Frequently Asked Questions – Answers for Parents

1 Uniform and Equipment

➢ *What is the Otterham School uniform?*

White/light blue polo shirt Black, navy or grey skirt or trousers/shorts Blue school sweatshirt Blue school cardigan Blue school fleece Blue and white gingham dresses can be worn during the summer **All uniform/equipment items must be clearly named**

In the interest of Health & Safety, pupils must wear flat black footwear, fashion shoes are not allowed in school. Please ensure your child has a named, warm and waterproof coat in school – this is essential for the winter months!

➢ *What should be worn for PE?*

Indoor PE/Gymnastics	Light blue polo shirt Navy shorts Plimsolls/trainers
Outdoor PE/Games	As above Tracksuit/jogging bottoms in winter Football boots (optional for KS2)
All children will need a named PE kit bag **All uniform/equipment items must be clearly named**	

➢ *Where can I buy school uniform, book bags and PE Kit?*

All school uniform orders should be ordered direct via Sewtex (Design Create), 1 Bess Park Road, Trenant Industrial Estate, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6HB Telephone 01208 812799
https://www.d2csigns.co.uk/store/schools/otterham-cp-school

Orders can be delivered to school for collection fortnightly.

➢ *Can jewellery be worn in school?*

The only items of jewellery allowed are stud earrings and watches. Watches must be removed for PE/Games.

➢ *Should long hair by tied up?*

Long hair must be worn tied back. This really helps keep head lice infestations to a minimum. We would simply ask that extreme hairstyles and colour eg bright pink, Mohican or peroxide white etc are not worn at school.

➢ *Can items from home (eg toys and books) come into school?*

We do not encourage children to bring toys, books or possessions from home unless it is for a learning or class purpose. We do not want items to be lost, stolen or damaged. Your child's teacher will let them know when they are able to bring particular items in eg for 'Show and Tell' sessions.

➢ *What should I do if my child loses something at school?*

Check with the class teacher in case the item is still in the classroom. If the item is named it is much more likely to be located successfully.

2 Food and Drink

➢ *What are the options for lunch?*

Children can bring in a parent packed lunch or have a healthy and nutritious hot school dinner or school packed lunch. School dinners are cooked on the premises with a termly menu detailing daily meal choices can be found on the school website.

All meals to be ordered in advance using the Aspens Select App. We encourage children to eat the food they are provided at lunchtime (including fruit and veg) to ensure they have good levels of energy for learning in the afternoon. We will not force them however and if their level of consumption is of concern, we shall inform the parent/carer.

All Key Stage 1 children (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are eligible to receive free school meals. Meals cost £2.20 per day (£11.00 per week) and can be ordered via the online payment system with AspensSELECT. The purpose of this system means that you can:

- Order your child/children's preferred menu choice in advance
- Pay for school lunches via the system, or just pre-book meals if your child/children are entitled to free school meals
- Order a day at a time, per week or even for a month in advance from the beginning of each term
- You can register more than one child per school

Website link: https://select.aspens-services.com

Free school meals are provided for children of parents in receipt of certain state benefits. An application form for free school meals must be completed, apply online via ww.cornwall.gov.uk/schoolmeals.

Packed lunches can be brought from home but we will expect the contents to be in line with our "Healthy School" status. There are ideas of a healthy and balanced packed lunch on the school website. In suitable weather, this may be eaten outside.

➢ *What can children eat at morning playtime?*

Children in the Foundation class and Key Stage 1 (Classes 2 & 3) are provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable to eat as a snack at playtime (10.45 am). Pupils in Key Stage 2 classes can bring in a piece of fruit or similarly healthy snack for playtime. We do not allow pupils to bring canned drinks, crisps, biscuits, chocolate or sweets at playtime as this goes against our "Healthy School" ethos.

➢ *Can children bring a drink into school?*

We encourage children to bring a named water bottle containing **only** water to school. Your child is encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day in school. At lunchtime there are water jugs to have with the school meal and packed lunch pupils are encouraged to bring a separate drinks bottle for lunchtime use.

➢ *Can children bring in sweets or cake to celebrate a birthday or holiday?*

Please discuss with your child's class teacher, as this will be dependent on allergies within the class and parental wishes.

3 Health

➢ *What should I do if my child is too ill to come to school?*

Please contact the office on the first day of sickness, ideally before 9.15 am. We have an answer phone operating when the office is not staffed so you can leave a message out of school hours. If we do not hear from you, we will contact you during the course of the morning to check the whereabouts of your child. This is for safeguarding purposes.

➢ *What should I do if I have a change to personal circumstances?*

Please ensure that you let the school secretary know, in writing, as soon as possible of any medical or other changes that are relevant to your child eg address, contact names and telephone numbers, medical problems. It is vital that we have up to date information.

➢ *How soon after illness can my child return to school?*

Please do not send your child back to school until they are fully recovered, as we do not have the staff or facilities to look after sick children. Children who have been suffering from sickness and/or diarrhoea should not return to school until 48 hours after the last bout of illness. Children who have been prescribed new medication or antibiotics should also not attend school for at least 24 hours after the first dose. This is to prevent problems if side effects or an allergic reaction should occur. Please check with your doctor as to whether or not an illness is contagious.

➢ *What do I need to do if my child takes medication during the school day?*

You must complete a "Medication Consent Form" available from the class teacher and leave the medication with the school staff who will keep it in a safe place. We generally only administer medicine/medication that has been prescribed by a medical practitioner.

➢ *What should I do if my child has asthma or an allergy?*

Please ensure that you let the school know, in writing, as soon as possible of any medical or other changes that are relevant to your child's health. It is vital that we have up to date information. Inhalers are the only asthma medication permitted in the classroom.

➢ *How will I find out if my child has had an accident at school?*

Many of the school staff are trained in First Aid. Minor bumps, scrapes and accidents are dealt with as soon as possible. If a child suffers a head injury parents will receive a specific telephone call with details of the incident. If we have any serious concerns, we contact parents/carers immediately.

➢ *What should I do if my child has head lice?*

It is important that head lice be treated before sending your child to school. A pharmacist can recommend the most up to date and effective treatment. Please inform the school quickly so that a text can be sent out warning parents that their child may have come into contact with head lice. If head lice are observed whilst your child is in school, we will contact you so that they could be taken home for immediate treatment.

➢ *How do I make an appointment to see the school nurse?*

Your child can have access to a School Nurse at any time if you have any health concerns, in addition your School Nurse offers a full health assessment in reception and year 6. Referrals can be made via the Early Help Hub. www.cornwall.gov.uk/earlyhelp 01872 322277 Client advice line: 01872 322779 www.cornwall.gov.uk/schoolnursing

➢ *Are dogs allowed on the school site?*

In the interest of Health and Safety/Hygiene, dogs/puppies are not permitted on the school site, with the single exception of guide dogs (this includes puppies being carried).

4 Charging and School Trips

➢ *How do I pay for school dinners, trips etc?*

Payments can be made online using School Money for school trips, residential, swimming, clubs and uniform. You will receive a text with website details and your own personal password. For dinner money, you will need to use the Aspens Select App.

➢ *Do I have to pay for school trips?*

When your child is involved in a trip or other school event a voluntary contribution is requested to cover the cost on the understanding that if insufficient funds are received the activity may not take place.

➢ *Does my child have swimming lessons?*

Yes, 5 x 1 hour lessons per year. Class 1 Autumn Term, Class 2 Spring Term and Class 3 Summer Term. Instructors and lifeguards are funded, but the school does ask for a contribution of £15.00 towards the cost of the transportation £3.00 per week. It is vital that these lessons compliment the lessons your child should be receiving outside of school.

➢ *What is Pupil Premium?*

Pupil Premium funding allocation this year has largely been used to fund in class support (Teaching Assistants), subsidise Breakfast Club and provide 1:1 support where necessary. Some of our children benefit from being part of the Achievement for All programme and their allocation will be used to fund this. Unfortunately, whereas previous trips, clubs, swimming transport and residentials were funded by the Pupil Premium allocation, this can no longer be the case. These activities can be subsidised at best.

5 Attendance and Punctuality

➢ *What time can my child arrive at school?*

Pupils must not be on the school premises before 8.45 am (unless attending Breakfast Club). Prior to this teachers are preparing their classrooms which means there is no supervision in the classroom.

➢ *What should I do if I arrive late for school?*

A reminder that late arrivals in the morning are very disruptive to your child's class – your child needs your support to get to school before 8.55 am. Any child who arrives after 9.00 am should report to the office. All school lunches must be ordered before 9.30 am, unfortunately the school cook is not able to take bookings after this time.

➢ *Can my child attend Breakfast Club?*

The school has a successful breakfast club which runs from 8.00 am to 8.45 am, the cost per child is as follows:

8.00 am start £3.50 per child per day

Reception children can attend Breakfast Club after Christmas.

➢ *What time should I collect my child at the end of the day?*

Due to Covid, we have a staggered pick up from 3.00 pm to 3.20 pm. Normally, school finishes at 3.15 pm for Reception children with no siblings or with siblings at 3.20 pm. School finishes for Y1-Y6 at 3.30 pm. Please be on time for collecting your child. In exceptional circumstances, should you know you will be late, please phone the school and your child can be watched for a short period of time. If someone else is collecting your child, please inform the school before 3.00 pm.

➢ *What should I do if my child has a dentist/doctor appointment?*

If you have reason to collect your child during the school day ie dental appointment, please inform the school office in advance. We will need to see an appointment card or letter. When your child needs to be collected, please come to the school office and your child will be brought to reception for you.

➢ *What should I do if my child needs time off from school for non-health reasons?*

We follow government guidelines which state the holidays will only be granted if there are exceptional circumstances which do not include the affordability of a holiday or work circumstances. Most holiday requests will not be authorised. Children are expected to have attendance of 96% and our EWO does a termly visit to check and possibly support pupils below this figure.

➢ *What is unauthorised absence?*

The school is required to keep an accurate record or absence. If your child is away from school this must be recorded as a particular type of absence (eg illness, medical appointment etc). An absence is classified as unauthorised when no valid reason is provided for the absence by the parent/carer. Unauthorised absences are passed on to the Education Welfare Officer. Children are expected to have attendance of 96% and our EWO does a termly visit to check and possibly support pupils below this figure.

6 Parent and School Collaboration

➢ *How will the school keep me informed?*

As soon as a date for an event is confirmed, it is placed on the website (calendar on opening page and calendar button). We will keep you informed in lots of ways. There is a half-termly newsletter which will keep you up to date with the latest school news. It is sent home with the children and is also placed on the school website. There are parent's evenings during both Autumn and Spring terms which will inform you of your child's learning progress and required next steps. Each class has a class webpage which provides information on the curriculum being delivered each term. A comprehensive written end of year report detailing your child's attainment, progress and learning attitude is sent out to parents towards the end of the summer term. Specific letters and forms will be sent home as required. Class teachers will often contact parents individually to deal with particular issues.

Diary dates will be sent out at least half termly, but as many of you will know, we do take advantage of opportunities if they arise. This may, on occasion, mean short notice. If anything special/specified is required you will be given extra information in the form of a letter.

➢ *How to sign up for our communication app?*

This is named the **Groupcall Expressions App**. Please access this by visiting http://parents.groupcall.com/ or by installing the Apple iOS or Android app (both free of charge). Once installed on your mobile device you will be able to receive messages from the school. It is important that we have the correct mobile number and email address for you on our records.

It is our hope that this tool will further improve communication between school and home. If you have any issues accessing the Groupcall Expressions App or have any questions relating to it please do not hesitate to get in touch via http://parents.groupcall.com.

➢ *What to do if I want to talk to a teacher?*

You can catch your child's class teacher at the beginning and end of the school day, book appointments to see them via the school office or phone before/after school. If it is not a convenient time to talk then the teacher will arrange a more suitable time at a mutually agreeable date. We want parents to be pro-active in their child's education so welcome the chance to discuss issues with you.

If you would like to make arrangements to speak with Mrs Ward, please make an appointment via the School Office or leave a note requesting a call.

➢ *Are mobile phones allowed in school?*

If a child brings a phone in to school for safety reasons ie walking home alone, they must be handed in to the class teacher to be locked away during the school day. Phones cannot be used in school at any time. The school cannot accept any responsibility for mobile phones brought to school.

We do not encourage children of primary school age to own a mobile phone.

➢ *Smoking or Vaping?*

There is a NO SMOKING/VAPING policy on school premises and this includes the playing field, playgrounds, parent waiting area and car parks.

➢ *Where to park at school to collect me child?*

Parking responsibly is the duty of everyone. Cars parked in unsuitable areas put our own and other people's children at risk. Please could all parents park outside school or at Otterham Hall and use the walking route. **PLEASE HELP US TO KEEP OUR CHILDREN SAFE.** Please do not block entrances to the staff car park and school entrance or private properties. You will notice that it is now illegal to park on the road markings surrounding both entrances to the school. Thank you in anticipation of your cooperation.

➢ *Can my child use sunscreen in school?*

Please remember during the sunny periods of the year the children will be outside in the sun. If possible, provide your child with a sun hat and water. Please apply sun cream before coming to school.

➢ *Can my child ride a bicycle or scooter to school?*

A few of our pupils bring bikes or scooters to school. These must not be ridden anywhere on the school site. In addition, care needs to be taken on surrounding roads. Head gear must be worn. If we have concerns over a pupil's appreciation of road safety, we will inform you immediately.

➢ *How often do parent evenings take place?*

You will be invited to attend a parent's meeting during both the Autumn and Spring term. If your child is participating in the "Achievement for All" programme then there will be more regular meetings arranged.

➢ *How often will my child get an academic report and what will it tell me?*

Normally it will be produced once a year towards the end of the summer term. It will provide parents with levels of attainment, rates of learning progress and detail learning targets for the following year. Your child's attendance and its impact on their learning will also be part of the report. If needed a parental consultation is available after the reports have gone home to discuss the report in more detail with the class teacher. All reports are monitored by the Headteacher.

➢ *How do I find out about school clubs?*

A club list will be sent home at the start of each half term of which will also be added to the school website. Unfortunately, due to a reduction in funding, the school is no longer able to provide its extensive range of After School Clubs free of charge. In the interests of equality and fairness, each club will cost £1.00 per child per week, payable ½ termly in advance. These charges will endeavour to cover the cost of staffing and resourcing across the range of clubs.

➢ *How often will my child bring homework home?*

Please have a look at the Homework Policy on the school website. The amount and frequency will differ depending on which class your child is in.

➢ *Can my child bring money to school?*

There is no reason for pupils to have money in school other than a special event day such as a cake sale for Children in Need.

➢ *What can I do if I have a compliment or complaint?*

Staff (and parents) work really hard to make Otterham Primary School a great school but we don't always get things right. If you have any issues or concerns you are welcome to speak to one of the teachers in the morning, pop in to speak to the Headteacher, make an appointment to talk to the Headteacher or send an email to secretary@otterham.cornwall.sch.uk who will forward it to the right person. We try to make it easy to talk to or inform someone.

It is not helpful to post negative comments about our school via social media without first raising them with staff. I ask that out of respect if you have a concern you contact the school and work with staff to resolve any issues or problems. After all, it's your school as well!

Thank you for taking the time to read these questions and answers and we hope you have found them useful. Let us know if there are any key questions we can add in the future.

Visit our school website for up to date news and information: www.otterhamschool.co.uk