

Charter Primary School

Starting School Frequently Asked Questions



Welcome to Charter Primary school. We understand that starting school is a huge milestone for children and their families, one that should be cherished. You may have some questions about what will happen when your child starts school in September and how the school is run. We are confident our Frequently Asked Questions sheet below will help to answer your queries. If not, we are always on hand to help. Please contact the school office with any further questions by phone on 01249 447223 or email us at admin@charter.wilts.sch.uk.

Who are the adults that work in Sunshine class?

Mrs Adams is our Sunshine Class Teacher and Mrs Smith is our class Teaching Assistant. Both Mrs Adams and Mrs Smith will be on hand throughout the school day to help your child settle in to school life, including break and lunch times.

What time does school start and finish?

School hours are from 9.00 am to 3.15pm.

Doors to the classroom will be open from 8.50am and you are welcome to come into class from this time onwards. There will be a range of activities for the children to do when they come in. There is no obligation, but please feel free to stay and join in an activity, read a story with your child or just generally help your child settle in.

The general school day runs to the following timetable:

08.50am	Doors open
09.00am	Registration
09.10am	Morning Session 1
10.45am	Break
11.00am	Morning Session 2
12.15pm	Lunch
1.15pm	Afternoon Session
2.15pm	<i>Break – Key Stage 1 only</i>
3.15pm	End of school

What if I am late?

Your child will be able to enter school via their classroom up until 9.00am. After this time, you will need to take your child to the school reception and sign them in using our Entry Sign system. Our office staff will be on hand to show you how to do this and then take your child through to their classroom.

Here at Charter, punctuality is very important. If your child is persistently late to school, you will be notified and asked to come and discuss this further.

What if my child is ill and will be absent from school?

We understand that children often pick up illnesses from time to time and require time off school. If your child is unwell, please call the school absence line on 01249 447223 to report the absence. If you are leaving a message, please notify us of child's name, class and reason for absence for example, sickness.

If your child is not in school and you have not reported the absence, a member of the school office will contact you to establish why they are not in.

You will need to contact us every day of your child's absence.

What if my child is ill at school?

We will contact you to let you know if your child is feeling unwell at school. If your child has had sickness, we will ask you to collect your child so please ensure your contact details are kept up to date with the school office.

Please let us know in the morning if your child has complained of feeling unwell or if they have taken any medication as we are then able to keep an eye on them and this helps to build a bigger picture.

If your child needs to take medication due to a bout of illness or infection such as antibiotics or paracetamol, a parent or other family member will need to come into school to administer the medication. This cannot be done by a member of staff unless it is part of an ongoing Health Care Plan.

What if my child has an accident at school and needs first aid?

If your child has a bump at school, one of our First Aiders will take very good care of them. We have trained First Aiders and Paediatric First Aiders on site at all times, including break and lunch periods. Bumps and scrapes are cleaned and patched up. You will receive a 'Bump' note at the end of the day to let you know what happened and what was done.

Head bumps are taken very seriously. Your child will be assessed, treated and monitored very closely. You will receive a text message, or phone call if necessary, informing you as well as a copy of the 'Bump' note at the end of the day.

We will contact you if your child has had an accident that causes us any concern.

What should my child bring to school?

- Book bag
- Named P.E kit in a named, drawing string bag
 - Plain white t-shirt
 - Plain black shorts
 - A pair of daps (pumps)
- Outdoor kit – named wellies, waterproofs and rain coat in a named carrier bag
- Named water bottle
- Optional snack/packed lunch

Every child in Sunshine class will have a named peg to hang their coat and P.E. bag. The shelf above is for wellies and any lunch boxes. They will also have a drawer with their name on to put other belongings in, such as their school book bag. You do not need to provide your child with a pencil case, pens or pencils. This will all be provided in class.

Please label everything, even socks. There can be 30 children in a class and lots will have trousers, daps and t-shirts from the same supplier. And all the jumpers look the same! We do our utmost to ensure your child has his/her belongings, but unless they are clearly marked it is a difficult task.

What should my child wear?

The school colours are burgundy and dark grey with a Ping the Dragon logo. Parents are asked to promote the wearing of sensible, comfortable school clothing. The school uniform with the embroidered logo is obtainable from scholars and is available as a sweatshirt or cardigan.

Please refer to the school website for full school uniform requirements.

<https://www.charter.wilts.sch.uk/parents/uniform/>

What if my child has a toileting accident?

The children can ask to go to the toilet at any time, but they **must ask** so that we know when they are leaving the room. Please keep a change of clothes at school in a named bag so that if an 'accident' happens, as they do, we can change your child into clean dry clothes. Any donations to our 'accident box' (pants, trousers, skirts, t-shirts, socks etc) are always appreciated.

What about going outside?

We are an Outdoor Learning School (LiNE – Learning in the Natural Environment). We will go out in all weathers so we would like every child to have a named light raincoat and wellies in school every day. These can be left in school permanently. A change of trousers or tights are quite helpful as the children can get very muddy from these outdoor activities and will sometimes need to change. It is a valuable part of their learning experience, albeit a slightly messy one at that!

What should they bring to school in their book bag?

Your child will come home with books in their book bag to share with you. We will also add Sound books and keywords to their book bags throughout the first couple of weeks. These need to be brought to school every day and placed in their drawers. Please check book bags for important letters and school information.

What books will my child bring home?

To start with, reading books will be full of pictures in order to really develop language skills and encourage your child to retell the events on each page. We encourage you to ask your child lots of questions about all the books they read including books from home. Some questions could be; what they can see, what is happening, how do the characters feel, what do they think will happen next, did you enjoy the story, what was your favourite part?

They will eventually progress on to books with words. These words will be made up with the sounds they have learnt each week.

Alongside these, your child will be able to take home a library book from our school library. These can be enjoyed at home and changed each week. At Charter we really aim to inspire a real love of reading!

All children are encouraged to read at least 5 times a week. You can record your home reading sessions in their Reading Record and can include sharing books such as bedtime stories or other reading books too.

We will write in the book when we have read with your child at school and add stickers and comments to help motivate your children.

What can my child have for lunch?

Children have the option of a hot school meal or a packed lunch from home. We really encourage the children to try the school meals, it is surprising what even the fussiest eater will eat when they see their friends eating it too!

Our school dinner menu is provided by Chartwells catering company and runs on a 3 week rotation. Please refer to the New Starter pack for a copy of the current menu. Every day, children will have a choice of a main course, a vegetarian option or a jacket potato with various toppings alongside fresh bread and salad bar, and a sweet treat, yogurt or fresh fruit for desert. Children will be offered water or milk to drink.

Under the Universal Infant Free School Meal (UIFSM) scheme, all children in Key Stage 1 (EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2) are entitled to a free hot school meal. Meals must be booked online through ParentPay although a charge will not be incurred. We encourage parents to choose the daily meal options with your children so they are aware of what is being chosen for them to avoid any upset.

What can my child have in a lunch box?

We encourage healthy, well balanced lunch boxes and ask that you refrain from filling lunch boxes with sugary snacks, a single sweet treat is adequate. Fizzy drinks, sweets and chocolate bars are not permitted. It is important for

children to spend time outside playing in fresh air during their lunch break so please be mindful with the amount you pack in lunch boxes. Some children can be slow to eat and feel overwhelmed if their lunch boxes are fully packed.

We are a nut free school so please ensure all snack and lunch boxes do not contain nuts or nut based products.

Can children bring snacks and drinks?

Children are welcome to bring a named water bottle into school. All classes and communal areas have water fountains available for children to use to drink or refill water bottles. Drinking plenty throughout the day can help increase concentration so we encourage children to drink regularly.

All infant children (those in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) are provided fruit for morning snack. Our catering company, Chartwells, can also provide a slice of toast for 10p per day and/or a small carton of juice or milkshake for 35p if you would like your child to have this at break time. Please feel free to send them in with an additional fruit or vegetable based snack in a pot.

How can I apply for Free School Meals?

All children in Key Stage 1 are eligible for free school meals under the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme. However, we strongly recommend any families in receipt of qualifying benefits apply for Free School Meals. Children will continue to receive Free School Meals into Key Stage 2 in addition to the school receiving a pupil premium of £1300.

Please refer to the New Starter packs for further information about how to apply for Free School Meals, or alternatively go to Wiltshire Council website using the following link. www.wiltshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

How will I know what is going on at school?

At Charter, we use ParentMail as our parent communications system. This allows us to send emails and text messages directly to parents and carers. Please refer to the New Starter pack for more information.

Our school website is host to a multitude of information, including copies of all of our policies and procedures. The calendar feature on the website is updated regularly with upcoming events. We also produce a termly newsletter which tells you a little bit about what each class has been up to, in addition to a list of dates for your diaries.

Classroom windows are a mine of information. There will be weekly sheets informing you of the general teaching focus, letter sounds, handwriting patterns and number themes that we are working on. We also put copies of letters and other important notices on the windows, so always keep your eye out for updated information.

What if my child has a medical or dental appointment?

Time learning in school is valuable so we ask that all medical and dental appointments are booked outside of school hours where possible. If it is an urgent emergency appointment, please notify the school office. You will need to complete an Absence Request Form and may be asked to provide evidence of appointments.

We understand that some children may need to attend hospital or medical appointments for on-going long term health matters. These absences will generally be authorised. Please notify the school office as soon as possible and complete an Absence Request Form with supporting medical documentation.

Can I take my child out of school for holiday?

Absence during term time for holidays will not be authorised

There is no entitlement for any leave of absence in term time. Any written request for absence, which must be received at least five days prior to the event, can only be authorised by the headteacher in exceptional circumstances. Family holidays will not count as a reason to authorise absence in term time due to the impact they have on pupils' learning and may be subject to a Penalty Notice. Please refer to the school attendance policy for further information. <https://www.charter.wilts.sch.uk/information/policies/>

Do you hold special events for parents to attend?

We believe at Charter it is important for parents and carers to have the opportunity to see their child immersed in school life. Once a term, we hold 'Learn with your Charter Child' mornings where parents have the opportunity to join their children for a morning in class taking part in themed activities. These are popular events and a fantastic way to get a feel for our school ethos, 'Create, Discover, Succeed, Together'.

We also hold regular class sharing assemblies where you will be invited in to watch your child present what they have been learning to the rest of the school.

As well as being a part of your child's learning journey, we believe including families in the social aspect of school plays a vital role. We host annual Mother's day, Father's day and Grandparent lunches where you will get the chance to come join us for lunch. These are popular events which many of our families look forward to.

We are extremely fortunate to have an active Charter School Friends Association (CSFA) who work endlessly to organise a variety of social events throughout the year. Class cake sales are always popular and the children always look forward to CSFA film nights and discos. Please get in touch with the school office if you are interested in becoming a member of the CSFA.

I can't find my child's jumper, where can I look?

Please check with your class teacher first if your child appears to be missing an item of clothing or belongings. If it has been clearly named, a member of staff will return the item to your child.

For items that are not named, we have a lost property box in the main office. You are welcome to come in and check it at any time.

How do I pay for school trip and events?

Here at Charter, we use a cashless online booking and payment system called ParentPay. ParentPay is easy to navigate and can be used on any computer, Android or iOS device. When your child joins us, you will be given a unique username and password for your child which you will use to set-up your ParentPay account. If you already have a parent account set up with a child at either Charter, or another school, these can be linked under the same account. The school office are able to give you some help and advice on how to do this if required.

Once your ParentPay account is set up, you will be able to book your child's school meals, pay for any trip and events as well as pay for any chargeable school clubs. All children's meals must be booked through ParentPay.

Can my child ride to school?

Children are welcome to ride their bike or scooter to school, however, we ask that they get off their bike or scooter at the school gates and push whilst on school grounds. We have bike and scooter racks available for children to use at Charter; these are left at the owners risk.

Can I park at school?

Whilst we understand that some families will need to drive to bring their children to school, parking at Charter is extremely limited and spaces are prioritised for staff members. Disabled parking bays are available to use with valid blue badges displayed at all times. Many of our children walk, bike or scoot to school so please be mindful of pedestrians when approaching the school site and within the school car park. We also ask that families are considerate to local residents when parking off school site.

Can my child bring things from home?

We ask that children do not bring toys from home to school to play with. A variety of play equipment and toys will be available for the children to play with daily. Children are welcome to bring specific items or books relevant to current topics to share with the class; these should be passed to one of the adults in the classroom for safekeeping.

What if I need my child to be collected by somebody different?

Please notify the class teacher in the morning if your child needs to be collected or is going home with somebody different to normal. As per our safeguarding procedures, we will not release any child to anyone that is not on their contact list unless otherwise told by the parent or main carer. Children must be collected by an adult over the age of 18 years.

If you are held up getting to school for home time, please call the school office as soon as possible so we can notify the class teacher.

What if I need my child to go to breakfast club/afternoon club?

Mrs Smith and Mrs Wells run our Early Risers Breakfast Club and S'cool Kids After School Club. Spaces can be booked as regular bookings or as drop in sessions, charges apply. Please refer to the New Starter pack for further information or contact the school office with booking enquiries.

Children will be escorted to and from their classroom at the beginning and end of the day.

How can I get my child ready for starting school?

The main thing you can do to get your child ready for starting with us at Charter is to talk excitedly about school. It is completely normal if they feel worried or nervous, talking openly and honestly with them will help increase their confidence when in the classroom. You can also try a few of these practical ideas:

- Enjoy sharing stories together, talking about the pictures, what they enjoyed and what you think might happen.
- Count, count, count anything and everything – stairs as you go up (and backwards as you go down!), number of cuddly toys on their bed, how many toy cars go down a ramp.
- Number and letter I Spy – can they spot any letters and numbers that they know around the house or out on a walk.
- Help your child recognise their name – make sure they know where to find their name in their clothes.
- Practise putting coats on independently and have a go at doing up the zip. Putting gloves on is particularly helpful as the colder months approach.
- Encourage them to ask for help when they need it, saying what they want.
- Help them practise peeling a banana and orange, we often have these for snack time, and how to use their cutlery.
- Play games with spoken instructions, such as Simon Says, and turn taking games. This will help to encourage listening skills within the classroom.
- Funky Finger practice – help to develop strong fine motor skills such as painting pictures and letters on the patio, spraying the garden fence with water spray, creating play doh animals.
- Wash your hands – good hand hygiene is important, particularly during these unprecedented times. Try singing 'Happy Birthday' twice whilst rubbing all the bubbles over their hands. Practising how to flush the toilet is also a good tip.

What if I am worried about something?

If you have a question or need to inform us of something that is urgent, please speak to Mrs Adams or a classroom adult as you bring your child into class. Please feel free to pop in when you collect your child to either the school office or to the classroom to speak to a member of staff. If there is something of particular concern, please talk us. Many issues can be quickly resolved quickly.

We look forward to seeing you all very soon. Please get in touch with us at admin@charter.wilts.sch.uk or call 01249 447223 with any further queries.