



# Ready for school



## Guide for parents

Dawpool Church of England (Aided) Primary School

**Welcome to Dawpool Church of England (Aided) Primary School Foundation 2 class. Starting school is a big event in the life of your child. It is the start of a whole new world of experiences, new people and new things to learn.**

It is the teacher's task to help your children make the change from home to school as easy as possible. We realise parents wish to help their children make a good start at school, therefore, the aim of this booklet is to give you information about our Foundation 2 area and the activities that take place so that your child will be able to settle in quickly and happily.

**Starting Foundation 2 (Reception)**

When children start school in September, there is an induction period of about two weeks. The children start in groups to allow numbers to build up gradually. This staggered start allows the teacher to spend a great deal of time getting to know the children as individuals and assess the strengths and development of each child as they begin school. All children will have a full time place once they start school and their day is 8.55am – 3.30pm. For some children, a part-time start would be beneficial initially.

**Attendance**

Regular attendance and punctuality is important in Foundation 2 to help your child to become familiar with the routines of the day. If your child is unable to attend school, please telephone school before 9.15am and let us know, sending a letter on their return giving a reason for their absence.

Children must be brought to school and collected each day by an adult. If there are any changes in who picks up your child please inform the school immediately. We will not let your child leave with anyone other than adults known to the staff and your child.

**The Foundation Stage Curriculum**

Children in the Foundation Stage follow the Foundation Stage Curriculum, which provides experiences in the following areas:

**Prime Areas:**

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language

**Specific Areas:**

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Children learn through play. Their play is their work. They learn to share, co-operate, discuss and investigate through different activities.

During their time in Foundation, your child will have constant access to a wide range of resources and activities, specifically selected and designed to support and extend their learning.

The children have access to their own out-door learning environment and we aim to spend some time outside each day.

The children are assessed at regular intervals using the Wirral Foundation Stage Profile. Parents are invited to share and contribute to these assessments.

### **Drinks and Snacks**

All children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a piece of fresh fruit every afternoon and have access to water each day.

We do offer toast as a healthy mid-morning snack at a cost of £1.00 per week.

### **What you can do to help**

There are many ways in which you can help and support your child in their learning before they start and during their time in the Foundation Stage.

### **Learning to share**

Starting school is a time when your child will be making new friends. Children make friends easily if they can get on with other children. But they have to learn to 'give-and-take'. How do they manage their frustration? It's easier to learn this at home than at school.

Does your child know how to share? For example to allow other children to play with his/her toys, so that at school s/he can understand that a pot of crayons or a box of toys is for everyone to use.

Even if your child has been at a pre-school it is likely that numbers there are smaller than at school. Having to share with 29 other children does not come naturally to most children.





### **Learning to be independent**

At home a child is secure and happy. To be equally secure and happy in school, your child must be a little independent, and feel s/he can cope without you there. Can your child dress and undress, manage buttons and zips, put on shoes, hats and gloves?

*Can s/he use the toilet independently, and know how to wash and dry hands?*

*Can your child blow his/her nose?*

*Can s/he use a knife, fork and spoon? Is s/he used to sitting at the table to eat his/her meals?*

*If s/he is to bring a packed lunch, have a trial run at home making sure that they can open packaging. Ensure that your child collects up the rubbish afterwards and leaves a tidy table behind.*

*Could your child recognise his/her name and surname on a coat peg, work book or item of clothing?*

*Does your child know his/her own address?*

*What about being able to tidy things away and hang things up? A child can learn this at home if given little jobs to help around the house.*

### **Learning through play**

Children learn through play – their play is their work. You don't need expensive toys. Your child will have better learning opportunities with such things as sand, a bucket of water and a plastic bottle, old boxes, crayons, some play-doh, a baking set and some spare pastry, plasticine, dressing-up clothes, a 'pretend' hat. Your child will benefit far more from playing with these items than electronic toys such as Playstation, DS or Wii or watching DVDs.

Don't let your child be afraid of getting dirty. Let him/her try messy activities at home. Does s/he help you to bake? Does s/he help you in the garden? Do you let him/her cut out with scissors?





### **Learning to read**

Read to your child every day, try and have a special comfortable, quiet place to do it. Talk about the characters and the pictures. Talk about the content of pictures and ask your child to predict what might happen next in the scene. Help him/her realise that books are read from front to back, page by page, and move your finger along under words so s/he can see that you are reading the words from left to right.

Teach your child to handle books properly – with clean hands, turning the pages carefully, putting it away neatly when finished. Make sure s/he has books of his/her own. Let your child see you reading books, magazines and newspapers, so that s/he can know that reading is enjoyable. Join the library, give your child a chance to choose for him/herself.

### **Learning to write**

Your child should enjoy using crayons, pencils etc, before they come to school for colouring in, drawing pictures and making early attempts at writing.

These activities begin to develop your child's pencil control ready for writing. Encourage your child to strengthen their fingers by threading beads or sewing. Pencils should be held with the finger and thumb in a tripod grip, not held in a fist.

Many children come into school about to write their own name, and we have included a page which shows letter formation clearly. Please teach your child to write their letters using this formation. Please DO NOT teach your child to write in capital letters. A capital letter should be used for the first letter of their name only.

### Letter Formation

This is the recommended way of showing your child how to form his/her letter.



### Learning to listen – conversation

Make your time at home with your child a time for him/her to learn to listen. It is very important to talk to your child and answer questions. This will help them to develop language skills, which will, in turn, help in learning to read. Explain what you are doing round the house, name the tools you are using – duster, polish, vacuum cleaner, etc, and explain what you are doing. Teach your child to wait patiently if you are talking and not to interrupt.

When out in the street discuss what you can see going on. At the shops talk about the things in your basket. When dressing, talk about the items of clothing – the parts of the body, face, hands, etc, in other words, keep up a running commentary of your daily routine.

Expect your child to listen to you when you speak. Get their eye contact when you ask them to do something. Ask them to wait if you are already speaking to someone else – then let them have their turn. They will sometimes need to wait to speak in school and will need to respect adults.

Listen to the sounds in the house – the phone, the vacuum cleaner, washing machine, and when out in the street, the traffic noises etc and encourage your child to talk about what's going on. Listen to music and recite nursery rhymes together. By teaching your child to talk and listen well, you will be giving him/her the very best start for all learning in school.

### **Ready for Maths**

Children learn quickly if learning is fun. Here are some fun ideas on how you can prepare your child for Mathematics:

1. Sorting: smarties, buttons, shells, toys, etc. Initially they could sort by size, shape and other characteristics, e.g. holes/ no holes; hard/soft; rough/smooth.
2. Counting: count whenever possible – sweets, stairs, toys, fingers, toes, pennies, buttons as they get dressed. Ask your child to carry out activities involving counting, e.g. give me five buttons, spoons, etc. Sing number rhymes, play number games.
3. Shapes and Sizes: use mathematical language – big/little; tall/short; narrow/wide; heavy/light. Talk about shapes, look for shapes in everyday objects. Your child should know circle, square, triangle and rectangle.





## **Parents and School**

The more that you are involved in the life of the school, the more that you are helping your child to accept his/her new life. There are many ways you can share in the life of our school.

You can help in activities such as cooking, painting, sewing, using the computer or helping to run the school library.

All parents are automatically members of our school's Parent/Teacher Association (FoDS) and there are regular social functions and fund-raising events organised.

Please be ready to accept all these opportunities to join in, and remember you are always welcome in school.

## **Early Days**

Your child's first days at school will be very exciting but very tiring. S/he will have new situations and new people to cope with and you may have to be patient as s/he settles in.

It is vital, especially during his/her early days, that you give him/her lots of love and reassurance and maintain a calm and familiar routine – mealtimes, bath times, bed times, etc. A regular bedtime (about 7.00pm) is especially important. Your child will need rest in order to cope with all the new demands that are being made of him/her. A tired child is not a happy child!

## **Finally**

Every child in our school is special and important to us. We want them to be happy so that they will learn and develop to their full potential.

If there is anything at all worrying you or your child please come into school. Generally it is best to make an appointment at the school office to talk to the teacher as it is not always easy to speak at the beginning or the end of the school day. Alternatively please telephone and leave a message and we will call you back.



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