

## PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to Queen's College Pre-Prep School.

I hope that this provides a useful guide to the day-to-day running of the Pre-Prep. We email home weekly newsletters and always write 'This Week' reminders on the notice board in the Entrance Hall. However, after reading the handbook, if there are any queries please ask your child's class teacher or Mrs Williams and they will be happy to help you.

### Staff

Mrs Janet Williams		Head of Pre-Prep and Nursery also Reception teacher
Mrs Teri Underwood	-	Year 1 teacher
Mrs Charlotte Baker	-	Year 1 teacher (job share, 3 days)
Mrs Helen Hitchin	-	Year 1 teacher (job share, 2 days)
Mrs Rebecca Milby		-Year 2 teacher
Mrs Clare Hood	-	Reception teacher
Mrs Jill Fear	-	Head's Relief, Reception teacher and supply
Mrs Gill Harrison	-	Learning Support teacher

### Nursery

Miss Elizabeth Hayes	-	Head of Nursery
Miss Christina Hardwick	-	Nursery Assistant
Mrs Kirsty Goss	-	Nursery Assistant
Mrs Rachel Hoyle	-	Nursery Assistant

### Ancillary Staff

Mrs Dawn Coram	-	Classroom Assistant and pre-school care
Mrs Anne Higgins	-	Classroom Assistant and after school care
Mrs Vanessa Monks	-	Classroom Assistant and after school

- care
- Mrs Sarah Silverwood - Classroom Assistant and pre-school and after school care
- Miss Danica Revitt - Assistant matron and after school care

### **Domestic Staff**

- Mrs Emma Davidge - Responsible for lunches and cleaning
- Mrs Marilyn Williams - Responsible for lunches and cleaning
- Mrs Sharon Wyatt - Lunchtime Supervisor
- Mrs Ann Churchley - Lunchtime Supervisor

### **Visiting Music Staff**

- Mrs Estelle Jackson - Recorder
- Mrs Alison Foyle - Violin
- Mrs Pam Collins - Piano
- Mrs Elaine Thorneycroft-Gibb - Piano

### **Visiting Speech and Drama Staff**

Miss Margaret Way

### **Visiting Dance Staff**

Miss Lesley Gray - Mountway School of Dance

Miss Verity Snell

### **Visiting Judo Coach**

Mr Ormerod

### **Secretaries**

Miss Julie Cameron from 8.30 am - 4.30 pm.  
Mrs Sarah Musgrave Telephone: (01823) 272990

### **Medical Officer**

Dr Downs and Dr de Cothie

### **Sick Bay**

Sister Sue Parratt  
Sister Lynn Dimery  
Sister Judith Barry  
Sister Jane Whitefield  
Sister Helen Backhouse

**Headmaster**

Mr Justin Backhouse is Head of the Junior, Pre-Prep and Nursery Schools

**Daily Routine**

8.00 am	Arrival for children requiring early morning supervision
8.30 am	Go into classes and registration
8.40 am	Assembly (times may vary)
9.05 am	Session 1
10.30 am	Milk or water, apple and playtime
11.00 am	Session 2
12.30 pm	Lunch and Play
1.30 pm	Session 3
2.45 pm	Playtime
3.00pm	Session 4
3.30pm	End of school, Activities start, After School care starts
5.00pm	Story/Book Club for children in After School Care.
5.45 pm	After School Care finishes.

Every Wednesday all Pre-Prep join the Juniors for an assembly at 8.45 am. We also join the Juniors for termly whole school assemblies. All children will need to be in school for 8.30am.

If some children need to be left before 8.30 am, we have early morning supervision in our hall, where they can be left with a member of staff between 8.00 am and 8.25 am.

Children arriving for school before 8.30pm and not going to morning supervision, wait with their parents in the entrance hall and look at a book until 8.30 am. When the bell is rung they go along to their classrooms. Children should be brought in to school by an adult as the front car park is hazardous at dropping-off times. Please make sure you use the designated pathways. At the end of the day, children should be collected from their classrooms at 3.30 pm or at the end of their

activity. We do need to know who is bringing or collecting the children - they may only leave in the company of a known adult. In an emergency, please telephone the school to notify of any change or delay. If someone different is collecting your child, please ensure a collection sheet is completed from the notice board and handed to your child's class teacher.

### **Playtime**

Children can choose between a drink of milk or water and some fruit before going out to play. We ask that they do not bring in toys from home, we have lots of school toys and play equipment for them to use at playtime.

**Lunches** are excellent and include a main course and a choice of puddings. A vegetarian alternative can be provided by the school. Staff sit and eat with the children and we encourage good table manners and happy conversation.

Should your child have any specific dietary allergies or requirements please speak to your child's class teacher.

### **After School Activities** (3.30 pm - 4.15 pm)

These are voluntary, free and run by the staff. The clubs are offered to all Year 1 and 2 children and vary from term to term.

### **After School Care (3.30-5.45pm)**

If you are unable to collect your child at 3.30pm, After School Care is available free to all children. They are cared for in the Pre-Prep Hall or in the Teacher on duty's classroom. Drinks, fruit etc are offered to all children. If you wish your child to stay in After School Care, please write their name on the list on the noticeboard in the Pre-Prep entrance.

### **Story/Book Club**

This runs from 5.00 pm - 5.45 pm for any children that are remaining in

After School Care.

## Music, Speech, Ballet and Tap Lessons

Individual music lessons are available in recorder, piano, violin and cello.

**Recorder** - In the Spring term all Year 1 children are given half a term of free recorder lessons. They are then (at the teacher's and parents' discretion) able to continue with these lessons if they so wish.

These are shared for new pupils. The lessons are then 30 minutes shared, group or individual - as parents wish.

**Piano** - An individual lesson. Children need to have made a reasonable start with reading and have a suitable hand span so we suggest that age 6 years upwards is soon enough. It will be necessary to have a piano at home for practice .

**Violin** - Available to Year 2 children and above.

1. Free for the first half term, these will initially be individual 20 minute lessons. Progress will be reviewed at the half term and then the second half of the term these lessons may still be offered free (at the teacher's discretion). Pupils are expected to pay for music and for the hire of the instrument.

2. Parents are encouraged to accompany their child to lessons for the first term. The violin is a very 'technical' instrument and the early stages may be challenging. Parents can be an enormous source of encouragement and support, helping to establish a good basic technique with the posture and bowing.

In each case music lessons take place during the school day and the children will come out of class for this. The children will not be allowed to miss out on anything important in the classroom. However, it would be advisable to limit the number of instruments a child takes as lessons and

practice both take time and practice needs to be fitted in to the evenings when they may already be tired or have reading or other commitments.

**Speech** - Group lessons to aid confidence and clear speech. Many young children benefit from this enormously. It can lead to examinations and entering the Taunton Speech and Drama Festival if wanted.

**Ballet** - Generally there are 3 groups - lessons take place during school. Examination standard is attained.

**Tap** - There is one group for Years 1 and 2.

**Judo** - This runs at the same time as our ballet lessons and is open to Year 1 and 2 children. The session lasts one hour with a maximum group size of 20 children.

**NB** in the case of ballet, music, judo and speech lessons a half term's notice must be given in writing if you wish to withdraw your child from their lessons.

### **Parent Helpers**

We welcome your involvement but parents must be aware that all helpers have to be CRB checked if they wish to help.

## PRE-PREP UNIFORM LIST

(As from Autumn 2009)

**All:** \* Queen's College parka

**Boys:** \* Grey shorts  
 \* Gold polo shirt (with Queen's logo)  
 \* Queen's College pullover  
 \* Queen's College tie  
 \* White shirt  
 (a white shirt and tie will only be needed to wear on special occasions in Year 1 and Year 2, at all other times the boys wear their gold polo shirts)  
 Grey socks  
 Black shoes

**Games:** \* White polo shirt (with Queen's logo)  
 Black shorts  
 1 pair of indoor trainers (velcro if possible with non-marking soles)  
 1 pair of running trainers (velcro if possible)  
 Black swimming trunks  
 \* Queen's College black tracksuit  
 1 pair of white P E socks

### Forest School Clothing: (For Autumn and Summer Terms)

1 lightweight waterproof coat and trousers and 1 pair of Wellington boots

**Summer:** \* Queen's College polo shirt  
 Black sandals (not open toe)  
 \* White baseball cap

**Girls:** \* Queen's College grey pinafore dress  
 \* Gold polo shirt (with Queen's logo)  
 \* Queen's College pullover/cardigan  
 \* Queen's College tie  
 \* White shirt  
 (a white shirt and tie will only be needed to wear on special occasions in Year 1 and Year 2, at all other times the girls wear their gold polo shirts)  
 Grey socks or grey tights  
 Black shoes

**Games:** \* White polo shirt (with Queen's logo)  
 Black shorts  
 1 pair of indoor trainers (velcro if possible with non-marking soles)  
 1 pair of running trainers (velcro if possible)  
 Black swimming costume  
 Yellow or black swimming hat for girls  
 \* Queen's College black tracksuit  
 1 pair of white P E socks

### Forest School Clothing: (For Autumn and Summer Terms)

1 lightweight waterproof coat and trousers and 1 pair of Wellington boots

**Summer:** \* Queen's College summer dress  
 White socks  
 White pants  
 Black sandals (not open toe)  
 \* White baseball cap

**All Children will need a black reading bag** (from the school shop) and some form of **Art Overall** - an adapted shirt is perfectly adequate but plastic ones are best and a **named PE bag** .

**All items marked \* are regulation and must be purchased from the**

School Shop. All other non-regulation items **except** shoes are also available.

The clothes should be marked with Cash's name tapes which can be ordered through the School Shop. **Outer articles of sports clothing must be named ON THE OUTSIDE, on the front right hand side wherever possible.**

### **School Clothing Shop**

The School Shop is situated opposite the Sport's Hall (car park end) at the Senior School and managed by Mrs Sandy. It is always worth telephoning her in advance so that there is ample time for her to help you if you have a number of items to buy.

Telephone Number:       01823 284307

School Shop opening hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm

The shop is also open at each end of the major school holidays. However, it is best to phone the above number to confirm the days it will be open and to make an appointment.

Queen's PSA run a termly second-hand uniform sale from the Junior school.

## The Curriculum

Our Curriculum is broad, balanced, inclusive. Learning is lots of fun in the Pre-Prep, we teach using a variety of methods which appeal to all learning styles, using a combination of topic based learning as well as discrete subject teaching.

We aim to provide the children with firm foundations on which to build future learning, within a happy, stimulating and purposeful learning environment.

Our lessons are carefully planned to ensure that each child progresses at their own pace. Ongoing informal assessments inform our teaching and planning. The small class sizes and high adult / pupil ratio allows us to help the children achieve their full potential.

Education is a partnership between school and home. Early in September we hold a curriculum evening for parents which gives more detail about their child's year ahead. This also gives lots more information about the transition through Key Stage One.

There are many ways in which you can support your child's learning through Pre Prep. In Literacy we follow the Read Write Inc scheme of work. This is a very successful, synthetic phonics programme developed by Ruth Miskin. Parental support is extremely important and by hearing your child read as often as possible they will soon become fluent and confident readers. Reading books are changed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In addition weekly spellings are sent home for the children to learn. In Year 2 weekly numeracy homework will start in the Spring Term linked to their maths topic.

At Queen's we value children as individuals and encourage them to develop as confident, independent learners. To support this we have incorporated the SEAL scheme of work. This is a whole school approach to social and emotional aspects of learning. It teaches the children to

express themselves, problem solve and develop independent thinking and learning skills.

Queen's is a Methodist school with a broadly Christian approach. The Chaplain, Rev Robert Blackhall, comes in every week to take assembly and to talk to the children. When ever possible, we encourage parents to join us for special events, for example, our Harvest Thanksgiving, Christmas services, Plays, Musical presentations and Class Assemblies.

We strive to raise children's self esteem by praise and encouragement and each week children who have performed particularly well during the week are chosen for merit badges. Children are also awarded Star badges for achievement in Sport, Music, Ballet etc. The children wear their badges for the week and then return them to their class teacher. Stickers are also given by staff for instant praise and encouragement. In addition to this, we award prizes to those children in Year 2, who have made outstanding progress, at our annual speech day

In Key Stage One the children benefit from additional specialist teaching. Swimming and P.E lessons are taken by Mrs Hoskins and Mr Wilde. Weekly French lessons are taught by Madame Alcock following the 'Jolie Ronde' scheme of learning.

We are fortunate to have the help and advice of Mrs Gill Harrison, who is our Pre Prep Learning Support Teacher. She is able to structure specific programmes of help if needed. We aim to identify and deal with any difficulties at an early stage, as experience has shown that this is most beneficial to the child.

We hold regular parents' evenings on an appointments system towards the end of each term. Written reports go out at the end of the Autumn and Summer term.

### **Record Keeping**

A folder of the children's work is kept, plus formal records of reading and mathematical progress and any assessment procedures. Termly parents' meetings and regular reports make up a vital home/school link.

### **At the end of the School Year**

Towards the end of every academic year, your child will have a number of opportunities to meet their new class teacher(s) and visit their new classroom. At the end of Year 2, the children spend the morning in the Junior School with their new Form Teachers.

### **Outings**

We frequently take the children out and about and encourage them to explore their local environment. Signed consent forms are required before every outing. Parents are also advised about the nature of the trip, times, dates and any specific information including costs which will appear on the end-of-term bills. A risk assessment is carried out for any off-site activity.

### **Forest School at Queen's College Pre-Prep**

In Years 1 and 2 these sessions take place during the Autumn and Summer terms and may be offered as a weekly afternoon activity. These sessions may extend beyond the end of the school day. Children attending Forest School will need to have appropriate clothing to wear.

Mrs Williams, Miss Hardwick and Mrs Goss have the BTEC Level 3 Advanced Forest School leader qualification for teaching Forest School.

## **The Origins of Forest School**

In Denmark Forest schools have been an integral part of Early Years Education since the 1980s. The philosophy of the Forest School was based upon the desire to provide young children with an education which encouraged appreciation of the wide, natural world and which would encourage responsibility for nature conservation in later life.

"Only through ready access to the outdoors and stimulating outdoor provision can a child's physical development, personal, social and emotional well-being and learning across the curriculum flourish".

Marjorie Ouvrey

The Forest School approach is a unique way to deliver the curriculum, from the Foundation Stage of life long learning. Whilst it offers many opportunities to target all areas of the curriculum it raises self-esteem, confidence, encourages independence and provides opportunities for active outdoor play and discovery. The outdoor provides opportunities to improve relationships and communication skills between all participants offering a memorable and valuable learning experience.

Quote - Queen's Reception Child 2009

"Forest School is the best time ever at school".

## **Dressing for Forest School**

We ask that all children have lightweight waterproof trousers, coat and Wellington boots in school to wear for their Forest School Sessions. Forest School clothing needs to be kept at school at all times.

Initially our Forest School projects will run from our own school grounds/gardens/playing fields (where appropriate), allowing the children

to become comfortable with an outdoor approach to education and play whilst in familiar surroundings. This also allows relationships to develop, based around trust and self-exploration with our Forest School leaders, to facilitate a more child-led outdoor curriculum.

Once the children are familiar with the routines of Forest School they will have introductory sessions in our chosen woodlands, exploring the site establishing physical and behavioural boundaries, safety procedures, hygiene and routines.

Once the group is established in the woodland and routines are set up, our Forest School projects will develop through a child-led approach with opportunities for projects to be taken back and extended at school.

### **Our Forest School Sites**

Once the children are familiar with our school grounds we will be using Murlinch Wood, Corfe, Fyne Court, Castle Neroche and Combe Florey Wood.

The woodland sites will have a circle seating area (logs) around a fire pit and wind breaks to provide protection from all weathers to create a safe and cosy enclosed area for a calm time around the fire.

### **A Typical Day at Forest School within our School Grounds:**

#### **Health and Safety Checks**

Our Forest School Leaders will ensure that each member of the group has appropriate clothing, footwear and the children have been to the toilet before leaving the school.

For activities in the woodland the children will be taken to the minibus and then transported to the woodland.

The area is checked for any hazards and members of assisting staff are briefed on relevant safety issues (see minibus policy)

### **The General Session Outline:**

- Welcome song
- Shouting out names
- 1,2,3 Where are you? A hide and seek game
- Introduction to the woodland activity
- Main activity
- Circle-time and feedback (This is an important part of the day when the children can reflect on their experiences at Forest School)
- Café time, when the children have a snack and a drink.

Each activity is designed around a theme and is age and ability appropriate.

### **Staff to Child Ratios**

Generally the staff to child ratio will be 3 adults to 16 children.

When using sharp tools the ratios will be 1 adult to 1 child.

Tools are used in Forest School in a traditional woodland manner and are introduced gradually with a structured safety base with which the children become familiar. The use of tools in the wood promotes trust and self-confidence within the child; it develops both gross and fine motor skills.

### **Fire Safety**

The fire pit is positioned over 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  metres away from the seating area. Children are taught the dangers of fire and how to remain safe at all times. No child is allowed near the fire without being under strict

supervision by an adult. The children learn how fires are put out by watching the adults.

### **Taking Something Home**

The majority of the time when the children leave the woods they will take something with them to encourage parental interest and interaction. This will also serve to enhance communication within school, with friends as well as with parents or guardians.

Individual progress is observed/monitored and a thorough evaluation process is used to ensure that aims and objectives are met.

Forest School is an immensely valuable and rewarding experience for all children.

### **Parents' Social Association (PSA)**

The association exists to give an opportunity for social contact between staff, children and parents. Each year the committee runs a series of events including a regular "welcome" evening in September with food and wine and the Christmas Carol Service get-together. Other events may include a Christmas and Summer Fayre, walks, outings to the theatre or ten pin bowling. Some events are for all the family, others are for adults but all are informal and fun. We are very pleased to involve anyone who is interested in helping, either as a committee member or in any other role.

### **Queen's College Parent and Toddler Group**

Each term we run three Parent and Toddler group sessions in our Pre-Prep hall.

On Tuesdays from 2.00 - 2.30pm we have Music with Mummy for one to three year olds followed by a 'stay and play' session for both babies and

toddlers until 3.30pm, on Wednesdays for over ones we have a 'Creation Station' (a creative session for 1-3 year olds) and on Thursdays from 2.00 - 2.45pm we have Socatots for walkers to three year olds.

These are relaxed happy sessions and we welcome all new parents and their little ones.

Please see Miss Hayes in the Nursery if you would like to join either of the sessions.

### **Complaints**

Should problems arise the class teacher is the first person to speak to and in most cases problems can then be sorted out. However, Mrs Williams or Mr Backhouse are always available if you need to take the matter further or to talk about issues of policy, staffing or personal problems. Finally matters can be taken to Mr Chris Alcock the Headmaster of Queen's College, or the Governors. Any financial queries should be referred to the Financial Director Mr Richard Abolins.

### **Absences**

If a child is unwell or unable to attend school, please telephone 01823 278928 (Pre-Prep telephone number) before 9.00 am. At all other times, please ring Miss Julie Cameron in the Junior Office, telephone number 01823 272990, who will take a message. If you are in doubt at breakfast time about your child's health please keep them at home and bring them in later.

**Any child who has been sick must remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.**

Please write or telephone to inform us if a child has to be away from school for any reason, including illness, particularly if it is anything infectious or contagious.

We trust that, since we have long holidays, family holidays will be taken within those dates.

Please ensure you keep us updated with emergency contact details in case we need to contact you urgently during the school day. The Contact Form which you are asked to complete at the beginning of the school year is kept for this purpose.

### **Website**

For more information about Queen's College, please visit our Website at [www.queenscollege.org.uk](http://www.queenscollege.org.uk).