
Starting School



Information for parents and
carers

Dear Parents and Carers

We would like to welcome you and your child to the EYFS at Stower Provost Primary School and the start of their school journey.

We hope that this guide will answer many of the questions you have about your child starting school but please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any further questions.

Welcome to Hazel Class. We are looking forward to working in partnership with you, to provide the best possible start for your child's education.

As part of our role we aim to provide the children with a happy, safe and secure learning environment where they will be encouraged to explore their interests and learn new skills. We have already planned an exciting start to the autumn term.

Miss Laura Buxton (Teacher)

We look forward to seeing you in September.

What is the Foundation Stage?

The Foundation Stage (EYFS) claims its name and importance from the fact it gives children secure foundations for later learning. Early experiences affect children's attitude to learning so it is vitally important we get it right. All children learn best from experiences that are suitable for their stage of development.

Play is key to the way young children learn. Through play, children can develop, for example: the confidence needed for learning; the social skills needed for personal development and the skills needed for reading and writing. We encourage independence from an early stage to aid problem solving skills.

Taking all this into account, the children will be given the opportunity to learn through a carefully planned, well-balanced, topic-based curriculum.

Our Aim

In our Early Years we aim to develop the whole person, one that is happy, independent and enquiring who can enthusiastically meet the challenges in the learning environment we provide.

How do we set out to achieve our aim?

- by providing carefully planned play experiences that enable the children to develop skills and co-operate with others.
 - by offering opportunities for children to actively explore and investigate their surroundings.
 - providing access to outdoor facilities.
 - providing a loving and secure environment.
 - enabling children to express their feelings.
 - to encourage the development of self-confidence and independence
 - to provide opportunities to interact with his or her peers.
-

- to provide opportunities for the promotion of communication, listening and reasoning skills, including the use of their first language.
- to encourage creativity and the use of imagination.
- to encourage learning through direct experience.
- to provide opportunities for children to direct their own learning.
- to consolidate learning through application, talk and reflection.
- to develop respect for the beliefs of other people and their ways of life by learning about the different cultures found in our community.
- by positive partnerships between home and school.

Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

EYFS children learn through the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This curriculum is based on the philosophy that children need time to explore the new ideas they are being taught through play.

There are seven areas of learning in the EYFS:

Prime Areas:

1. **Personal, Social and Emotional Development** relates to developing confidence and independence, building good relationships and to enjoy sharing as part of a group.
2. **Physical Development** relates to improving control and coordination of the body while learning to move and handle equipment efficiently.
3. **Communication and Language** covers communication with one another and developing skills in speaking and listening.

Specific Areas:

4. **Literacy** covers reading and writing skills.

5. **Mathematics** involves using ideas about number, quantity, measurement, shape and space.

6. **Understanding the World** covers investigating and beginning to understand the things, places and people around them.

7. **Expressive Arts and Design** involves finding ways to communicate by using colour, shape, sound, texture, movement and stories.

Play, Learning & Assessment in Foundation Stage

Adult directed learning

Why is there so much play in Early Years?

We value the importance of play and it is fundamental to the delivery of the Early Years Curriculum. Play that is well planned and structured, through provision of appropriate resources, space, time and intervention, helps children to think, increase their understanding and improve their language skills. It allows children to be creative, explore, investigate and apply what they have learnt. Young children learn most effectively through first-hand experience provided by play. It catches and sustains their interest, thereby motivating their learning.

Child initiated learning

What is independent learning?

A situation in which, within the curriculum framework, opportunities are provided for the child to decide what activity he/she wishes to undertake. They may plan verbally with a teacher or record pictorially. The independent learning times

gives children the opportunity to express ideas, reflect on and apply learning, to make decisions and discoveries and to engage in the first-hand experience. Discussing the activity afterwards allows children to reflect and evaluate what they have learnt with an adult.

Assessment

Children will be assessed within the class using the normal classroom activities during the first three weeks of schooling and a baseline assessment will be made by the class teacher. Using this baseline assessment, the teacher can then build on what the child already knows and plan their work according to each child's needs. Throughout the year we use an interactive assessment tool called 'Tapestry'. Tapestry allows us to record all of your child's progress and you have continuous access to it as well. You are able to view the evidence we are building and add to it with anything you see your child do outside of the school environment. At the end of the EYFS year, the children will be assessed again, and the outcomes and progress shared in the child's formal report.

Sharing with Parents

There are two parent's evenings which enable teachers to report on children's progress and to set future targets for learning. A written report will be given to parents in the summer term.

If you do have any worries or concerns about your child or your child's learning, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the school office where an appointment can be made with me.

Some pre-school activities

How to help you prepare your child for the learning experiences ahead:

Talk to your child at every opportunity and most importantly, encourage them to respond. Discuss what is happening around you when out and about with your child. Encourage your child to ask questions.

Give him/her a wide experience of activities such as:

- Drawing
- Singing
- Playing games – inside and outside
- Painting
- Making models
- Cooking
- Name writing

Let them get used to using:

- Scissors
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Paint
- Play dough

Enjoy books together:

- Use the library
- Share books together
- Re-read or retell favourite or familiar stories (such as traditional tales)
- Recite nursery rhymes
- Sing songs together

Find opportunities for sorting, counting and matching in everyday routines such as laying the table or putting things away.

Ten top things to enjoy before your child starts school

- Learn a new song or nursery rhyme each week
- Enjoy sharing a book together every day
- Visit the library regularly and choose books to take home
- Play with empty boxes –Where does your imagination take you?
- Draw pictures of things you have enjoyed doing together
- Go on a nature walk –What can you see, hear, touch and smell?
- Visit your local park –What will you discover together?
- Play I spy –What colours, numbers and letters can you see?
- Enjoy play dates with old friends and new
- Collect objects in a bag or a jar and make time to count them again and again

Once in School

School Times

Enter School:	8:40 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.
Morning session:	8:50 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Morning playtime:	10:45 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Afternoon session:	1:00 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.
School finishes:	3:20 p.m.

It is important for your child to keep to the school routine. Please ensure that he/she arrives on time in the morning or they will miss introductory sessions and may find it difficult to settle.

In order to keep your child safe, staff will only release children to authorised adults. In the event that you are delayed and cannot get to school in time, please telephone the school as soon as it is possible to do so. Please note that if someone who is not on your child's 'permission to collect' list comes to collect your child and you have not informed us; we will contact you to confirm they have your permission before we can allow them to leave with your child. If we are unable to get in contact with you, we will keep your child safe until we are able to contact you.

Dropping off and collecting your child

On the first day you will be able to come into the classroom to help your child with settling in, however we do ask that after the first day (unless they are finding separation difficult) that you then drop your child off at the playground entrance, where they can then walk down to their pegs. An adult will be there to meet the children at their pegs to support them getting ready for the day.

Attendance

Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. Research has shown there is an overwhelming connection between those pupils who are frequently absent and those who go on to underachieve in their future.

Tips for good school attendance:

- Good habits, establish good routines, such as going to bed on time.
- If your child is off school, you must let the school know why and tell them when they can expect your child back.
- Make all appointments for the doctor, dentist, optician etc. after school hours or during the school holidays.
- Don't let your child stay off school for a minor ailment.
- Take all holidays during the school holiday periods.

Uniform

All children are expected to wear the school uniform. Badged items such as polo-shirts and sweatshirts are available from South West School in Yeovil or online at

<https://www.swschoolwear.co.uk/shop/pcategory/schoolwear/sto-wer-provost-primary-school/>

Please feel free to buy other items from outlets of your choice. Please ensure that all garments are clearly named and that children can manage fastenings with as little help as possible. Black shoes, not trainers, are required in school. Velcro is preferable to laces! All hair bands should be school colours and discreet.

We also request that you provide your child with:

- a sun hat in sunny weather, (please apply sun cream before arriving at school).
 - a waterproof coat.
 - wellington boots– all children will need a named pair of wellington boots to keep in school.
-

Your child will need a book bag, which will be provided by the Friends of Stower Provost team. Also, they will need a P.E kit consisting of a royal blue t-shirt, blue shorts, jogging trousers and plimsolls. **Everything should be named.** The children will wear their PE kit to school on their PE days, which will be confirmed at the beginning of each new term. It is a good idea to keep some spare underwear/uniform in a bag on their peg in case of any toileting accidents.

Sensory experiences are central to our provision, which means that children often engage in messy play. **Remember...** a messy uniform at the end of the day means your child has been learning!

Assembly

EYFS children will participate in a class assembly every day. When they are ready to join the rest of the school, they will go into whole school assembly.

Lunch

The children have lunch at 12:00 p.m. Children have an opportunity to play in the playground after their lunch and a midday assistant (who will be responsible for their welfare at lunchtime) will care for them. Lessons recommence at 1:00 p.m.

Playtime

Morning playtime (with whole school) is 10:45 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Snack

Just before morning playtime we have a snack time in the classroom which is a healthy snack provided by the government fruit scheme. If you know your child likes a particular snack, please put these in your child's book bag daily, in a clearly named pot or with their name on the wrapper. This will still need to be a healthy fruit/vegetable snack. **In addition to snack**

time, children have independent access to drink water throughout the day. Please provide a named water bottle for your child to support this.

Milk will be provided at snack times for those who wish their child to have milk. Please see the 'Cool Milk' leaflet which will be in your pack.

Big Buddies

In September all of the children in Hazel will be linked up with a Year 5 or 6 'Big Buddy'. Throughout the year, Year 5/6 will support their Little Buddies when going out to the big playground for the first time, doing creative activities together, reading together, as well as many other exciting things.

Homework

In EYFS, children take home a reading book when we feel they are ready. We encourage children to read at home with a parent or carer and record this in the reading record book. The children will be set weekly real life maths challenges to complete at home. In addition, comprehension, phonics and handwriting activities will be sent home on a Thursday, to be returned the following Tuesday.

Parental Involvement in School

We look forward to working in partnership with you to provide the best possible start for your children's education. Your child's class teacher will be pleased to speak to you daily, please try to do so at the end of the session, rather than at the beginning when children are settling into the school day. If it is a more complex query, please call the school office to make an appointment with your child's class teacher.

Health Matters

If you have a specific worry about your child, do not hesitate to approach the class teacher who will be happy to listen and, hopefully, put your mind at rest. If your child has an injury that

did not happen in school – please ensure you inform a member of staff when you drop off in the morning.

We can only administer medicines detailed on a healthcare plan and these medicines must be clearly labelled and have been prescribed by a doctor.

If your child is unwell with a temperature, sickness or diarrhoea please keep them at home for 48 hours and until all symptoms have disappeared. Please also contact the school to let us know you child will not be attending every day that your child is off sick.

Universal Infant Free School Meals

All children can now get free school meals if they are in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2. Please see the separate information sheet about hot school meals, so you can register and order meals online.

Free School Meals

From Year 3, your child may be eligible for free school meals. You may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit. This is as long as you are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual gross income isn't more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' payment (paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit

Apply for free school meals

To apply, complete a free school meals application on-line:

<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/free-school-meals>

Dorset Free School Meals will check to confirm your entitlement. If you qualify, they will tell you straight away. You will then receive written confirmation within three working days.

How long will a free school meals award last?

Your child will receive a free school meal as long as:

- your child continues to attend a Dorset school
- All children who receive free school meals will remain eligible until at least 31st March 2025. This also applies to any new children who are approved before this date.

Applying for Pupil Premium

The pupil premium grant is designed to allow schools to help disadvantaged pupils by improving their progress and the exam results they achieve.

If you fit the eligibility criteria for free school meals and your child is in either EYFS, Year 1 or Year 2, your child's school may be eligible for pupil premium.

You may also be eligible for financial support for example, school trips and uniform. All new children that are eligible for Pupil Premium will be entitled to a free PE kit (T-shirt and shorts). Please speak to me or Mrs B, Head teacher, for information. Check the school's website to see how we use Pupil Premium to benefit our children.

Submit a free school meals application to apply for pupil premium for your school. Submitting an application will have no effect on your child's free school meal.

Breakfast and After School Club

We have a before and after school club at Stower Provost, please

contact the School Office for more information. Breakfast Club runs from 7:45 a.m. to 8:40 a.m. and you can choose to have breakfast or no breakfast. After School Club runs from 3:20 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and a small snack will be provided during this time.

The First Day

The Big Day has finally arrived! Although excited, your child may feel a little nervous, and you may be feeling anxious. Please

be as positive and cheerful as you can – even if your child is unsettled. Be assured, it will help your child to settle more quickly. If you remain concerned, you can always ring the school office on 01747 838370 later in the morning to check that all is well.

Please go in through the playground entrance on your first day and head to the EYFS cloakroom. An adult will be there to show your child to their pegs, and they can then head into their classroom with you, where you can help them settle. We do ask that parents aim to leave promptly once their child is happy.

Remember to pack:

- A named water bottle which will be put in a box in the classroom
 - A named piece of fruit or vegetable for snack time if wanting to bring own snack from home
 - Named PE kit which is to be hung on your child's peg
 - Named wellington boots
 - Spare underwear/uniform (does not need to be logo) in case of accidents
-

We can't wait to meet you!

