



*With God's love, all are encouraged to thrive.*

# Guide to School for New Starters



## Headteacher's Introduction

At Otterbourne Church of England Primary School, we know how important it is selecting a primary school. Early education is very much a partnership; one in which we are very proud to be involved. When they are with us, your children will be given the care, encouragement and support they need to find success and feel pride, as much as they might need guidance if things are not quite going right. Where this partnership works best is where parents and teachers have a shared understanding of what is best for the children, and we will always welcome the chance to talk about the needs of your child and how we can make their time with us even more successful and happy.

Much of our children's lives are shaped and developed through their time at primary school so it is vital that we offer a learning environment in which children feel safe, able to take risks, ready to take on challenges, and allows them to live the school's core Christian values of Trust, Respect and Determination every day. Together, we regularly attend St. Matthew's Church for worships and key events in the Christian calendar and throughout their time with us, children learn lessons about citizenship through parables and passages from the Bible.

We are blessed to have such a beautiful location and we have created a curriculum that provides regular opportunities for children to develop a lifelong love, respect and appreciation of the outdoors.

Contained within this guide is everything you need to know about the routines of school, answers to many of the questions we hear throughout the year and more information about what makes our school so special.

I am very proud to lead this caring, inclusive school as we strive to give all children memorable experiences and the foundation in learning that will stay with them forever

With kindest regards,



Mr Martin Geraghty  
Headteacher

## Our Vision

*Otterbourne is a loving, inclusive family where our Christian values – Trust, Respect and Determination – are recognised and developed. With God’s love, all are encouraged to thrive.*

*Here, everyone feels valued and cared for with individual strengths recognised and nurtured.*

*Focussed learning, creativity and risk-taking underpin our curriculum.*

At Otterbourne Church of England Primary School, we strive for excellence in all that we do. At the heart of everything are the children. This is a nurturing environment where we recognise what every child needs to be able to learn successfully. We support the personal, social and emotional needs of children so that they develop self-awareness, self-confidence and inherent learning behaviours that will see them succeed...and feel pride.

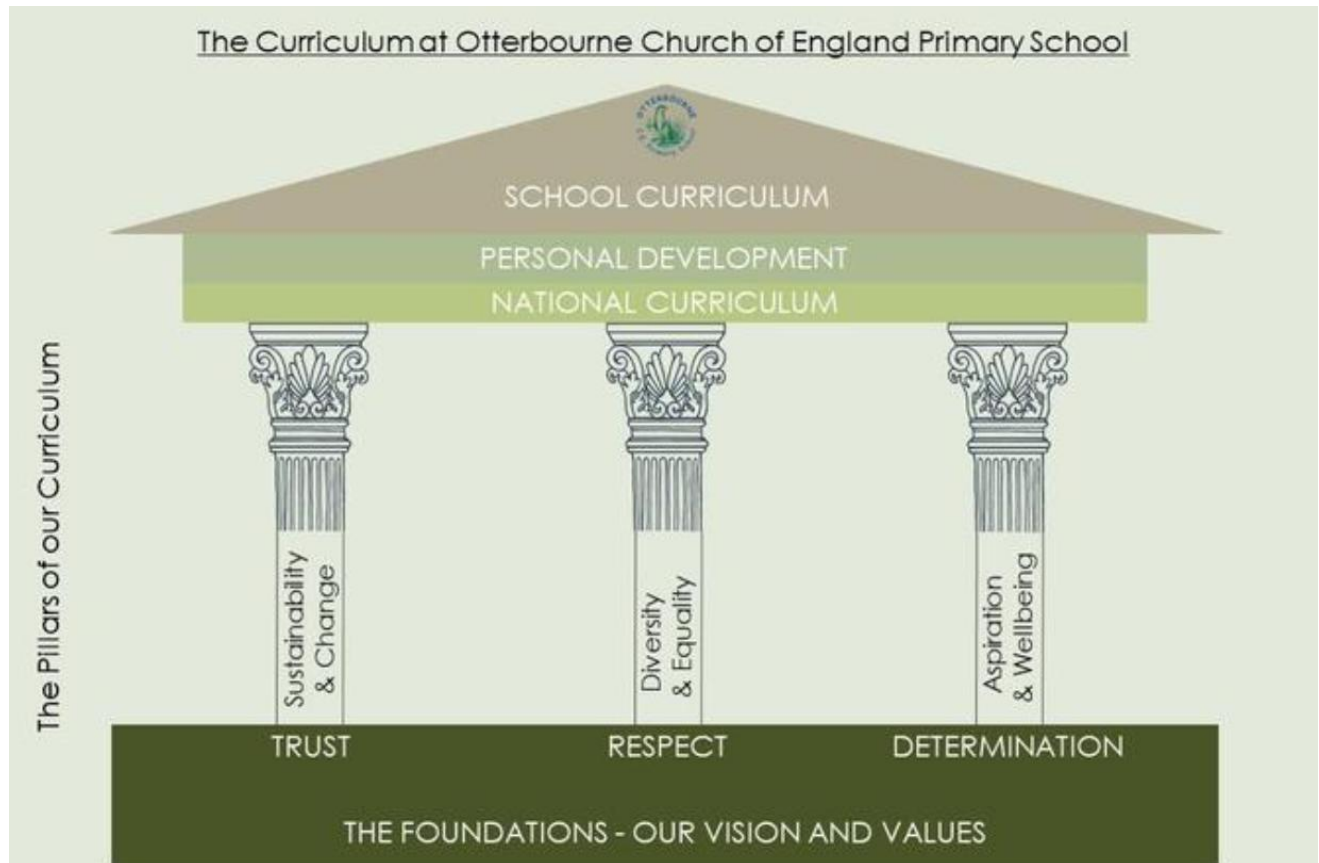
We are a community school, with strong links to St. Matthew’s Church and the village hall, and we have built our curriculum so that our children learn about village life as well as their place in a global community.



Mistake-making, editing and improving are essential elements of our curriculum as we shape children to aim higher and aspire to be the best versions of themselves. Our children are taught to not compare themselves to others, but to compare themselves now to themselves at a point in the past. Children need to see the fruits of their labour, recognise how they have been successful and be encouraged to go even further.

## Our Values in our Curriculum

Our school curriculum is developed on the foundation of our core Christian values.



Through our school curriculum, our focus on personal development, our vision for children to find success and pride in their achievements, and the enrichment activities that run throughout the school year, we hope to give every child a strong foundation as they progress through the stages of their education and into adulthood.

Our PSHE curriculum introduces children to valuable learning behaviours, that we embed throughout their time here. These support children to recognise how they can adapt their own learning so they find success. We call these our Positive Learning Powers and we celebrate successful application of these 'powers' in our 'Mission of the Month'.



## **Daily Life in School – what you need to know.**

### **Arriving at school.**

The school doesn't have its own visitor car park. There are a small number of reserved spaces within the school gates, which includes an accessible space.

The best access point to the school is the small, grey, pedestrian gate along the footpath as this leads to a pelican crossing on the school grounds. Access can also be made via the two green gates at the end of the driveway that runs alongside the church grounds. In all cases, please be aware that some children arrive by car during school hours and some moving vehicles are now near-silent.

Car parking is available, subject to spaces, in the village car park on Cranbourne Drive from which it is a very short walk along the footpath by the school meadow up to the school. At the start and end of the school day, the village car park can be very busy.

If children are being dropped off for school, this should be no earlier than 8:45am as the school gate remains closed until this time so children will be unaccompanied. The school will always endeavour to support families where alternative arrangements are required and The Holt offers before and after school 'wrap around' care. In the morning, the school operates a 'free-flow' entry system rather than lining up. We ask parents to 'drop-off' in the school car park so that the children can walk to their classroom independently. The school has strict safeguarding procedures in place to protect staff and children, and visitors are not allowed on site without first signing in at the school office. Parents/carers are not expected to accompany their children in to the school and should not visit classrooms without prior appointment. We ask all visitors to help us keep everyone safe by following these procedures. Thank you.

We do recognise that those early days can be tricky and there are often little messages that make all the difference to the children's wellbeing, so there is the chance to speak to the teacher if your child is in Year R. Messages for teachers of other year groups can be passed to the member of staff at the school gate, or to the office team.

Where children are arriving late for school (those entering after 9:00), an adult will need to sign in the child on the school's entry system in the main reception.

### **Collecting from School**

School finishes at 3:30pm. At the end of the school day, Year R and Key Stage 1 children will be brought out to the front of the school known as the 'meadow playground'. Key Stage 2 children are brought to the top of the 'church' playground to the left of the school.

Parents are asked to make eye contact and wave to teachers (preferably at the time they see the teacher with their child) so that we can ensure a safe release at the end of the day. Teachers will very quickly get to know names and faces of those collecting each day, so if there is any change, this needs to be communicated to the school office as soon as possible.

If you are aware that you will miss the regular pick-up time, please contact the office as soon as you are able giving an ETA. Children will always be brought in to the office once the daily pick-up is completed so they remain safe until you arrive. If there is no communication about being late, children will be brought in to the office and we will try to make contact with you.

We discourage any child from walking home without an adult, until Year 6 when this is discussed with the children and parents. With our commitment to safeguarding, we take an active stance when considering the needs of each individual child and will always welcome an open conversation where our views can be considered. Please do not be offended if we question someone collecting your child. We always have the children's safety in mind.

### **Reflective Approach to Behaviour**

During their time with us, there may be occasions when behaviours have affected the learning, safety or wellbeing of others. In the first instance, class teachers and other adults will support children by giving them a 'reminder' in class of the expectations. If a behaviour continues, children may be relocated to another classroom. If this happens, staff will ensure there is time for a reflective conversation. This means helping them to reflect on their mistakes and consider alternative approaches. This supports children to repair relationships, through simple acts such as making an apology. Where necessary, children may be brought to a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and if it is considered appropriate, we will inform you immediately by email so that you can be made aware and we can agree the most suitable approach to addressing problems together. We believe that an open and honest partnership between home and school is the best way to helping your children navigate the challenges of daily life.

## School Uniform

In order to maintain a strong sense of identity and belonging, we require all pupils to wear full school uniform. Any cultural or religious variations to this must be brought to the attention of the Headteacher. Please ensure that all items of uniform and sports clothing are clearly labelled, and continue to check that labels have not become detached over time. The school uniform consists of:

- Polo shirt - white (with or without school logo) (for Year R to Year 2)
- Plain white collared shirt with green school tie (for Year 3 to Year 6)

For all children

- Jumper or cardigan - green with school logo
- Knee length skirt or pinafore dress – grey
- Trousers, knee length shorts (or skorts) – grey
- Gingham dress or playsuit with short sleeves and flat collar - green and white
- Socks - plain black, grey or white - without sports branding
- Tights - grey or green
- Shoes - black - these should be plain, flat and sensible/suitable - not trainers
- Hair accessories - green and simple by design (longer hair should be tied back)

Children wearing dresses/skirts can additionally wear black shorts (unbranded)

Children are encouraged to take pride in their uniform and key stage 2 children are expected to wear ties with a smart knot and ensure shirts are tucked in at all times. In hot weather, children can untuck shirts and remove ties for outdoor play, as directed by the Headteacher.

Children are also encouraged to have a sturdy water bottle in school each day. These should be simple and inexpensive as they will be used outdoors in warmer weather. There is also limited space and there is always the risk of loss or damage.



## PE KIT

When they arrive in school, all children are placed in one of our four houses, which comes with an associated colour.

Children coming in to Year R will be assigned a house in the previous term so that parents can make a choice about which PE kit to purchase.

The PE kit consists of:

- Plain white (or house-coloured), short-sleeved, round-neck T-shirt
- Plain black shorts
- Plain trainers or plimsolls – these are for outdoor use.
- Plain, dark-coloured, jogger bottoms and sweat top – for outdoor use in colder weather

PE kit should be available in school at all times to allow some flexibility in time-tabling. Kit will be sent home at the end of each half-term for washing and should be returned on the first day of the new half-term. Kit should be kept in a drawstring bag (which should be clearly named).



The following are **not part of our PE kit** and should **not** be worn:

- Hooded tops
- Branded items - all kit should be plain by design to support our policy of inclusion
- Items of any colour other than plain white or the appropriate house colour
- Coloured trainers (excluding therapeutic options where colours are limited)
- Socks not in a school colour

## **Jewellery/Wearable Technology**

Due to the active nature of school, the wearing of any type of jewellery is discouraged. Many children are now more aware of their own health and wellbeing, so school does allow the wearing of simple 'Fitbit' type step counters but this is at the child/families risk and school will not accept any responsibility for losses or breakages. Devices with features that support communication, social media, photos etc are not permitted.

Should a pupil have pierced ears, these must be plain studs. If studs cannot be removed for physical activities, they must be covered with a plaster (or tape) which should be provided by home and applied by the child. If you are planning on getting your child's ears pierced, please consider the timing of this as it can have an impact on school life. The best time would be the first weekend of the summer holidays as this gives enough time for studs to remain in place undisturbed for the suggested six weeks.

## **Hair**

Hair should be neat and tidy and where accessories are worn, these should be green as they are considered part of the school uniform.

Due to health and safety reasons, as well as to prevent a barrier to learning, all long hair should be tied back using a green hair accessory.

## **Outdoor Learning**

Across the school, we encourage teachers to plan lessons that make the most of our incredible grounds. There is a high possibility that children will be outside in light rain and the added chance of mud around the site.

Teachers will communicate with you when there is a planned timetable change, so that children can bring in long trousers and long sleeves (for learning in the meadow) or wellies (for muddy conditions). Ideally, these will be part of the kit that children leave in school.