



Starting School at ESJ

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I buy uniform?

Jumpers, sweatshirts, PE kits and book-bags can all be purchased directly from school. A price list and order form are available on the school website and paper copies are kept in the 'notices' section of the school foyer. Once your child is on the school roll in September, you can order uniform online. The school keeps uniform in stock and orders are usually fulfilled within a few days.

Other uniform items can be purchased at local supermarkets and retailers such as Marks & Spencer.

Does my child need to wear uniform for the 'stay and play' sessions?

Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes for the story sessions and 'stay and play' sessions. Uniform should be worn from Thursday 7th September.

What does my child need to bring on the first day? Do they need a pencil case?

Your child will need their book-bag, water bottle with a sports lid and outdoor clothing suitable for the weather e.g. a coat, sunhat, etc. We recommended leaving a pair of wellies in the cloakroom as soon as possible as the weather can be very unpredictable in the Autumn Term! Pens, pencils and other stationery are all provided by school. We discourage children from bringing in toys from home due to the upset caused if they are lost or broken. However, if your child feels more secure having a toy from home please help them to choose something small that fits into their drawer or speak with your child's class teacher during the home visit about how best to manage this.

Will my Foundation Stage child see their older siblings during the school day?

Foundation Stage have their own playground so won't spend playtimes with other year groups until the Summer term when this is planned as part of transition. Once the children are settled into school, we will join some whole school events and the children might see siblings at these times. They may also see them at lunchtime in the hall.

Will my child be with their friends from nursery?

This term we will be in contact with the nurseries and pre-schools that our new children currently attend. We will listen to the feedback that they give us regarding friendships and take it into account when organising classes. We always try to ensure that children are with at least one familiar face from their previous setting. If you have any concerns about your child and friendships in their new class, please contact us via the school office but please be aware that we cannot guarantee that parental preferences will be included in the final class list as a number of important factors are taken into consideration when organising these, including age, additional needs, and gender.

Does my child need to know how to write their name?

No, it's our job to teach them this! Whilst some children will be able to write their name in September, many children start school not being able to do this. Developing early writing skills is a big focus of our Autumn term provision. It is helpful if your child recognises their name as it allows them to be independent in managing their belongings. We have a 'Ready for School' skills document on the school website for more information about this.

Can I bring in treats on my child's birthday?

Our school policy is that teachers cannot give out treats on behalf of children and their families. We will put party invitations into book-bags but we ask that you give these to us discreetly at the start of the day as children at this age can be upset if they are left out.

My child can be a fussy eater. How will I know if they are okay at lunchtimes?

The current menu is on the school website so you can talk to your child in advance about the lunch options each day. Foundation Stage classes have a team of dedicated midday supervisors who look after them throughout the lunch hour and will encourage them to try the different foods on offer. If a child is regularly reluctant to eat or a pattern is noticed, the midday supervisors will speak to class teachers who will then contact parents and/or carers.

It is a good idea to practise using knives and forks over the summer so that your child feels confident with these in the lunch hall.

My child struggles with toileting. What should I do?

Talk to your child's class teacher about this during the home visit. We will always help children to manage their self-care but do expect them to manage as much as possible independently. At the start of the year we provide a lot of support, reminding children to go to the toilet throughout the day and talking them through the process of wiping themselves, flushing the toilet, washing hands, etc. Practising this over the Summer holidays will really help. If there is a medical need that requires a care plan, let us know as soon as possible so that we can organise this.

My child has asthma. What should I do?

Talk to your child's class teacher about this during the home visit. We will ask you to complete a medication form and to provide an inhaler that can be kept in school. Please ensure that asthma and/or any other medical needs are included on your child's admissions form.

Are there any after school clubs?

Ely St John's offers a wide range of after school activities for children in all year groups. More information on after school activities will be added to the Starting School section of the website as it becomes available.

Do you offer wrap around care?

Ely St John's Primary School does not offer wrap around care. Many of our pupils attend the breakfast and after school clubs run by Kids Club Ely. Places are limited and need to be organised directly with the team at Kids Club Ely. Their contact details can be found via the link on the school website.

How many children are in a class?

We have 60 places on offer in each year group, making two classes of 30 children. We currently have a full intake due to start in our Foundation Stage in September 2023.

Can parents volunteer to help in the classroom?

We usually wait until the second half of the Autumn term before inviting volunteer helpers to support in the classroom. This gives time for the children to settle into the routines of school and build relationships with staff and peers. Please speak with your child's class teacher if are interested in helping in the classroom at any point.

Is homework set for children in the EYFS? How can we help our child with learning at home?

When we teach new letter-sound correspondences in phonics we will send home a worksheet that can be used to practise at home and we will send reading books home once the children begin to read words independently. We also send home vocabulary sheets to support the learning of new words and their meaning. We hold workshops for parents throughout the year that will include ideas for supporting learning at home and include links to useful resources on both our weekly newsletter and school website.