



ST CHAD'S PATCHWAY CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Re: Welcome and general information.

Dear Parents and carers,

Welcome back to the new school year at St Chad's Primary. It is such a privilege to see the start of each academic year, the initial nerves (for some) not knowing what their new classroom, teacher, work etc is going to be like is quickly overtaken by smiles, stories of the summer and smiling happy children. I have been very impressed this year with the superb behaviour from the very second of walking through the school gates, it seems each pupil really wants this year to be the best for them and are working hard to make it so.

I am always so proud of all of the children (and staff) when I visit the classes on the first morning; the classes are ready for the year, excited, engaged and ready to learn. I wish you could see it, you would be very proud too!

We extend an especially warm welcome to the new families starting with us this year in Reception and those who have joined in other year groups as well. I'm sure you'll make the families welcome, as you always do at St Chad's. Please remember that next Friday (18th) is the welcome BBQ straight after school. Look out for more information.

At the start of the year there will be many letters and texts about things to look out for or be aware of, such as upcoming clubs, trips and so on, so do watch out for those. Please also remember that letters can be found on our school website:

<http://www.stchadsprimaryschool.co.uk/letters/>

I would like to remind you of a few important items which will make the year a little easier.

Universal Free School Meals has been very successful and pupils are really enjoying their lunches. Please remember that if your child is moving into Year 3, they will no longer be eligible and will either need to apply for Pupil Premium (please see the website for more details) or pay for school dinners. Copies of the dinner menus were sent home last term, if you require another copy, please ask the office. Pupil premium brings a lot of benefits, not least £100 for you to spend on school items!

Attendance. We have had three years of in line with national average attendance and last year slipped a little, being the lowest attendance we have had for the past 4 years. Please remember that unless for illness or *exceptional* circumstances, absence during term time (including holidays) will be recorded as unauthorised. If more than 10 sessions (=5 days) are recorded as unauthorised, the school is duty bound to request South Gloucestershire Council issue a penalty notice. There are two sessions in one school day, so a week of holiday will equal 10 sessions. This is further explained in letter Holidays in Term time and also in our Attendance policy, both of which can be found on our website. Please support your school in giving the very best all round education to your child by ensuring they attend, thank you.

Snacks and drinks. It has always been the rule that pupils are permitted to bring a small snack and drink for break times. This is separate to their lunches. There are plenty of water fountains across school, but if you wish your child to bring bottles of drink and a snack, we ask that pupils bring *water* and either real fruit or a plain biscuit if you choose to bring such refreshments. Linking with the national drive to improve the way pupils eat, chocolates, sweets and other such snacks are not allowed at break times. Equally, the mess made when a bottle of squash leaks in a classroom or corridor necessitates us asking for water only please.

Morning drop off. As you know, the new EYFS pupils are starting school and many being only 4 years old. It is *really important* that they are able to leave their parents hand and walk to a receiving teacher. For the year ones who have been used to a similar drop off last year, we will continue to have their class teacher to greet them for a while, which means we have two year groups being directly handed over to teachers during the morning drop off. I am sure you will understand that a forest of adults in the path is quite daunting for young children, and so we ask that parents of older pupils who wish to wave one more goodbye after you have dropped them off, stand in a way that does not block the gates, allowing the youngest pupils to feel a little less worried and allowing staff to help ease their start in school. Also if you could encourage your child not to stand in a way that blocks the gates this will further erase the four year old's journey into big school. Thank you.

School start time. School officially starts at 9.00. A few years ago as a gesture of goodwill, we agreed to staff the playground from 8.50 onwards, giving parents and carers an extra few minutes to get to their next destination after drop off. You will appreciate that most of the staff arrive at or before 7.30 and that hour or so before 9.00 is a very important time of the day for them. As such, we are not able to staff the playground before the good will 8.50 time. Please can I ask that pupils do not arrive at school before this time (unless they are an official morning helper, or part of an organised club) as they will not be supervised and we cannot guarantee their safety.

Welcome to new staff. You may have already spotted our new staff members, and their roles in school were explained in a letter sent at the end of last academic year. In case you missed this, we welcome Helen Marsland (EYFS) Nicole Scott (EYFS) and Joe Lane (Upper KS2).

Lots of information is shared in the school newsletters, all of which are also available on our website <http://www.stchadsprimaryschool.co.uk/newsletters/>. These are invaluable resources if you are interested in news and events that happened at the end of last term (this also includes a summary of the year) and if you are so inclined you are able to look back over the last few years.

For those of you new to the school, I would like to take this opportunity to explain that we are an open school, if you have anything you would like to discuss, please pop in and have a chat with your class teacher or with myself. One of the factors of the success of St Chad's Primary School is that we all want the best for your child and aim to work together as a team to create an environment where they will flourish.

With best wishes for another happy and successful year.

Kind regards,

Darren Brown
Headteacher.

