

A – Z Information for Parents

Absence

If a child is absent because of illness, please telephone first thing in the morning (between 8.45am and 9.30am). This should be followed by an explanatory note when the child returns to school. Whilst in law a parent is entitled to absent a child from school for the maximum of a fortnight for a family holiday, we feel that even very young children can miss vital topics during a term and that our holiday periods provide plenty of scope for all but the most unusual circumstances. Leave of absence for particular events such as a family wedding, funeral etc. is always regarded sympathetically, but the Head should be informed in writing in advance.

Allergies

A list of children with allergies is kept by the First Aid Box in the KS1 block. Please help us to keep the Information for Parents list up to date by informing us if your child either develops or grows out of a particular reaction. We try to support any child with special dietary needs so they may have a hot meal at school if required.

Annual Meeting

The Governors hold an annual meeting during the Autumn term. All parents are invited to this and it is an opportunity for them to meet the Governors and to ask them questions about the running of the school and in particular the School's Annual Report. Wine and cheese is served before the meeting begins and there is usually a short presentation on some aspect of the school curriculum.

Appointments

We do know how difficult it is to get doctor, dentist, hospital, orthodontic and other appointments. However we would ask that you try, wherever possible, to arrange these out of school hours. During school hours please report to the school office to sign your child in (or out).

Arrivals / Departures

All children are expected to be on the school premises five minutes before the bell is rung at 9.00am. Please remember that your child is your responsibility until 8.45am after which time a staff member is available to supervise in the playground.

The school day finishes at 3.30pm. If you arrive with a younger child before 3.30pm please encourage him/her to be as quiet as possible so that lessons are not disturbed.

Assembly

A collective worship time is held every day at 10.15am. These are varied by theme and year groups: Monday KS1 & KS2 ~ Headteacher; Tuesday KS1 & KS2 ~ Senior Staff Celebration of Song; Wednesday KS1 & KS2 ~ The Verger of St. Mary's leads the assembly; Thursday - KS2 assemble with the Deputy Head, KS1 assemble with the Head; Friday KS1 & KS2 ~ The Vicar of St Mary's leads the assembly.

The content of assemblies is broad and pays due respect to all faiths and creeds, however as a Church of England school the main message of assemblies is a Christian one. The Vicar of St. Mary's Church and other church members are regularly involved in leading assemblies. If you do not wish your child to attend assembly you must inform the Head in writing.

Asthma

The school holds a register of children suffering from asthma. If your child is diagnosed by your GP please ask for a registration slip. Children aged eight years and over carry their own inhalers.

Bags

School book bags can be purchased from the Office. A clearly named bag will be required for games kit. Your child's class timetable will tell you when games/PE sessions are. Please note that we have limited facilities therefore the smaller the bag the better (this includes lunchboxes as well).

Baseline Assessments

When your child starts school the Reception class teacher will look at what they can do, so that they can record a starting point for your child's learning and find out about your child's learning needs. It's not a formal written . It is often done simply by doing some regular classroom activity with your child, such as looking at a book with them, so they won't even be aware they're being assessed (These activities are mainly individually based so are time consuming for the teaching staff). It's not something you or your child should worry about. You will be given the results of the assessment when complete and have an opportunity to talk to the Reception class staff about it. More information about this can be found in the green 'Is your child about to start school?' leaflet which is given to all new parents in their induction pack.

Birthdays

A child's birthday is a special and exciting time and we recognise this at school. 'Happy Birthday' is sung in the early years. We do not encourage children to bring in sweets, cakes or biscuits to share because this sets up an expectation which might be difficult for some children and their parents to fulfil for various reasons.

We would ask that the distribution of party invitations be done in as tactful and diplomatic a way as possible.

Books

Any text books that are needed are supplied by the school. Children are expected to take care of their books: a charge may be made if books are damaged or lost.

Book sales

The 'bookshop' is opened once or twice a term for the sale of paperback books. A saving scheme is available whereby children can purchase stamps to include on a saver's card. This valuable service is organised by a small team of parents, this also provides extra resources for our school library.

Breaks

There is a break from 10.30am to 10.45am for the whole school. Key stage 1 children have an additional break in the afternoon from 2.45pm to 3.00pm. Unless the weather is really bad all the children go outside to play under the supervision of member(s) of staff.

Children may bring a small carton of drink or a piece of fruit to have during morning break but no flasks please.

(Also see 'Milk', 'Playground' and 'Wet weather'.)

Bullying

The school has specific guidelines to deal with bullying. We aim to attend to any anti-social behaviour immediately. Children who have difficulties in meeting our high standards are monitored through the school's special needs procedure. Children are actively encouraged to support their peers by reporting incidents immediately. The school council of children reviews any reports in their monthly meeting with staff.

Bus

Your child is eligible to travel to school by bus if he/she meets the distance from school/dangerous route regulations set out by South Gloucestershire Council. Please contact the office for up-to-date information. Due to insurance requirements only children with a bus pass are allowed to travel on the school bus.

Carol Service

The school carol service takes place in St Mary's Church, Olveston, during the last week of the Autumn term for the Key Stage 2 children. Family members are invited to attend.

Key Stage 1 children present a Nativity play on two successive afternoons in the school hall. Tickets are allocated for this and can be collected from the school office during the preceding week.

Details are always put in the Newsletter.

Car Parking

The school has no car parking facilities for parents. However we recognise that many parents use their cars to transport their children to school. We would ask that all the normal driving and parking regulations be followed outside school. We would particularly ask parents to respect the forecourts, entrances etc. of residents in Elberton Road and the adjoining area.

Charities

The school responds to the needs of others through various fund raising activities throughout the school year. Many of these are initiated by children and parents, e.g. non-uniform day for Children in Need, cake sale for environmental help for the Galapagos Islands and so on. The school has collections for selected charities at Harvest and Christmas time. We aim to support one major charity through a sponsored event per year.

Christmas

The weeks before Christmas are always ones of increasing excitement in school. There are the preparations for the Infant Nativity and the Carol Service as well as class topics around the Christmas festival.

Christmas dinner is provided, for children who book it, a few days before the end of term.

A post box is placed in the Infant foyer so that children may send each other cards. This is opened daily by Year 6 postmen & women and the cards distributed. It is felt that this is a bit overwhelming for the Reception class children so they make a large communal card for and from each other.

Each class has a Christmas party. You will be given details of this, including any food to provide, by your child's class teacher.

Closure of School

If the school had to be closed because of severe weather or other emergency announcements would be made over local radio stations. We also endeavour, through telephoning governors and parents, to pass on the information to key areas of the community. A notice will also be prominently displayed at the school entrance.

Clubs

Various clubs are run at different times. An up-to-date list of clubs currently running is available from the school office. Children are eligible to join these clubs from Year 3 upward.

Communication

Part of a child's development is to learn to communicate and we try to train the children to pass on information. Some are inevitably better than others at this and sometimes even letters from school are not handed over. Please check your child's bag/folder/pockets from time to time in case there are forms to be returned or things to act upon. There are always duplicates of the current letters on the notice board to the left of the school gate.

It is helpful if you can inform us of any difficulties with or changes to a child's normal routine as this can sometimes explain unusual behaviour or poor performance in the classroom.

Computers

Each child has time allotted for work on the school computers. They may be used for various projects and activities as well. If you have a computer at home it is good for a child to learn to adapt from one machine to another but a child will not be disadvantaged by not having one. (see also 'Internet' and 'Web site'.)

Contact Numbers

We keep a list of telephone/fax/mobile numbers so that a parent or close relative or friend can be reached in an emergency. Please inform us immediately of any changes - we often only discover changes when we need to ring and can't get hold of the person required!

Cycling

During the summer months a Cycling Proficiency Programme is available for the older children. We do not recommend that children cycle to school due to the congested road network around the school.

Days Off

We recognise that some of the Reception year children are still very young and soon develop illnesses when tired. Reception class parents may recognise this and keep their child out of school for a day or part of day as a preventative measure.

In exceptional cases in other years, e.g. prolonged illness, a similar arrangement may be reached.

Days Out (see Educational Visits)

Dinner Money

At the moment dinners cost £1.25 per meal. Payment for school dinners is made in advance, on a Monday. Please send in money separately for brothers and sisters in different classes. Money should be put in a clearly marked envelope, indicating which week(s) the payment is for and the child's name. Payment may be made on a weekly, monthly, half-termly or termly basis. Any over payment is calculated and repaid at the end of the school year. Cheques should be made payable to 'South Gloucestershire Council'.

Drugs

In the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum for science, children learn that some drugs can be good for the body (medicines) and others harmful (prohibited drugs). At this age we use teaching about personal, social and health education and citizenship to help children think about treating others with consideration and resisting unwanted pressure - important foundations for later teaching on drugs education.

In Key Stage 2 children learn about the effects of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. Alongside this information children need to develop skills so that they are able to decide whom to trust and to resist unwanted pressure.

Educational Visits

Where appropriate visits are arranged to places of interest which will enhance work in various subjects. Parents are informed of the visit beforehand and all children are expected to participate. Transport and entrance fees are paid for by the school but voluntary contributions from parents are requested. There is no obligation to contribute and no child will be omitted from a proposed activity. However, in order that some activities take place it may be necessary to have substantial contributions from parents.

Entertainment

From time to time theatrical companies, puppeteers and other such entertainers are invited into school to broaden the children's experience. Parents are informed beforehand.

Exams (see SATS)

Exercise

Children need plenty of exercise. We aim to develop the physical capabilities of all our children through a carefully planned programme of physical activity. This includes class music, movement and drama, team games including football, netball, shinty, cricket, rounders and athletics. Sessions at Thornbury Leisure Centre expand our range of exercise possibilities for the KS2 children.

Extra - Curricular Activities

We provide a variety of extra-curricular activities. These include gymnastics, football, netball, cricket, athletics and rounders. There are also music clubs for choir, violins, drums, guitar, flute and recorder. Other activities are arranged depending on demand.

Fire

The school has a comprehensive system with smoke detectors, fire doors and appropriate fire extinguishers throughout the buildings. The system is regularly inspected. Impromptu fire practices are carried out termly so that children know what to do and where to go if a fire alarm sounds wherever they may be in school.

First Aid

Most of the staff are qualified first aiders. Procedures are laid down for action in cases of accident or emergency. If a child has a minor accident at school the parent will be informed when they collect the child at the end of the school day. Any child who bumps their head should be given a special sticker (a picture of an elephant with a bandaged head) which should alert parents to keep a careful eye on their child for the next 24 hours. A record of children's injuries is kept in the School Accident Book. If a child requires hospital treatment they are taken either by ambulance or taxi accompanied by a member of staff and parents are informed.

Food

Meals are cooked on the premises and children have a choice of a main course and pudding. There is always a vegetarian option and fresh fruit and yoghurt as an alternative to pudding. A sample menu is included in the appendices.

Children may bring sandwiches if preferred but soups and drinks should not be included. We encourage children to bring a sensible balance of food items for their lunch.

Mid-morning snacks should not be brought to school, although a piece of fresh fruit is allowed for morning break and/or a carton of drink .

Friends of Olveston School (FOOS)

This is the Parents' Association, which is very active providing financial and general support through a diversity of social events. The main fund-raising events during the year are the Christmas Bazaar at the end of the Autumn term, the Fun Run in the Spring and the Summer Fete. All parents are welcome to join the committee or can support in a variety of ways through the numerous events organised by FOOS.

Friendships

Friendships can be enriching but they are also the cause of many of the difficulties which children experience in school life. Learning to be a friend in order to have a friend requires maturity. Mixing happily with a wide variety of peers is important and parents should not think that because their child has no 'best friend' they have failed socially - they may be better adjusted than those who play fast and loose with each other's affections. Parents of girls particularly should be prepared for all sorts of emotional upsets as friends come and go in a very short space of time!

Games Kit

Children are required to have a pair of trainers or football boots, a tracksuit or change of top and shorts plus a warm top and a pair of socks.

(see also ?PE Kit?)

Governors

The Governors are all volunteers who, as the governing body, have a general responsibility, which is defined legally, for the effective management of the school. The Governors work with the Head and with South Gloucestershire Education Authority making decisions about the aims, conduct and ethos of the school; curriculum policy, the school budget, the appointment, selection and management of staff, maintenance of school buildings and various other policy areas. They meet at least once a term at a full meeting and in sub-committees at other times. Details of the governors can be found in the appendices at the back of the handbook.

Head Lice

Head lice are a major irritation for school children and their parents. They are no respecters of persons and no matter how clean or dirty, long or short, straight or curly hair is head lice may

invade. They are not choosy about the age of the head they are living on either so parents beware! There is some debate about what is the most effective method of dealing with them. Local pharmacists will be able to advise on various chemical preparations, While some people swear by a mixture of certain essential oils added to your shampoo. The cheapest method is to use lashings of cheap hair conditioner and a fine toothed comb. Leave the conditioner in the hair after washing and carefully use the comb, wiping on a white towel, kitchen roll or similar. Lice will show up as tiny little brown specks. Continue until all the hair has been combed thoroughly. Repeat this several times a week for at least two weeks. Continue once or twice a week as a preventative and diagnostic measure.

We ask parents to inform the school office if lice are found in a child's hair so that we can monitor frequency outbreaks etc.

Health Education

The emphasis of our Health Education programme is on providing experience so that children are able to make considered choices relating to their health. We include developing good habits and a positive self-image. Year 6 children follow a series of television programmes on sex education. Parents are informed beforehand and encouraged to discuss with their child issues that may arise from the programme. Further information can be obtained from class teachers or the Head.

Holidays

Parents are issued with term dates as far in advance as possible. This is so that holidays can be organised and child care arranged as necessary.

(See also 'Absence'.)

Home-School Agreement

Your support and encouragement are very important to your child's progress and the home-school agreement is to help you work with the school. The agreement lists the school's responsibilities, your responsibilities and what we expect from pupils. You are asked to sign a copy of this agreement when your child first starts at school. If you feel you can't sign it, you don't have to but please talk to us about it. A copy of the agreement can be found in the appendices.

Homework

We work in partnership with parents and you are encouraged to take an active interest in your child's homework. It provides a link with the school and helps familiarise you with the structure of the National Curriculum. Education today fosters initiative, research and experimentation from the earliest stages right through school life. The amount of homework increases as your child progresses to Year 6 in preparation for transfer to Secondary Education.

(See also 'Homework Diary'.)

Homework Diary

Your child's class teacher will explain the format of the homework required. Key Stage 2 (Junior) children will have a homework diary or log in which, on Mondays, they will write down expectations for the week. More information should be given to you at the 'year ahead' meeting in the Autumn term.

Illness

If a child is ill and unable to come to school a telephone message is appreciated. Please see 'Frequently Asked Questions' for more information.

Induction

All new parents are invited to an introductory evening where there is an opportunity to meet the Reception class teachers, and to ask any questions. An induction pack is provided at this meeting for each child. The school provides a staggered induction programme so that each child has quality time with the class teacher to settle in. This usually lasts up to the Autumn half-term. This process is constantly being reviewed to ensure the best introduction to the school for Reception class children and any comments are welcome.

(see also 'Baseline assessments'.)

ICT

This stands for Information and Communication Technology, which includes the use of computers, the internet and video and sound- recording equipment. This subject used to be called 'information technology'. Children learn to use ICT to find out information to support their work in other subjects. They become familiar with different types of 'hardware' and 'software' and they develop their research and communication skills. (See also 'Computers'.)

Internet

Children are taught how to use the Internet as an information source. We teach them that information needs to be accurate and relevant and try to show them that information on the Internet may sometimes be neither. We teach them how to check the quality of information and how to filter good from bad. There are guidelines laid out for all school users of the Internet - these can be found in the appendices.

Jewellery

For health and safety reasons necklaces, rings, bracelets etc. should not be worn at school. If a child has pierced ears we would recommend that only tiny studs be worn. These must be removed during P.E. sessions and swimming lessons. It is advisable that children do not wear earrings on sporting days so that loss of items is minimised.

Key Stage

The National Curriculum says when things must be taught by describing broad 'key stages' which are blocks of years. Your child starts with a 'Foundation stage' which covers learning from ages 3 to 5 years. Key stage 1 covers learning when your child is aged 5 to 7 years, lasting for two years. This is what used to be called 'Infants'. Key stage 2 covers learning for children aged 7 to 11 years, four years, and used to be called 'Juniors'.

Lateness

Please ensure that your child is ready for the bell at 9.00am. If your child is late please call into the office so that the register can be amended.

Library

Children have the opportunity of visiting the school library in class groups or individually as they grow older. We have a teacher assistant who works in the library on set occasions.

Literacy Hour

The National Literacy Strategy (NLS) is an important piece of government guidance, which gives detailed aims for teaching reading and writing. These are taught during a daily literacy hour. More details should be provided in the 'year ahead' meeting.

Lost Property

Please ensure that all items of clothing, stationery and any personal possessions, such as a watch, are clearly marked with your child's name. Articles which are left lying around can then be returned to their owners. All lost property is placed in the Lost Property Box, which is situated inside the door to the Infant cloakrooms.

Medicine

Medicines are not allowed in school. If your child requires regular medication please call in at the school office for further advice.
(See also 'Asthma'.)

Menstruation

Evidence shows that girls are reaching physical maturity earlier and earlier. It is not unknown for a girl to begin her periods in Year 6. Menstruation is covered in both science and personal and social education lessons. Sanitary protection is available in school in case of emergencies. Please talk to your daughter's class teacher for further information.
Talks on 'how to cope practically' are promoted in PSHE lessons.

Milk

Milk is provided free of charge for children until they reach their fifth birthday.

Money

Money is not required at school and only causes trouble if it is mislaid. If small amounts of money are required, e.g. for a cake sale, parents are notified in advance.

Music

Music is a part of the National Curriculum. Making music together helps children to explore and express their thoughts and feelings. Learning songs from times gone by or from other parts of the world helps children learn about other times and other cultures. Getting to grips with listening will be useful in most areas of life. We have a strong musical tradition at the school with a choir and several music clubs. If your child wants to learn to play a musical instrument please speak to the class teacher or the Head.

Nearly New Uniform

We do not have the facilities in school to provide a 'nearly new' service. However items of good quality school uniform can be often be bought at the Olveston Pre-school Nearly New sales which are held in November and March/April every year.

Newsletter

The school produces a regular newsletter that is sent home on the first Monday of each month. We use this to try to keep parents informed of coming events and of interesting features of school life.

Noticeboards

The main school notice board at the school gate is used for general information and publicising school events.

We often display adverts etc. about coming events on the main school doors.

Numeracy Hour

The National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) is an important piece of government guidance, that gives detailed aims for teaching mathematics, which is taught in a daily maths lesson. This is sometimes referred to as the numeracy hour. Further details should be given to you at the 'year ahead' meetings.

Open Afternoon

The school holds an open afternoon in July every year. This is an opportunity for children to show parents and family members some of their work from the year, take them round the school, show them next year's classroom and so on.

Outings

All classes have the opportunity of a 'school journey' each year. These are aimed to enhance the classroom experiences of topics being studied. The Year 6 children have the opportunity to go on a residential weekend at Welsh Bicknor in their final term.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

There are three opportunities during the year to share information in a more formalised setting. In the Autumn term we have a 'Year Ahead' meeting. This is a general introductory meeting to outline the curriculum for each year and discuss parents contributions. In the spring term individual appointments are made for each child to discuss the mid-year report. In the summer term we have the Open Afternoon.

We are willing, of course, to meet with parents at any time to discuss any worries or questions they may have about their child and school.

PE Kit

Children are required to have a pair of gym shoes, a white T-shirt and a pair of navy blue shorts or a leotard. These should be kept in a draw string bag with your child's name clearly marked on it. (see also 'Games Kit')

Photographs

Individual photographs are taken (on a sale or return basis) in the Autumn term. Younger siblings may be included in these photographs. Details are always sent home before the photographer comes to school.

Class photographs are taken in the Summer Term. Every four years a whole school photograph is arranged.

As we develop our Internet web pages we shall be including photographs from school life. Children will not be named, as is our policy with the press (no surnames). If you do not want your child's picture to be seen on the schools' site or in the press, would you let us know.

Playground

We believe in fresh air and children are expected to go outside during breaks unless the weather is very bad. In the winter we ask that children have appropriate outdoor clothing including hats and gloves so they may stay warm while outside.

Great pleasure is derived from the activity equipment, donated by FOOS, which is situated under the trees. Each class has allocated times when they are allowed to play on this equipment. Parents are reminded that if younger siblings use this equipment they do so at their own risk.

Children are always supervised by member(s) of staff while out in the playground.

Quarrels

Falling in and out of friendships is a natural part of growing up although some children seem to make more of a habit of it than others do! Disagreements are usually short lived, but children (particularly girls) do use emotional pressure to achieve their own ends and they can be sharp tongued. It is often better to let them develop resilience and self reliance by sorting out their own troubles. However, if matters seem to be having a detrimental effect please have a chat with the class teacher. If you feel there any indications of bullying please mention this immediately.

Queries

If you do not appear to have information about something to do with a school event or your child's daily routine or progress please do not hesitate to ask.

Refreshments

Children are provided with milk until they reach their fifth birthday. All children may bring in a carton of drink or a piece of fruit for break time.

Reports

Progress reports for each child are sent out during the spring term. An individual appointment is also made so that parents may discuss this report with the class teacher. A further report is provided at the end of the summer term.

Residential Trips

Year 6 children have the opportunity to go on a residential trip to Welsh Bicknor Youth Hostel during their last term at the school. Details of this will be sent to parents nearer the time.

SATS

These are the common name for National Curriculum tests and tasks. Your child will sit these national tests in Year 2 and in Year 6. They are used by the school to check on your child's progress so we can match teaching to your child's needs and abilities. They are also used by the Government to see how many children are making the right kind of progress. More information will be provided when your child reaches the appropriate year group.

School Council

We have a school council of children and adults. Their peer group democratically elects the children. Each month they meet to discuss issues, which range from routine procedures such as playtime rules to community items such as fund raising. A suggestion box is placed in the school hall on the piano for children and adults to place their ideas.

Secondary School

Parents of children due to transfer to Secondary school will receive information regarding the choice of schools in the autumn term of your child's last year here (year 6). An induction programme is provided and we liaise closely with Marlwood School. Children visit Marlwood for academic and sporting events. This is enhanced by staff working closely together in a scheme where work is shared in their final year at Olveston and their first term at Marlwood. Great care is taken to ensure as smooth a transition as possible, both socially and academically.

Security

We recognise that this is an important issue and we aim to make the school a safe and secure environment. All visitors, including parents during the school day, should report to the office before going anywhere else in the school. Children are not allowed out of the school grounds during the day unless accompanied by a teacher.

The Children Act of 1989 means that all staff in the school, teaching and non-teaching, will have been checked against police and social services records.

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We have a School Council made up of children and adults. The children are democratically elected by their peer group. Each month they meet to discuss issues, which range from routine procedures such as playtime rules to community items such as fund raising. A suggestion box is situated on the piano in the School Hall - this is for use by children and by parents, suggestion slips are often included at the bottom of the monthly school Newsletter.

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We recognise that this is an important issue and we aim to make the school a safe and secure environment. All visitors, including parents during the school day, should report to the office before going anywhere else in the school. Children are not allowed out of the school grounds during the day unless accompanied by a teacher.

The Children Act of 1989 means that all staff in the school, teaching and non-teaching, will have been checked against police and social services records.

There is a closed circuit television system in operation throughout the school. We hope this enhances the security of people, possessions and buildings.

Sex Education

During Key stage 1 science lessons children learn that every living thing eats, grows and reproduces. Key stage 2 develops this and by the time your child leaves us they should know about the main stages of the human life cycle. In year 6 children follow a series of television programmes which explains the biology but also examines the emotional and moral dimensions of sexual relationships. Parents are informed beforehand and encouraged to discuss issues that arise from these programmes with their child. Further details can be obtained from your child's class teacher or the Head.

Shoes

We would encourage children to wear sensible, sturdy shoes to school. We do not recommend high- heeled or open-toed shoes for safety reasons. It is a great help if younger children wear shoes that they can take off and put on with a minimum of help - Velcro fastenings are far easier for little fingers than shoe laces.

Smoking

Children are alerted to the health hazards of smoking during personal, social and health education lessons. Some of them will inevitably experiment, particularly if someone at home smokes. However the school has a strict no-smoking policy - there should be no smoking anywhere on the school premises.

Special Educational Needs

We aim to ensure that every child with special needs is identified and provided for as early as possible in their school life. We aim to assist each child to achieve their full potential, developing independence and self-discipline. We have a monitoring procedure to identify any children with special educational needs. We have a framework for assessment and for action, which fully involves parents in a programme for their child, co-operation and discussion being essential. One of the Governors has a particular responsibility for special needs.

Sports Day

This is held towards the end of the summer term. All parents and family members are invited and we also invite the children who will come into Reception class in the following year. Details can be found in the Newsletter nearer the time.

Staff

We have an excellent team of staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Details can be found in the appendices along with a photograph.

Sweets

We do not encourage children to have sweets of any description in school.

Swimming

Beginning in KS2 children attend Thornbury Leisure Centre once a week for an hour where they have a swimming lesson and dry sports activities such as table tennis and badminton. If a child should not swim for any medical reason a note should be sent to school explaining the situation. A child excused from swimming usually accompanies the class to the pool and observes the lesson. An introduction to swimming starts in the summer term of the year 2 class.

Teams

The school participates in a variety of inter-school sport matches. We have an established link with a Welsh school for international matches!

Toys

We discourage children from bringing toys to school but any brought for use at break times are the responsibility of the child. Reception class children may sometimes bring in toys for the 'letter table' and other classes may bring them in for a special topic. These are exceptions to the rule.

Timetable

The school day runs from 9.00am to 3.30pm. Details of the school routine can be found in 'Your Questions Answered'.

Travel

Children travel to Thornbury Leisure Centre and to outings on coaches hired from reputable companies used by the county transport authority. All the coaches we use are fitted with seat belts and we expect the children to use them. We set great store by safety, there is always a member of staff who travels with the children during school events and parents are always informed of non-routine arrangements in advance.

Travel Plan. The School has developed a travel plan which encourages children to be healthy and walk to school.

Uniform

We recommend the following:

Girls - navy blue sweatshirt, jumper or cardigan; grey skirt or pinafore dress or trousers; white or blue blouse or shirt; navy blue or grey tights or white socks; black or dark shoes. In summer a blue and white checked or striped summer dress.

Boys - navy blue sweatshirt or jumper, grey shorts or trousers, white or blue shirt, black or dark shoes.

Quality sweatshirts and tee-shirts with the school badge are available for purchase from the office.

Voluntary help

We welcome the involvement of parents. Please see 'Your Questions & Answers' for further details.

Vouchers

Collection boxes for Tesco Computer vouchers, 'Books for Schools' vouchers and other similar schemes can be found outside the school office. We welcome as many of these as possible as they provide a welcome boost to school equipment and resources.

Walking

We would encourage as many children as possible to walk to and from school but recognise that all sorts of factors may influence this. We are working hard to improve safety on roads around the school and are always exploring possibilities of new footpaths and thoroughfares.

Web site

The school has its own web site which is being worked upon, updated and improved all the time. The web site address is: www.olvestonschool.co.uk

The Department of Education has a web site for parents which has lots of useful resources. You can find it at www.parentscentre.gov.uk/ and it has two main sections. 'In school' covers issues to do with day to day school life. 'Out of school' covers a broad range of topics to do with wider education issues including higher education and adult learning.

Other useful websites may be recommended by class teachers. We are always looking for suitable and innovative sites to recommend to parents and suggestions are always welcome.

Wet Weather

If the weather is too wet children will not be allowed out into the playground during break times. Instead they remain in their classrooms where members of staff supervise them. Various activities will be on offer during 'wet play'.

XYZ

This stands for all those other things that you want the answer to. Please ask us, talk to other parents, maybe your child knows the answer. Please don't remain in frustrated ignorance - keep asking until someone has answered your question.