

7th May 2021

Induction into Castle Hill

To the Parents or Guardians of Castle Hill Primary,

Welcome to Castle Hill Primary School. This initial letter is aimed at providing you with key information about our induction process for when your child starts with us in September 2021. There will be a lot of information, so if at any time you are unsure please do get in touch and we will be more than happy to answer your questions.

Our induction process is carefully considered to ensure the children have a smooth and purposeful transition into school. We understand that this can be an anxious time for the whole family and we always strive to make this a positive experience. Due to Covid, we have had to amend our induction process to ensure that we are following the latest guidance from Public Health England. We have also sought guidance from the county Early Years Advisor to ensure our process is a fair and positive experience for all. After receiving positive feedback from our current year R parents, we have amended our plans slightly. You will receive more information on the changes we have made during our virtual parent information evening. The children and parents, including those who have not started with us, are at the forefront of all our decisions.

A little bit of history...

You may already be aware that we have two sites. The school site in Rooksdown opened in September 2015 and is known as ***Castle Hill Primary School - Rooksdown Campus***. The multi - award winning junior school facility is known as ***Castle Hill Primary School - Greenbank Campus***, which is located in Winklebury. Your child will be attending ***Castle Hill Primary School - Rooksdown Campus and any sessions attended in person will be held here.***

The Induction Programme

The Induction Programme is made up of the following meetings and sessions:

- a virtual parent information meeting
- a visit or phone call with your child(ren)'s current preschool setting
- a home visit followed by a visit to the school in the afternoon
- four settling in sessions (Drop and Play) in a small group
- one whole class half day visit with lunch

We cannot emphasise enough how important it is that you attend these meetings and sessions, so that the 'settling in' process goes as smoothly as possible for you and your child(ren).

Virtual Parent information

A series of videos will be published online offering you a virtual tour of the school, a chance to find out about the teachers and information regarding school routines. The virtual information will be available from **Monday 21st June at 5pm** on the school website and the live Q & A will be held on **Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at 6pm.**

This meeting is extremely important and we really hope all of our parents will be able to attend virtually. Our aim is to give you the opportunity to:

- get to know the teachers and PTPs in the Year R team and other members of the Year R Castle Hill Primary Team
- find out what to expect from your child's first year at school
- confirm information about the induction arrangements for children starting school
- ask **any** questions you may have about Early Years Provision and our school in general
- have access to written information and forms connected to your child starting school
- find out about the school uniform and how to order

Which class will my child be in?

We understand it can be an anxious time waiting to find out what class your child is in but to make a considered and well-informed decision, the Year R teachers need to gather all of the information to ensure the classes are balanced. We will be using the information from the pre-school visits and any information you have given us, therefore we ask that you complete a brief form to give us any relevant information. Once we have completed this process, we will let you know as soon as possible and begin the settling in process with the children. You will find out your child's class teacher when you join our school communication system (Class Dojo). More information about Class Dojo will be shared during the virtual information presentation.

Pre-School Visit or phone call

We hope to be able to visit the nursery or pre-schools to observe your child(ren) in their current environment. However, due to Covid restrictions, we may be unable to do this in person. If this is the case, we will do this virtually to gather all of the necessary information and we will provide the nurseries with a welcome pack to be shared with the children.

Home Visit - class teacher and PTP visit your home to meet you and your child

Week commencing 6th September 2021

We are hoping to visit you and your child (ren) in your home or garden, if government regulations allow us to do this safely. The home visit session will be held in the morning during the first week. This will be followed by an afternoon 'Drop and Play' session on the same day as your home visit. During the home visit, one member of staff will get to know your child by playing with them, showing them a book and photos of the setting while the class teacher will complete some basic information forms and discuss the information you have shared previously. You will also have the opportunity to pass on anything else you would like us to know about your child. This is an essential conversation to help us prepare. Please share any concerns regarding family situations, your child's behaviour or any worries you may have about them starting school. This information is vital to help us understand your child's needs before they start their new journey with us. We strongly believe these visits help to build strong home-school relationships and they enable you to raise any questions you may have about your child starting school or concerns you may have. A separate letter will be sent to you on this with more information at a later date.

Children's Settling in Sessions 'Drop and Play'

On the same day as the home visit, we invite Parents to leave their child(ren) at school to experience a 'Drop and Play' session independently in the classroom. Please ensure that you have your Parent Consent Booklets completed and returned to school no later than **Monday 21st May 2021** as it is important that we have all of your contact details on our system. Our first session will last one hour to give them a 'taster' of the classroom environment and to spend time with the class teacher and PTP in a small group. If current Covid restrictions are no longer in place, we will invite you into the school to attend this session with your child so it becomes a 'Stay and Play' session rather than a 'Drop and Play'. We are unable to make this decision until much closer to the time. Along with this letter, you will receive a link to allow you to indicate your preferred day and we will do our best to accommodate your choice.

Settling in week

Our Year R pupils starting with us at Rooksdown Campus will come into school from **Monday 13th September 2021** for short settling in sessions until **Thursday 16th September**. This will be a week later than other year groups due to home visits being scheduled for the first week. We will have the children in school for shorter sessions either in the morning or the afternoon with 15 children in each group. Please be aware that from **Thursday 9th September 2021**, your child is entitled to attend full time but we have found that this has worked very well and that the children were more confident than previous years. We have had positive feedback from last year's parents and we strongly advise that you allow your child to complete the settling in process. If this is not possible for you, please let us know as soon as possible by contacting admin@chjs.net.

On **Friday 17th September 2021** all children will be invited into school for a morning session and to stay for lunch. Your child will start full time with us on **Monday 20th September 2021**. These arrangements will be discussed in more detail at the School Induction Meeting.

We very much look forward to meeting you on **Wednesday 23rd June 2021**. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,

Mr John DF Martin
Executive Head

Ms R Willmouth
Deputy

The Year R team

Important dates to remember

Monday 21st May 2021	Deadline to return completed child information booklet
Monday 21st June 2021	Virtual tour and videos to be published
Wednesday 23rd June 2021 at 6pm	Live induction Q & A session for parents
W/C- Monday 6th September 2021	Morning home visits and afternoon 'Drop and Play' session in groups of 6 children Your date and time will be confirmed closer to the time.
Monday 13th September 2021/Tuesday 14th September 2021	Drop and Play session in groups of 15 children for 1hr 30 minutes am time slot 9am – 10.30am pm slot 1pm – 2.30pm
Wednesday 15th September 2021/Thursday 16th September 2021	Drop and play sessions for 2 hours am time slot 9am – 11.00am pm time slot 12.30pm – 2.30pm
Friday 17th September 2021	All children in for the morning and lunch 8.55am – 12.30 am
Monday 20th September 2021	All children start full time