



Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is your school philosophy or ethos?

*“Learning, Playing and Laughing Together
to be the best that we can be”*

We firmly believe that children learn best by ‘doing’ and therefore our approach is based on the ‘learning through structured play’ approach, with plenty of opportunity for hands-on experience. We aim for the children to become independent learners who are confident to ‘have a go’, take risks in their learning and not be afraid to make mistakes. Our Learning Crew help the children to ‘be the best that they can be’. Our staff are very skilled in knowing the children’s next steps and adapting the provision to enable each child to work towards these. More information is available on the school website.

2. What curriculum do you use?

In Reception the children continue to follow the Early Years curriculum, building on from their achievements at nursery and preschool. In Key Stage 1 we follow the National Curriculum. Learning is taught through half-termly topics, which are themed to be exciting and engaging for the children. We have a cross-curricular approach, meaning that all the learning links to a central theme, enabling children to make connections across subjects. Our commitment to learning outside means that our outdoor classrooms, and Forest and Beach school are a vital part of our approach.



3. Tell me more about Forest and Beach school.



We have created a Forest school area within our school grounds and are also very fortunate to be sited within a short walk of the beach. In every year group, most topics are linked to either Forest or Beach school e.g. Pirates → Beach, Hansel and Gretel → Forest. In a Forest or Beach school linked topic, each class spends one day per week (initially half a day in Reception) doing all their learning in the Forest area or at Beach school. They wear their own clothes to school for the day (something practical that you don’t mind getting messy) and take a packed lunch to Beach school. More information is available on the school website.

4. What are your class sizes and pupil-to-teacher ratios?

As an Infant school, the Government limits all of our classes to a maximum of 30 pupils. We have 3 classes in each year group (90 children in total), with 270 children across the whole school. Each class has one teacher and there are a number of support staff, who work across the three classes in each year group, to support the children's needs.

5. Are there clubs, before and after school?

The school offers a range of before and after school clubs, although these are currently more limited due to the Coronavirus restrictions. Generally, there are clubs offered by both external providers (such as Football, Karate, Tennis) and school staff (Computing, Cooking and Glee club). Most clubs begin straight after school and last for about an hour.



6. Do you offer Music lessons?

The school works in partnership with the West Sussex Music Service and is happy to facilitate instrument lessons during school time. These have previously ranged from Guitar and Drums to Violin and Trombone. In addition we have a pianist who runs lessons in school during the day.



7. Do you provide before and after school childcare?

The school does not currently offer this service as there is an Out of School Care provider on site, situated next door to the Infant school. Rascals is Ofsted registered and can be contacted on 01903 772000 or info@rascalschildcare.org.uk.



8. How do you settle children if they seem unhappy?



We offer a very thorough transition programme for the children, which usually means that they settle very quickly into the life of the school. However, if a child is unsettled we will work closely with you to find different ways to overcome this. This could be having a transition object which moves between home and school, arriving slightly earlier or later than their peers, having a dedicated adult to meet and greet them etc

9. What's the school lunch like?

Hot meals are prepared on site and are provided by Chartwells. Every child is entitled to a free school meal or parents can provide a packed lunch if they prefer. Sample menus can be found at westsussex.mealselector.co.uk and special menus can be prepared for children with food allergies.



10. What about snacks and drinks?



The school provides fruit or vegetables each day for the children and parents are also welcome to provide an additional/alternative snack if they wish. Please see the snack policy on the school website for more details. We ask that you provide your child with a named water bottle to use in school as the children are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day. Milk is free for under 5's and can be ordered from www.coolmilk.com for over 5's.

11. Is there an 'open door' policy?

Under normal circumstances, the teachers are very happy to chat to parents at the beginning and end of the day, however, due to the current Covid restrictions this is now by appointment only. Again, we usually hold regular open mornings and workshops where parents are able to come into the school, see their children at work and talk with the staff. These have also been temporarily suspended. Each year group has an email address so that parents can communicate directly with the teachers and there is always a member of the Senior Leadership Team on the gates in the mornings at drop-off time.

12. What's your take on bullying?

The school operates a zero tolerance policy on bullying and links this closely to our right to be safe. Incidents are taken seriously and our Anti-Bullying policy sets out the actions that the school will take. The children are taught regularly about what bullying is, what to do if they see it and they learn the 'Bullying 1,2,3' to empower them to take action.



13. How are behaviour problems handled?



Good behaviour is expected and actively encouraged. Behaviour management is closely linked to the following rights: The right to be safe, the right to be treated fairly, the right to be listened to, the right to be educated, and this language is used with the children. Each classroom has a 'If you misbehave' poster which clearly explains to the child the next step that will be taken if they continue to misbehave. Our Positive Behaviour policy sets out the actions the school takes when behaviour falls short of that expected.

14. How much homework is there?

The DfE suggests that children in Years 1 and 2 have approximately 1 hour per week of homework, however we believe that little and often is better. Home learning letters are sent out each week with activities ranging from Phonics and Maths to creative projects. All children are expected to read at home each night. See our Home Learning policy for further details.



15. How do you support high or low achievers?

Children arrive at school with a range of different strengths and teachers are very used to differentiating learning to meet the needs of those who need additional support and those who need further challenge. Where children are falling behind, interventions are put in place to help them catch up.

16. My child has additional physical, behavioural, speech or learning needs. What support will they receive? Who can I talk to about this?

If your child has additional needs please contact the school office (01903 773177) to make an appointment to talk with the Inclusion Co-ordinator, who will be able to explain the facilities we have and what support we would be able to provide for your child.



17. My child is very young and I'm worried they won't be able to cope with being at school all day. Can they be part-time? Should I defer for a year?

We are very used to having very young children in school and our provision is adapted to meet the needs of these children. We would actively encourage all children to start school on a full-time basis however, we recognise that this may not be suitable for a minority of children and therefore part-time places are available from 9.00 – 1.15pm each day. Some parents feel that their child is simply too young to start school and choose to defer their child for a year. We do not know your child so are unable to offer advice on this matter however, there are potential long-term implications in doing this so we would therefore urge you to seek advice before making this decision.

18. What transition programme do you offer before they start school?

Our transition programme is very thorough and usually means that when the children start school they settle very quickly. Parents are asked to complete a Baseline form, which gives us detailed information about the children, including their friendships, interests and worries. We then make contact with each pre-school/nursery to find out further information about the children's learning and relationships. The children are then allocated to a class and contact is made with the class teacher either face-to-face or virtually. Each child is given a photo booklet containing pictures of the staff and classrooms along with a toy mouse as a transition object, with tasks to do with mouse at home, to help them get ready for school. If children are still in nappies we offer toilet training advice to help get them dry before they start school. Home visits and short small group visits take place in the autumn just before the children start full-time.



19. We live outside the catchment area of the school. What are the chances of us getting a place?

Every year the school takes children from outside its catchment area, with Rustington, Angmering and Littlehampton being frequently on this list. The school is usually oversubscribed however every year there are families who do not take up their places (moved house, going to private school etc) and these are then offered to those families who were not successful in the first instance. If you would like your child to come to East Preston Infant school our advice would be to put it as your first choice as you are very unlikely to be offered a place otherwise.

20. We have booked a holiday before we realised that our child was going to be at school.

Absence from school can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances, however if you are able to evidence that a holiday was booked before you were offered a school place, then the Headteacher will authorise this as a one-off.

21. I'd like to volunteer to help in school. How do I go about this?

Volunteers in school are very welcome. You will need to have a DBS completed before you are able to help in school so please contact the school office to arrange an appointment for this to be undertaken with the School Business Manager.



22. How can I become part of the school community?



We welcome parental support. Daily home learning tasks such as sharing a reading book, phonic practise and learning of spellings will all support your child's confidence and learning. Parental support for our Forest School and Beach School sessions is vital for them to take place, which doesn't have to be every session. We also welcome all parents to become involved in our Friends of East Preston (FEPIS) events, whether you can be involved in organising or in the running of events.

23. What happens next?

You should apply for school places online by the deadline of 15th January 2021. If you miss this deadline you are very unlikely to be offered a place at the school. You will be asked to put the schools in order of preference. **If you would like your child to come to East Preston Infant school, our advice would be to put it as your first choice, regardless of where you live, as you are very unlikely to be offered a place otherwise.** You will be advised, usually in April, of where your child has a place. Do remember to accept the place as soon as possible (assuming you're happy with it) or you could risk losing it. Remember, if you are not initially offered a place at the school, this could quickly change. Please contact us in this instance for further advice.



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