 to 11.45 am** Morning session  
*(children to be collected at 11.45 am)*
  
- 11:45 to 12:45 pm** Lunch  
*(children arriving for lunch and the afternoon session have time to wash their hands before going to the school hall for lunch at 12.00 pm)*
  
- 12:45 to 3:20 pm** Afternoon session

Preschool fees are £10.00 per session (morning or afternoon) which includes a snack and £6.50 for lunchtime supervision which includes a hot meal, a drink and a dessert. All meals are cooked fresh on site by our kitchen team.

All sessions and fees are available on your parentmail app. Instructions on how to use the app to settle your fees are included in this booklet. We are sorry we cannot refund session or lunch fees if your child is absent for any reason.

In the summer term, our Preschool gives priority to those children who are attending Black Firs Reception Class the following year. Sessions are subject to change where necessary to accommodate this.

### ***Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE)***

Children become eligible for the FEEE the term **after** they have celebrated their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, although there are also date restrictions which are as follows:-

- Children born between **1<sup>st</sup> January** and **31<sup>st</sup> March** can start in April (Summer Term)
- Children born between **1<sup>st</sup> April** and **31<sup>st</sup> August** can start in September (Autumn Term)
- Children born between **1<sup>st</sup> September** and **31<sup>st</sup> December** can start in January (Spring Term).

This entitles 3 and 4 year olds to 15 hours of free childcare. These hours may all be taken at one setting or split between settings, as long as the total claimed does not exceed 15 hours. The maximum number of hours we can claim on your behalf is detailed below:



on 1 day = 10 hours  
over 2 days 15 hours  
=

Our sessions are timed, as set out below:-

08.50 to 11.45 am	morning session	3 hours
12:00 to 12:45pm	lunch	¾ hour
12:45 to 3:20 pm	afternoon session	2 hours 35 mins

We will ask you to sign Cheshire East Council forms each term to confirm how many hours you will claim with us. The Grant is set by the Government and Cheshire East Council ensures that we follow all regulations.

### ***Uniform***



Preschool children are not required to wear uniform, however DP Sportswear do stock sweatshirts in smaller sizes. If you wish to purchase any please visit the DP Sportswear Congleton website or call 01260 274400 for a fitting.

All clothing **MUST** be marked with your child's name.

### ***Admission to School***

There is one admission date for Reception children. This is at the start of September each year. If your child is 4 years old by 31<sup>st</sup> August he/she may start School in September.



Preschool works closely with the rest of the school, sharing a purpose-built building with the Reception class. The Preschool children work and play alongside their Reception peers throughout the day and have daily contact with all adults within the teaching team. Our Preschool-ers also come across to the school building to share in special events and assemblies and for lunch every day.

During the summer term our school starters join with Reception for more structured activities, including PE lessons.

Applications for admission to School for September must be completed and returned to the Cheshire East Borough Council during the January of the same year. This date is set by the LA and *all* schools must abide by it. Further details can be found at: [www.cheshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cheshire.gov.uk/admissions) or on telephone: **0300 123 5012**



## ***Photographs***



Individual or family photographs are taken during Autumn Term (and can be arranged to include siblings in school), the summer term, and a whole school photograph is also taken in the summer term, Preschool being invited to also take part. There is no obligation to purchase them, of course, although we find that most parents like to have one each year.

## ***Complaints Procedure***

Should an incident arise that concerns you there are a number of people who will be able to help you. Complaints usually are best dealt with by the person most directly involved in the situation. If the complaint is minor or specifically related to an incident in the Preschool then the staff should be able to help.

The Manager is usually available during Preschool hours and is always keen to assist you and listen to your concerns.

Any safeguarding concerns must be reported to our designated Safe Guard Lead, Peter Woods.

Our complaints and safeguarding policies can be found on our school website.

## ***Summary***

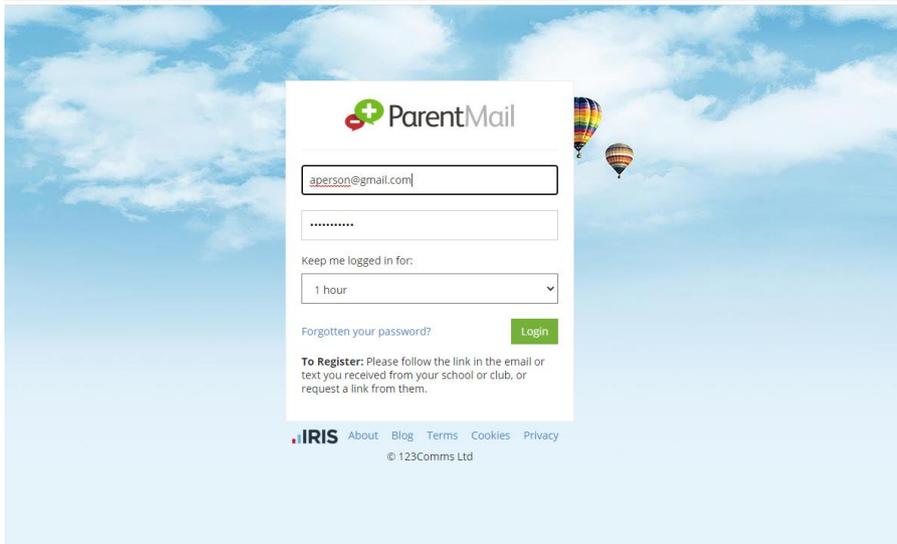
It is our genuine desire to give every child the best possible start in life. How far we succeed depends very much upon the support that you give us. Please do support us in matters of discipline, good manners, punctuality, etc. and give your active support to our various events. If you show interest and pride in the Preschool, so will your child.

We are proud of the Preschool's achievements and with your help we can, not only maintain our standards, but improve them still further. We hope that this prospectus has given you the information about the Preschool you require, but should you need any further details, please either telephone the School Office on 01260 272935 or call in during school opening hours.

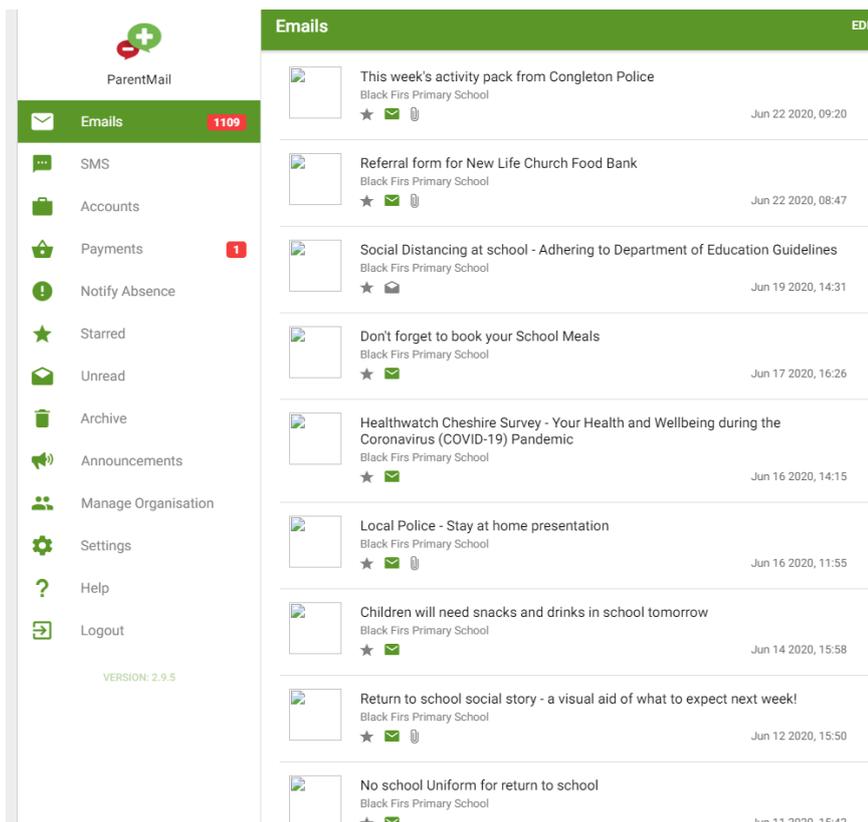


## How to book Out of School Club sessions using the online Parentmail app:

To book any sessions you need, please download the free Parentmail app to your mobile if you haven't already done so.

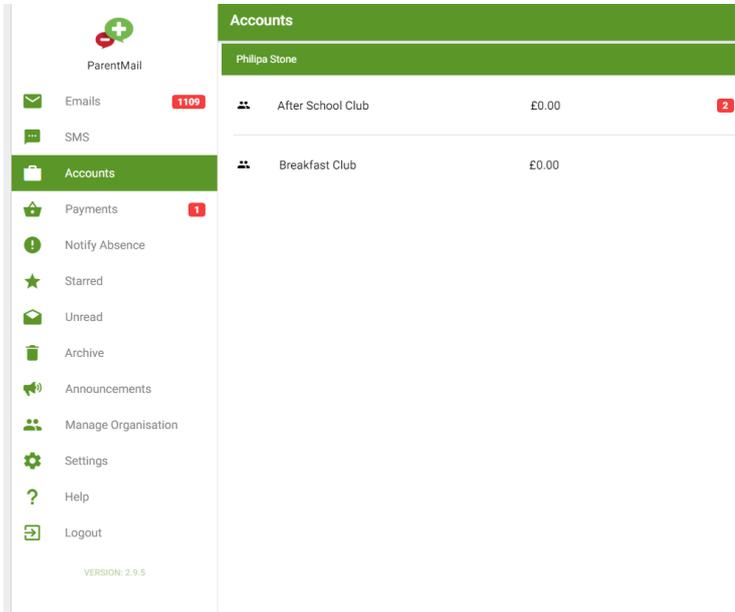


Once you have signed in, you will see three lines in the top left hand corner of the screen. You need to click on this to enable the main menu of services.





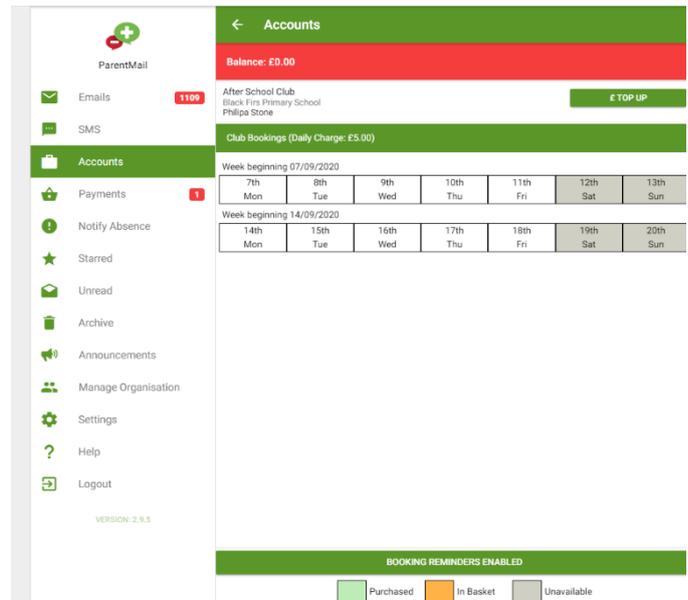
Select Accounts from this left-hand menu menu. You should then be able to see all of the available accounts relating to your child or children if you have more than one attending Black Firs.



To book into the sessions, simply click the service you require, either

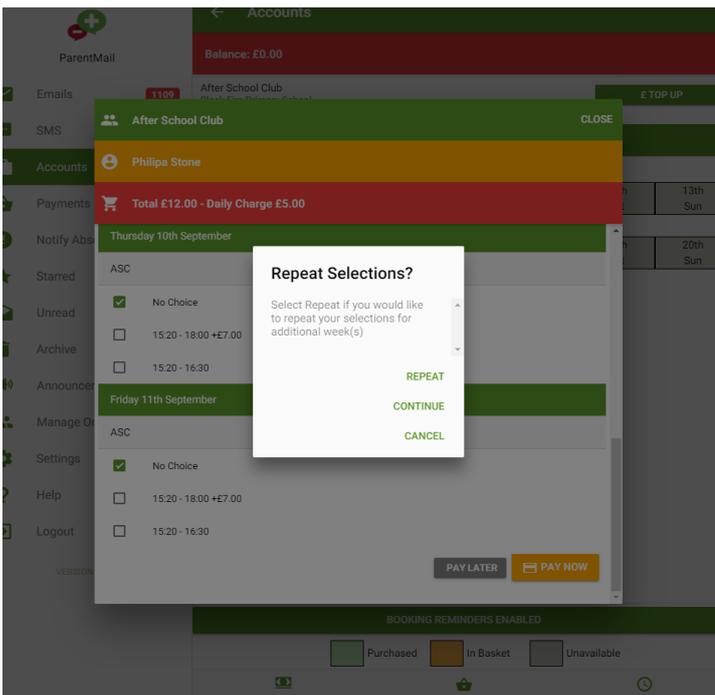
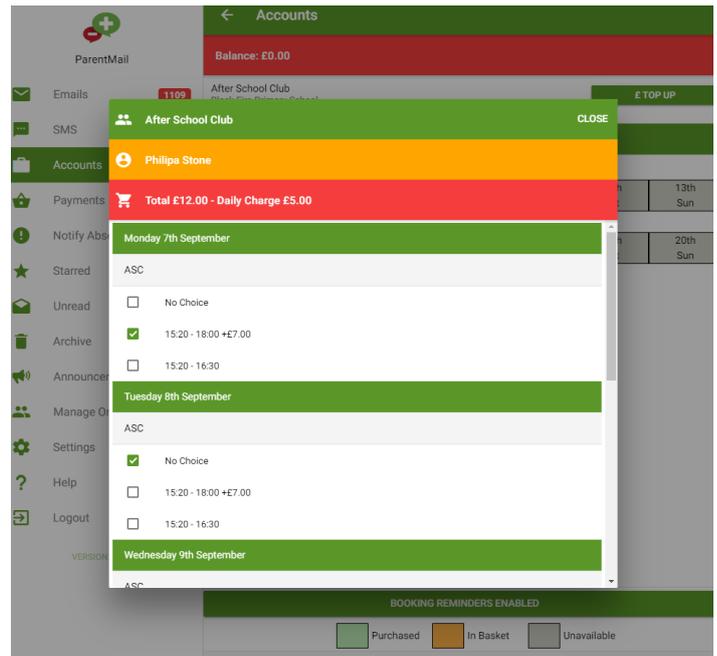
breakfast or after school club, and click on a day you would like the session for.

This will then open a new screen where you can select which session (either full or part) you require.





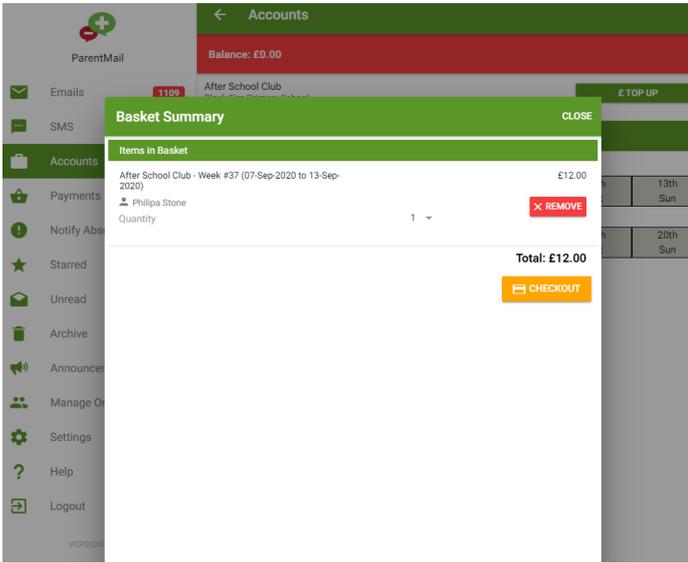
Once you have selected the sessions you need select Pay Now (or Pay Later if you are paying with childcare vouchers, or are a monthly payer that has been set up via the school office) A pop up will ask if you require to make repeat bookings, this is available for anybody that knows their session pattern and would prefer to bulk book until the end of a published booking period.



Once you have decided to either book more or not, then select continue. Another pop up will then display your chosen options for you to check through. Select Back if you wish to alter any selection. Once you are happy with your selections, scroll down to the bottom of the page and click Confirm.

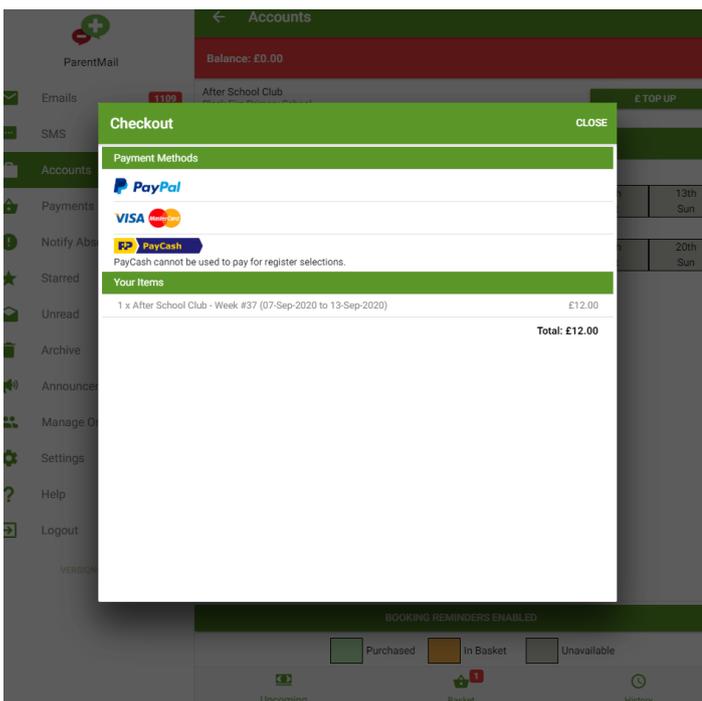


You will then be taken to the following window. Please select Checkout.



Sibling discounts will automatically be applied so the amount due is the correct amount for the bookings selected. You will be able to pay by credit or debit card, PayPal or even the PayPoint barcode system. There is also an option to top up your account so you can keep money in the account to use as and when you need to.

Once you click checkout you will be taken to the secure payment process to pay for your bookings. You will need to select your payment method in order to start the secure payment process.



All sessions settled by voucher payments will be credited manually by the school office once we have seen the voucher amount hit our bank account. Please inform the school office if you are using childcare vouchers to pay for any sessions.



## ***Useful Contact Details and Further Information***

Our School Website:

[www.black-firs.co.uk](http://www.black-firs.co.uk)

Dp Sportswear Uniform Shop:

<https://www.dpsportswear.co.uk/> Email: [sales@dpsportswear.co.uk](mailto:sales@dpsportswear.co.uk)

50 Bromley Road, Congleton, CW121PT

01260 274000



Follow us on Twitter! @BlackFirsSchool

Parentmail Website:

[www.parentmail.co.uk](http://www.parentmail.co.uk)

For more information on the EYFS and Every Child Matters, click on the following links.

[www.foundationyears.org.uk](http://www.foundationyears.org.uk) (to access EYFS)

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) (to access information on Every Child Matters)

[www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0068102/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs](http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/a0068102/early-years-foundation-stage-eyfs) (to access Government guidance on EYFS)

[http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/education\\_and\\_learning/early\\_years\\_and\\_childcare.aspx](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/education_and_learning/early_years_and_childcare.aspx) (to access Cheshire East's Early Years website).

To contact:

Mr Martin Casserley (Headteacher, Black Firs Primary School)

Email: [mcasserley@black-firs.co.uk](mailto:mcasserley@black-firs.co.uk)

Mr Peter Woods (Safeguarding Lead, Black Firs Primary)

Email: [pwoods@black-firs.co.uk](mailto:pwoods@black-firs.co.uk)

Mrs Jen Harrison (EYFS Manager)

Email: [jenharrison@black-firs.co.uk](mailto:jenharrison@black-firs.co.uk)

Miss Kirsty Bibby (Preschool Teacher)

Email: [kbibby@black-firs.co.uk](mailto:kbibby@black-firs.co.uk)

Miss Becky Ayre (Administrator and Admissions)

Email: [parents@black-firs.co.uk](mailto:parents@black-firs.co.uk)