



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF EARLY YEARS CHILDREN POLICY

OUR ETHOS

Every child should be happy, secure, valued and confident. At Altrincham Preparatory School, our philosophy is to value every child as a unique individual, who enjoys learning and thinking for himself. We provide a supportive and secure environment in which every boy can flourish and learn at their own pace and in their own individual way. Our role is to stimulate and encourage their development and enjoyment of learning through a variety of different activities in secure indoor and outdoor situations, through play and through structured and creative activities. We encourage the growth of social skills and empathy amongst the children. The relationships which the children develop with each other and with our staff are central to their happiness and lay the best possible foundation for their future.

Rationale

The period from birth to five is one of rapid growth and development (DCFS)

Early childhood education provides the essential foundation for all future learning. We therefore need to provide a socially and emotionally secure environment with a less formal atmosphere, in which the children are able to learn successfully and play purposefully. We also need to provide an environment in which they are able to develop their language and mathematical skills and to explore and experiment.

Children will learn when:

- They feel secure, valued and confident
- They find learning to be a pleasurable and rewarding experience
- They are supported in school and at home
- They are interested and positive
- Their physical, intellectual, social and emotional abilities are taken into account
- They are encouraged to think about their learning and to develop independence
- They are provided with first-hand experience and appropriate adult intervention
- They are encouraged to use play and talk as media for learning
- Their progress is assessed and recorded and used to inform future planning

Aims

We aim to provide a curriculum that should underpin all future learning by supporting, fostering, promoting and developing children.

APS aims to provide a secure, stimulating and positive learning environment where children can:

- Develop intellectually, socially and emotionally
- Develop curiosity in the world around them
- Develop a good moral judgement
- Develop good communication skills
- Become independent learners and creative thinkers
- Become happy and confident learners, with high self-esteem

The Staff in the Early Years Unit at APS aims to achieve these objectives by:

- Ensuring that each child is equally valued and reaches their full potential
- Providing a safe, stimulating environment, both indoors and outdoors
- Planning for and delivering a broad, balanced curriculum
- Recognising and recording individual children's progress and achievements
- Establishing a positive, on-going partnership with parents and families, acknowledging the vital role they play in their child's education

APS – A Positive Start!

ALTRINCHAM PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Altrincham Preparatory School is a school that caters for children from 3 - 11. All of the children who enter our Nursery and Reception Classes are part of our School community. The Head Master will extend a warm welcome when you visit and will show you our facilities. He will be pleased to answer any of your questions, either about our Nursery and/or Reception, or about the rest of the school. We send parents and prospective parents copies of the school's prospectus on request, or parents themselves can download the web site information. The website gives details of the school's address, location and contact details, and the name of the Chair of Governors, as well as a great deal of information about the aims and ethos of the whole school. A great deal of further information about the school is available on our web site, [including a list of the whole school's policies, including those that apply specifically to the EYFS provision. Copies can be sent to you on request.

As an integral part of the school, the Nursery boys, located at Marlborough Road make full use of the Junior School's facilities, such as the school hall, although they have a separate Nursery indoor and outdoor play areas of their own. We expect our Nursery boys to remain pupils in our school until they reach the age of 11.

Altrincham Preparatory School is registered with the DCSF as an early years provider. We participate in the Government's Nursery voucher scheme for 3 and 4 year old children.

ADMISSIONS

Boys who have turned 3 on or before 31st August of the previous academic year can join us at the start of the autumn term either for the whole school day or for mornings only (finish at 1.15pm) for the five days of the school week subject to availability. Our Admissions Form will be provided on personal contact with the school.

We take a maximum of 70 boys, divided between our Nursery and Reception classes (30 boys in the Nursery and 40 boys in Reception, split between two Reception classes).

We prefer children to be able to dress and undress with minimum help and to be able to use a knife and fork before they join us. Boys must also be toilet trained.

The whole school's admissions policy applies to the EYFS setting as much as to the rest of the school. It appears on our web site, and copies can be sent to parents on request.

Equal Opportunities Policy

We welcome children from a diverse range of backgrounds and pride ourselves on being an inclusive community where there is complete equality of opportunity and everyone is valued for being him or herself. Copies of the school's Equal Opportunities Policy are on our web site and can be sent to parents on request. We are non-selective at point of entry (Nursery and Reception) and so welcome children with disabilities and special education needs, and adhere to the Government's SEN Code of Practice.

PUPIL NUMBERS AND OUR DAILY ROUTINE

Children who have turned 3 on or before 31st August of the previous academic year can join us at the start of the autumn term or, if capacity allows, at a later stage, either for the whole day (9.15 am – 3.15pm) or for mornings only (9.15 am – 1.15pm), for the five days of a normal school week.

Children attending the morning session in Nursery stay for lunch, which is served at just before noon.

Children who have turned 4 on or before 31st August of the previous academic year can join us at the start of the autumn term or, if capacity allows, at a later stage, in Reception. Reception children join us from September, for the full day (8.45am – 3.15pm).

Our term dates are on our web site and are sent to parents.

Procedures when a Child is not Collected on Time

Please refer to our separate policy: "Missing Child Policy and Procedures when a Child is not Collected on Time," copies of which are on our web site. Copies can be sent to parents on request.

OUR STAFF

Mrs. Makepeace-Taylor is our Early Years' Phase Leader and is responsible for the Curriculum Management and Leadership of the EYFS section of the school (with the guidance of the Head and the Deputy Head).

She is a Reception teacher and is supported by Mrs. Bacon (her parallel Reception class teacher and KS1 Phase Leader) and Miss. Evans, who is in charge of the Nursery Department with day to day responsibility for all of its activities.

Specialist teachers for PE/Games, Music and French also work within the EYFS setting.

The Nursery is supported by two full-time, fully trained teaching assistants and we also have two Lunchtime supervisors who assist the teacher and teaching assistants during the lunchtime session. Teachers and teaching assistants cover the playtime responsibilities.

The Reception classes have two fully-trained teaching assistants; one full-time teaching assistant and one part-time teaching assistant. As for the Nursery, we also have a Lunchtime Supervisor who assists staff during the lunchtime session. Teachers and teaching assistants cover the playtime responsibilities.

The children are supervised by qualified staff at all times when they are under our care, including break, lunch and play times. All teachers in the EYFS and two teaching assistants (one Nursery, one Reception) are fully trained in Paediatric First Aid. All members of the team have received Safeguarding Training.

Our specialist teachers, for Music, French and PE are all fully trained teachers.

OUR FOUNDATION STAGE CURRICULUM

At Altrincham Preparatory School we offer a broad and balanced Foundation Stage curriculum for our youngest pupils, which is based upon the Early Learning Goals and the six areas of learning. All children are given equal access and opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

All children learn through play with a mixture of child initiated and teacher led learning opportunities. Learning takes place both indoors and outdoors.

Our Early Years' programme is planned on a two-year basis in our Nursery and Reception classes. We introduce different topics which the children explore through a variety of mediums, including books, art, clay, drama, music, ICT, crafts and model making. We gradually introduce synthetic phonics and the basics of literacy are taught daily through a structured reading scheme and rhyme. Numeracy is introduced through different activities, such as counting games, weighing activities and measuring, and is also taught daily. All children are encouraged to participate in PE/Games/Dance, Music and French. All children are gradually introduced to the principles of writing, and to the use of computers. By the end of two years, the children in Reception are enthusiastic and confident learners, who are ready for the more structured, less play-based, environment of Year 1.

The Annual Curriculum Meeting

All parents of children in the EYFS setting are invited to a welcome meeting just after the start of the autumn term, when the aims of the year's curriculum, the topics that will be studied and the methods of delivering the curriculum through play, structured activities and outdoor activities will be briefly explained.

Parental involvement

Parents are central to the early academic and social development of their sons.

We recognise the importance of parents as their child's first educator and as active partners in their son's continuing education. Regular communication is encouraged and parents are invited to discuss their child's progress with Early Years staff at any time (appointments can be made to discuss issues or concerns in more detail).

Workshops are also held during the year to inform and support parents, so that they are more able to assist their son effectively with his phonics work, reading, writing and Maths at Home activities.

Parents are encouraged to come into school to share in our "Bring an adult" activity days (for example, Art Mornings, Christmas Decorating Day, Book Making Day and so on). They are also encouraged to support educational visits and any specialist knowledge or expertise that parents can offer is welcomed and actively sought by staff (for example, knowledge of particular religion, a profession which links with a topic). Volunteer help is always appreciated, for example, with artwork, cooking or ICT.

Please also see the "Home-School Partnership" document, which acknowledges the importance of a positive relationship between children, parents and teachers.

Assemblies

Assembly is held every day for the Reception classes. Assemblies are formal occasions which foster the development of self-restraint and a collective spirit. Assemblies provide an excellent public setting in which to commend children for special work, acts of kindness or helpfulness, and to reward them with stickers/special certificates/gold stars. Reception operates a "Merit Badge" scheme, when one pupil from each of the two Reception classes are given special commendation by the Head Master, along with KS1, at Highbury.

We also celebrate behaviour in our outside environment with our Golden Ticket scheme.

Nursery operates a similar scheme, sharing assemblies at Marlborough Road.

Outdoor Learning

All of the children are encouraged to play in their dedicated, secure outdoor space during morning and afternoon breaks, except in the worst weather. We also use the outdoor space for supervised activities, involving playing with water, sand and some ball games. Reception children are encouraged to plant and grow their own seeds. The school has secure grounds and children are regularly taken in supervised groups inside the school grounds to learn about the seasons of the year, by collecting autumn leaves, observing animals etc.

Visits

We organise excursions to the zoo and farm etc as part of the curriculum we deliver. We require signed permission slips each time, for even the shortest visits. We will send you a letter well in advance, telling you about every visit and, if appropriate, its cost and whether it involves an extension to the normal length of the school day. Copies of our policy on visits for EYFS children are on our web site and can be sent to parents on request.

Behaviour

Even the youngest children are encouraged to behave towards each other with kindness and consideration. They have to learn to look after their own possessions and to respect other's possessions. We expect them to be honest, helpful and polite, and to work hard and to listen to others. They should respect everyone and learn to value differences and diversity.

Mrs Makepeace-Taylor has day-to-day responsibility for the management of behaviour, supported by the Deputy Head at Highbury, a responsibility delegated to her by the Head Master. Due to the Nursery's physical separation from the Reception classes, Miss. Evans, our Nursery teacher, is in day to day charge of the management of behaviour in the Nursery Department and is supported by the Head Master, who is based on the same site.

We explain to children why some forms of behaviour are unacceptable and hurtful to others. We rarely need to impose sanctions; but sometimes we may remove a treat for hurtful behaviour. Occasionally, a child may see the Head Master, who will explain the inappropriateness of a particular action; but such instances are rare.

Parents are always informed, either in person or by telephone, when any sanction or reproof is needed. A record is kept in the child's file of this conversation. In cases of repeated instances of hurtful or inappropriate behaviour, they will be invited into the school to discuss the situation with their child's Teacher in order to agree a joint way of handling the difficulty. If the behaviour so merits, this discussion may involve the Head Master.

Our Behaviour Management Policy for EYFS and KS1 is on our website and can be sent to parents on request.

FOOD AND DRINK

Children in the Nursery are offered a piece of fruit and a drink of either water or of milk at both morning and afternoon break. Drinking water is available throughout the day, as we fully recognise the importance of proper hydration. Boys are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school.

Children in Reception are asked to provide their own healthy snack and water bottle each day.

All boys in the EYFS setting have a hot meal at 11.45am in their appropriate dining area. They are taken to the dining room by their teacher, who remains for as long as he/she is required, and they are helped and supervised throughout the meal time by the Classroom Assistants and the lunch time assistants.

Weekly menus are put onto our web site. We offer a choice of menu at each sitting, with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and salads. We offer our pupils a widely varied and healthy and tasty diet. We also attempt to cater for all tastes and preferences, including vegetarian. Our meat is prepared according to Halal custom.

Special Diets

Parents of children who have allergies to any food product, or who have special dietary requirements, are asked about this at interview and are asked to make this clear in the medical questionnaire they receive prior to entry. They should inform the school at once if their son subsequently develops an intolerance of any food. The Catering Manager is happy to see any parent who has concerns about their son's medical condition, and to devise a special menu, where practically possible.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

We appreciate that sending your child to School is a big step and that it is understandable that some parents may worry or feel anxious about their son's well-being and happiness. That is why we invite your son to spend time in the Nursery or Reception classes before he joins us. Once he has joined us, you are always welcome to visit the school.

Your son's class teacher is responsible for your child's pastoral care and they speedily get to know every individual boy extremely well. You will see the class teacher twice a day when you drop off and collect your child, and many worries can be speedily resolved by an informal chat at this time – do please be mindful that they do have other concerns at this time to attend to.

If meeting at this time is not appropriate, e.g. time constraints, privacy, you are welcome to make an appointment for an individual conversation with him/her, or with Mrs Makepeace-Taylor or the Deputy Head or Head Master. Any concerns will always be treated in complete confidence.

Our website is a very useful way of keeping up to date; it is full of examples of children's work and news about activities and outings. We send invitations to parents to a number of events during the year, and very much hope to see you at:

- The Harvest Festival
- The Christmas Play
- The Easter Celebration
- Sports' Day
- Open Day
- End of Year Celebrations

Parents' Evenings

We start each academic year with a welcome meeting to which all parents in the year group are invited, at which we outline the Nursery and Reception plans for the year. We hold Parents' meetings during the second half of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms at which parents have the opportunity to talk to their son's teacher about his progress and to raise any worries which they may have.

Reports

Children are assessed throughout their time through observations, questioning and activities using the Early Learning Goals in the Nursery and the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile in Reception.

Narrative reports are prepared on each child and sent to parents at the end of the halfway through the Spring term and at the end of the Summer term. The mid-year report is an interim report whilst the end of year report is a more in depth record.

EYFS Profile

At the end of your child's two years of "early years" education, we complete a detailed "EYFS Profile" on your son which summarises his learning and development against 13 assessment scales and 69 learning goals, which have been determined by the Government. You will of course, receive your own copy, which we will discuss with you at the time that it is completed. We are required to send your child's EYFS to Trafford Local Education Authority.

Storage of Records

All records are passed on to the child's next teacher. Parents may arrange to see the records of their children in accordance with the whole school's policy on Reports and Record Keeping (which is on our web site and can be sent to you on request). You have the right to make written comments on your child's records, which will then be treated as part of that record. The School is registered under the Data Protection Act and complies with its provisions for example, about the disclosure of information relating third parties.

COMPLAINTS

We hope that you will not feel the need to complain and that any difficulty can be sensitively and efficiently handled before it reaches any need to move towards formal procedures. However, the school's complaints procedures (which apply equally to the EYFS section) are on our web site. We will send you copies on request. We undertake to investigate all complaints and to notify you of the outcome of investigation within the stated time period. We maintain records of complaints for three years after your child has left our school.

Although the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is responsible for inspecting the EYFS setting, because it is part of an independent school, parents should though be aware that if they are dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint, they are entitled to make a complaint directly to Ofsted. They can download the Ofsted leaflet: "Complaints to Ofsted about Schools: Guidance for Parents" reference 080113 from www.ofsted.gov.uk .

SAFEGUARDING

The school's safeguarding policies, including its policy for the safer recruitment of staff, are enforced rigorously in the EYFS setting. Copies of the policies, which apply throughout the school, are on our web site and can be sent to parents on request.

MEDICAL MATTERS

Please keep your child at home if he is ill or infectious, and phone or e-mail us on the first day that he is ill. An ill child will not be happy in school, and will only infect others. We will therefore telephone you and ask you to collect your child if he or she becomes ill during the day. If your son has been unwell, particularly if he has vomited or experienced diarrhoea, during the evening and night, please keep him at home until 48 hours has elapsed since the last episode.

We will *always* contact you at once if your son suffers anything more than a trivial injury, or if he becomes unwell during school day, or if we have any worries or concerns about his health. We will ask you to collect your son if becomes ill during the school day. We will inform you by note if he or she has a minor accident or graze at school.

Medical Care

Although your son will normally receive medical care from your family GP practice; we hold medical information on all our pupils in order to ensure that we can provide appropriately for their needs, or look after them if they are injured or have an accident. We would therefore be grateful if you would ensure that you complete and return the medical questionnaire that is sent to you before he joins the school.

Children with Medical Needs or Special Education Needs who require special adjustments

If your child has medical needs, special education needs or requires any special adjustments, we will invite you to a meeting with Mrs Makepeace-Taylor and Mrs McNally, the school's SENCo, and any outside Specialist who has been involved with the care of your child, to discuss thoroughly the regime that is most appropriate for his individual care, well before he joins the Reception classes or the Nursery.

Medical Records

We keep records of all treatments that your child receives during his or her time at the school. We record all accidents and injuries to your child and of all medicines that are given to him or her. We will always tell you in writing if your child has received any form of medical treatment – however minor.

These records will be kept in your son's file throughout his time at school.

Emergency Medical Treatment

In accepting a place at the school, we require parents to authorise the Head Master, the Deputy Head or the Early Years' Phase Leader or an authorised deputy acting on the Head Master's behalf, to consent on the advice of an appropriately qualified medical specialist to your child receiving emergency medical treatment, including general anaesthetic and surgical procedure under the NHS, if we are unable to contact you in time.

Medicines and Treatments Brought to School for Pupils

Please advise your son's class teacher of any medication that you bring into the school for your son. If your son has a medical condition which necessitates regular access to medication, please inform the Head Master, the Early Years' Phase Leader or the Nursery teacher so that an appropriate regime can be devised. The relevant staff will

be informed, in confidence, of any condition that is likely to affect him in any area of school life. We will work with you in making arrangements that work best for him.

Copies of our Policy for Administering Medicines can be seen on our website/sent to you on request.

Please remember that we need your written consent for every medicine before we are allowed to give it to your child.

Medical Questionnaire

All parents of new pupils are requested to complete and return the school's medical questionnaire before your son starts the school.

MAINTAINING A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT

The safety of the children is our highest priority, and because they are so young, we need to be particularly vigilant. We will therefore:

- Only allow your child to go home with you, unless we have received your advance permission (preferably in writing) that he may be collected by another adult.
- Never allow a boy to leave the premises unsupervised. Ask all visitors to identify themselves and to state their business before we give them access to the premises. Visitors sign in, wear security badges and are escorted throughout their visit. They sign out on leaving.
- Register all pupils at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- Check all pupils out as they are collected by their parents or carers
- The arrangements for handing over children to the care of their parents at the end of the day
In Nursery, boys wait in their classroom until parents arrive. One child is handed over at a time, to the appropriate parent or carer, by the Class Teacher or teaching assistant.
In Reception, boys are led out in to the playground, where they are required to stand behind the "yellow line" until the Reception Teachers or teaching assistant have made eye-contact with the parent/carer.
In both Nursery and Reception, we only allow your child to go home with you, unless we have received your advance permission (preferably in writing) that he may be collected by another adult.
- The arrangements for registering the children in both morning and afternoon sessions. Children in both Nursery and Reception are registered at the start of the morning and the afternoon sessions. The children also self-register as they arrive (e.g. adding their name rocket to the launch pad!), just in case there was an incident during the fifteen minute "arrival window".
- The physical security measures which prevent unsupervised access to or exit from the building
At the Marlborough Road site, the Nursery is protected by a locked door (key pad entrance only) and a gated playground area.
- At Highbury, the Reception is protected by automated gates at the entrance on West Road, a key-pad entrance and a secure fence around the playground. The supervision of the playground

Teachers and teaching assistants cover the playtime responsibilities on a rota system, to ensure suitable ratios. Additional members of staff are available in first aid situations.

Missing Child Policy

Our Missing Child Policy and our Procedures concerning when a Child is not Collected on Time are on our web site and are sent to new parents, if they request a paper copy.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

We update and review our risk assessments on the EYFS classrooms and other indoor areas, the outdoor play space and all the equipment and toys used by the children every year in order to ensure that everything with which your child may come into contact has been assessed and that potential hazards are kept to a minimum.

Reviewed: November 2009

Revised: January 2010