

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

*The following document is designed to provide you with additional information to help you and your child to settle in at Hambleton Primary Academy quickly.*

### ***What is the best way I can prepare my child for school?***

- To be able to dress/ undress themselves.
- To be independent – these children make the fastest progress.
- To not be bothered about doing everything perfectly or getting it right the first time. Children who are scared of making mistakes, or who are told that they are “not doing it right” make very slow progress.

These things are far more important than being a fluent reader at the age of 3.

### ***Where do I leave my child in the morning and pick them up at night?***

Leave your child at the gate and they will walk to their classroom. They will be supervised by a member of staff from 8.40am when they come straight into school. If your child tries to follow you back out of school, please tell them off, and then let us know so we can back you up. Parents are asked not to wait on the playground - this is very unsettling for the children as it prolongs the parting. Nursery/ Reception parents should deliver their child to the classroom and sign them in.

Nursery/Reception parents can collect their children from the classroom door at home-time.

### ***How will I know what is going on in school?***

Children are often reluctant to talk about their day; once home, they distance themselves from school. Mrs Wood sends a newsletter home every week, usually on a Friday, and this contains diary dates, news and requests. Parents are very welcome to help in school, though not in their child's class. (Experience has shown that this can be very unsettling for children, particularly younger ones.) Please contact Mrs Shaw if you have some time to spare on a regular basis. This is subject to CRB clearance. Class teachers also send curriculum letters home every term.

### ***What is a Curriculum letter?***

At the beginning of each term we will send you a letter to tell you what your child will be learning about. Often, we put pleas for things on this letter, such as junk materials, parents to help, old material. It is really important that you read this letter so you know what your child is doing in school each day. Parents do not have access to teachers' lesson plans.

### ***When do I pay dinner money?***

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are now all entitled to a free school meal. For the rest of school... You will receive an invoice for the following half term. Please pay for dinners

either on a weekly basis or pay the invoice in full by the due date. This can be done by cash/cheque or bank transfer.

Bank – Lloyds (FCAT T/A Hambleton Primary Academy)

Account – 27548960

Sort code – 30-90-90

Please see Mrs Shaw if you think you may be entitled to free school dinners for your child and she will advise you further.

***How much notice do I give when changing from dinners to packed lunches?***

At least one half terms notice. This is because the kitchen orders food in advance.

***Will you give my child medicine?***

Yes, but only for an ongoing condition which would form part of a “care plan”. General medicines, e.g. Calpol, cough mixtures, are not given. We do not administer antibiotics unless they are 4X daily. You need to see Mrs Wood / Mrs Shaw / Mrs Gardner about this as they are the only people who can give child antibiotics and there is a form to sign. Please do not send any medicines or throat lozenges into school with your child – especially not in your child’s bag!!!

**Children who are ill need to stay at home.**

***If my child becomes ill in school, what happens?***

Your child will be cared for until collected. (Most staff are first-aid trained.) We will telephone you, or other named contacts – please make sure to let us know if your phone numbers, or family contacts, change. Immediate medical help will be sought in an emergency.

We will also phone you if we notice head-lice on your child – parents are sometimes alarmed or embarrassed when this happens for the first time- please don’t be! Head – lice are a common occurrence in all schools and they are very sociable little pests. The best method of prevention is to go through your child’s hair with a nit comb and hair conditioner once a week. We will send the child home to be treated and they can come back to school once this has happened.

***Do I phone the school if my child is sick?***

Yes, please phone Mrs Shaw or leave a message on the answer machine by 9.30am. It is imperative that you do this so that we know your child is safely with you and not been abducted en-route, unbeknown to all of us!

***Will you put sun cream on my child?***

Yes, but please label the bottle with your child’s name. It is better if you can put sun cream on your child after you’ve washed them, first thing in the morning.

***Are there special assemblies throughout the year?***

Yes. There are special assemblies and performances throughout the year and all families are welcome. You will be informed via the weekly newsletters.

***Why are the children collecting jewels?***

As a whole school initiative we give the children jewels, individually, for good work and behaviour and these are added on a weekly basis to determine a class of the week in both infants and juniors. Individual children may also gain certificates. Your child will be assigned a team;

Diamonds - yellow

Emeralds - green

Rubies - red

Sapphires - blue

***(Reception) Does my child have a buddy?***

Every child will have a Year 6 / 5 buddy who they can see at playtime for support. They also have reading time together every week.

***My child has lost his/her sweatshirt, where is it?***

Your child's clothing should be clearly marked (remember biro comes off in the wash and you will need to re-apply regularly). We encourage children to be responsible for their own belongings. Often, children put the wrong sweatshirt on after PE and will bring it back the next day. Mums will phone to say they have a "foreigner" at home and return it!

***I think my child is being bullied - what can you do?***

We regard bullying as a very serious issue. Bullying is sustained, mental or physical abuse. It is not a playground spat, falling out between friends, or infants tumbling over each other and learning to take turns etc. Children who are being bullied change over time, often becoming more and more withdrawn and experiencing disturbed sleep. Their confidence erodes, as does their self-esteem. It is vital that we recognise any signs as soon as possible and act quickly to stop it. If you are concerned, contact the class teacher, or Mrs Wood directly.

We very rarely have cases of bullying at our school. Often the children have just fallen out with one another or are playing in a rough manner – but if this is the case and your child is upset, we still need to know!

***(Reception) My child has come home bruised. Why has this happened?***

If this is a case of bullying, then it is obviously very serious. However, a large part of development during the Reception Year is learning to exist, socialise and make friends with a larger group of children. Reception children are rather like puppies in a pack! They literally crawl and tumble over each other outside, and we have to train them not to!! This is a developmental stage, and they do grow out of it!

### ***What happens if there is an accident in school?***

You will be contacted in the same way as if your child has become unwell. As much as we try to prevent accidents from happening and have set health and safety procedures, they do occur from time to time, as they do at home; children fall, heads get bumped, infant children still attempt to cut their own hair, etc etc. We will telephone to tell you what has happened and offer advice on the seriousness of the incident.

Children also fall out with each other; this is part of growing up and we take our role of teaching children how to get along with each other, very seriously. Playground spats do happen, sometimes with resulting minor injuries. We investigate causes, inform parents if we consider the incident to be serious, and work hard to both resolve conflicts and teach children how these can be avoided in the future. We all want children to enjoy coming to school and learning.

### ***Does My Child Have To Go On The School Trip?***

Yes. School Visits have been carefully considered to enhance the curriculum and take part in statutory school time. There is a charge for visits, to cover costs, but parents experiencing difficulties can always approach Mrs Wood in confidence if they are having problems paying. Risk assessments are always done before hand and there are set-pupil/adult ratios to observe which are different from those generally operating in school. (1/8 is the statutory number, but we always do 1 / 4 or 1 / 5 for infant children.) A qualified first-aider always accompanies school visits. Most of our school staff are trained first-aiders.

### ***Can I take my child on a family holiday in term time?***

I am unable to authorise time out of school except in the most exceptional of circumstances. Fixed penalty notices will be served to parents who take their children out of school when authorisation has been denied. (This is £200 per parent, per child, lowered to £100 per parent, per child if the notice is paid within a set time.) Holiday request forms are available from Mrs Shaw which need to be returned to school. Children have 13 weeks holiday per year and need to be learning in school. Taking work away with you is no substitute and we do not set work for children who are taking term time holidays.

### ***Does a letter need to be sent if a holiday / personal family commitments are extended over the holidays?***

You need to complete a holiday/ family leave request form for the Educational Welfare Officer. Please ask Mrs Shaw for one.

### ***How will I know about my child's progress?***

In various different ways;

Reading records

Parents Evenings

Curriculum Newsletter

Conversations before and after school

Newsletters

Termly targets

End of Year Reports

Children are assessed using a variety of methods through out the year and class teachers monitor progress carefully. Individual assessments are not reported to parents as they need to be taken as a whole over the course of the year – they are not reliable when taken out of context. However, parents will be informed of progress (and the results of assessments) three times a year, at two Parents Evenings and on the school report at the end of the year. Class teachers will contact parents if they feel that children are not progressing as expected.

All assessments are reported to Mrs Wood who charts progress over time and looks for any under-achievement. She always contacts parents to discuss concerns and staff set specific targets to ensure that progress is maximised. All parents are welcome to discuss concerns about achievement with Mrs Wood or their child's class teacher.

### ***Why are parents only informed of progress three times a year?***

Because progress takes time to happen! You are welcome to contact your child's class teacher for an update, especially if you are concerned, but please don't expect startling improvements to happen on a weekly basis. (Reception parents – please don't ask every day!)

### ***How often do you hear my child read?***

In Key Stage 1, children will be heard to read every day but not usually their home reading book. We have other reading literature in school, which we read with the children, in addition to being heard in guided reading during Literacy lessons. They will be listened to more often by other support teachers or parent helpers. **Please** hear your child read at home **every** night. Reading books are NOT to be raced through and changed after the first reading. Key Stage 1 books are to be read over a few days, several times and talked about, particularly the pictures. Junior children should still be listened to until they are reading independently. Even at this stage, it is important to ask them about books they are reading, and to contact us if you have any concerns. Please, please try not to be competitive with other mothers over the "colour" of your child's book. All children learn at different rates and children pick up "pressure" very quickly. It is very counter-productive!

### ***How often do you change reading books / words?***

In Reception / Key Stage 1, the children's books will be changed every day. Key Stage 2 books will be changed when appropriate. Parents should be aware that they still need to hear their child read regularly – reading often dips in Years 3 and 4 because reading aloud at home has stopped!

***(Reception) My child is not reading the book - they are memorising it, is this right?***

This is one of the first stages of reading. This is fine as long as they are pointing to each word as they read it and can distinguish between a word and a letter.

***(Reception) My child writes their letters / numbers back to front - should I worry?***

Do not worry at all. It is quite normal, although we would be concerned if they were still doing it in Year 6!

***How should my child be forming their letters?***

We have a school handwriting scheme which the children are encouraged to use. The children will be introduced to this when they are ready.

***Why have you not checked my child's bag?***

We have a lot of children in our classes and it is impossible to check their bags every day. Please make sure you remind them to give us any letters or money they have in their bags each day. We are helping them to become independent.

***(Reception) When will my child get homework?***

The only homework your child will receive in Reception is their reading book and spellings.

***What about Homework throughout school?***

Homework is statutory for children from Y1 upwards, but as a school, we place far more value on the work children do in class. Reading, and learning tables and spellings, is by far the most important activities you can support your child with at home. No child should be doing more than 20 minutes/ half an hour per night – and this includes reading time. (Children will be given more homework in Y6 prior to SATs.) Too much work at home pressurises young children and is counter-productive, turning them off school. Primary aged children need to play at home and lead full and active lives.

***(Reception) What is Baseline Assessment?***

Within the first six weeks of school your child will be assessed using CEM. This will be on the computer and the children answer questions. They will be tested again at the end of the school year using the same test to see how they have progressed throughout the year. A Baseline Profile is completed for each child, which is purely teacher assessment and is carried out each ½ term.

***Do you have After School Activities?***

Yes. Each term you will receive a letter about the activities on offer and you must fill in the sheet and send it back to school. We do not cancel clubs when it is raining or when teachers are ill; other arrangements will be made. We do not have clubs during the dark winter months. We do not have a club on the first day after each term (**NOT ½ term**). All children are welcome from the year groups specified; we do not have waiting lists and

they will not be turned away. Please see the additional sheet on Extra Curricular Activities.

Key Stage 2 children represent the school in sports teams in local leagues. These are competitive and you are welcome to stay and watch matches. You will be expected to ferry your child to other schools if your child is picked for a team.

***Why isn't there an after school club?***

Because we've had one in the past and it wasn't cost-effective and had to be closed down. We need at least 17 children to use it every night on a planned, regular basis and there isn't the demand. However, there are child-minders in the village and Mrs Shaw can supply parents with their details.

***My child has been told off – who do I see about this?***

Very few children have been excluded from Hambleton and we rarely have behaviour problems. However, all children are naughty at some point – they're children and it's normal! We co-parent with you and children are not the finished product. They need guidance, checking and to know what the boundaries are for good behaviour. When they've crossed the line, they need to know, in order to develop and learn. Every day is a new day in school and staff never bear grudges. Please expect your child to be in trouble at some time during their time at Hambleton and trust that we will tackle the situation with your child's interests at heart. Should poor behaviour become prolonged, we will work with you and introduce a support programme to help your child.

We rely on parental support over incidents. If you require clarification, it is better to see Mrs Wood rather than the class teacher at the start of the day, as Mrs Wood has time to discuss your concerns. Class teachers are setting up for the day and seeing their classes into school.

***If I am worried or unhappy about something, what should I do?***

Always come in and talk to Mrs Wood or the classteacher. We have an open door policy and would rather you talked to us than worry at home. We build up warm and trusting relationships with families in school and we are always ready to listen. **The best time to see classteachers is after school rather than in the morning, as all teachers are busy preparing for the day in the time before school starts. (Please be aware that all staff run after school activities so try to avoid those nights.) If your child is in Key Stage 1, please wait for the staff to release all the children at 3.15 p.m. before you try to speak to them about your child. It is imperative that all children are handed over safely and without distraction.**