



Beaminster  
St. Mary's Academy

# Parent's Handbook

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**School Office:**

**Email:**

**Website:**

**Tel: 01308 862201**

**[office@beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk](mailto:office@beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk)**

**[www.beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk](http://www.beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk)**

## DAILY ROUTINE

School hours for pupils are as follows:

### **Whole School**



8.35am	Pupils are able to enter their classrooms and engage in classroom activities.
8.45am	Bell is rung, register.
11.00am – 11.20am	Morning break
12.15pm – 1.15pm	Lunchtime
1.15pm	Register for afternoon session to begins
3.15pm	Bell is rung - School Day ends.

### **Arrival at School**

Children are able to come into the playground from 8.35am. A bell will be rung at 8.45am to signal that children can go into their classrooms. Please make sure your child is on time for school each day and ready to learn.

### **End of the School Day**

Children will be dismissed at 3:15 PM. A member of staff will be on duty at the school gate to ensure the children's safety as they leave. The children are regularly reminded that if their parent or carer is not there to meet them, they must return immediately to their class teacher.

If someone different will be collecting your child, please ensure your child is aware of the arrangement and inform the school as early as possible during the school day.

**Key Stage 1 children** are to be collected from their designated classroom exit.

We understand that occasionally parents may be unexpectedly delayed at the end of the school day. If you are delayed, please contact the school as soon as possible so a message can be given to your child's teacher. If, in such a situation, you arrange for someone else to collect your child, please inform the school so that your child can be notified.

Thank you for your cooperation.

What should I do if I know I am going to be late to collect

# ABSENCES

We give high priority to attendance and wish to convey a clear message to parents and pupils that regular attendance is vital. Unauthorised and unnecessary absence is detrimental to a child's education.

## Sickness Absence

If your child is absent from school due to illness, please inform us by phone (01308 862201) as soon as possible, preferably by 8:45 AM on the first day of absence. If we do not hear from you, we will call you to confirm the reason for your child's absence, in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

Upon your child's return to school, please write a letter addressed to their teacher explaining the reason for their absence.

If your child is absent due to vomiting and/or diarrhoea, they must not return to school until 48 hours after the last episode. This is to prevent the spread of viruses.



## Medical Appointments

### Remember

Your child's education is very important, please do not ask for unnecessary leave of absence.

Please try to arrange medical appointments, such as doctor, optician, dentist appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, please seek permission, by showing the appointment letter, to the office.

### Absences

Permission may be requested for "exceptional circumstances only", e.g., family wedding, exams, bereavement, religious observance. Requests for such absences must be in writing to the Headteacher and authorisation must be gained before absence is taken. These absences do not count as holiday, but will only be given sparingly and appropriately, if a child's attendance is above 95%.

Examples of absences that will not be granted:

- Holidays
- Shopping trips
- Birthdays
- Leaving at lunchtime to avoid traffic problems at the weekend.

### Attendance Ladder



## ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

In addition to on-going assessment, children are also more formally assessed following a particular learning module.

While assessment and testing is important so that we can ensure children are realising their full potential, we do realise that every child is different and learns and achieves in different ways. We adopt a low-key approach to testing so that children feel relaxed.

At the end of the Summer Term each year, all parents will receive a written report on their child and the opportunity to discuss their child's progress.

There are also opportunities for parents to meet formally with their child's teacher:

<b><i>The whole school</i></b>	Autumn Term 2	Parents' Evening
	Spring Term 2	Parents' Evening
	Summer Term 2	Formal written reports

If you have any concerns, staff are always willing to discuss with you at a mutually convenient time by appointment, which should be made through the school office.

## BICYCLES / SCOOTERS



All children who cycle to school need to wear a cycle helmet. We have bicycle racks available in the school grounds, although we cannot accept responsibility for bicycles left at school. Children may also bring their scooter school. We encourage the wearing of helmets. We also have space for scooters to be stored during the day, but like the bicycles, we cannot accept responsibility for any scooters left at school.

## CAR PARKING



We emphasise most strongly the need for care and consideration with regard to parking at the beginning and end of each school day. The school car park is for staff only. Please take extra care when parking on the roads near to the school: do not park on the zig-zag lines as this creates an obvious hazard.

## CELEBRATION WORSHIP



As a Church school, the children take part in act of worship each day. On a Friday at 2.45pm, we hold a special Celebration Worship when parents and visitors are invited to celebrate the children's achievements. These come in the form of certificates for 'Heavenly Handwriting' and our 'Values'. There are also certificates given out for 'Remarkable Readers', 'Marvellous Mathematicians', 'Super Spellers', 'Amazing Artists', 'Stupendous Scientists', 'Wonderful Writer' and 'Impressive Improvers'. As well as these certificates children earn house points and gain a Bronze Award for 50 House Points – a Silver Award for 100 House Points – a Gold Award for 150 House Points and finally a Platinum Award for 200 House Points. The Platinum Awards are very rare! We also like to celebrate success outside of school, if they have been given any certificates, medals, badges etc. then we love to share this with the whole school.

## CHURCH LINKS



Beaminster St Mary's has strong links with St Mary's Church in Beaminster. The Reverend Jo Neary visits the school every week to lead a worship and many of our annual Christian services are held in the church; these include carol services, harvest festival and Easter. We also hold a leavers' service in Church to celebrate the time our Y6s have been with us and wish them well as they move on. Parents are warmly welcomed to come and take part in these services.

## COMMUNICATION

In order for the school to communicate with parents and give out important information, the school uses Arbor which is our whole school information management system and has a Parent Portal that parents can access.



New Parents will receive an email inviting them to sign up. Once they have done so, they can log in and update the contact details which we hold for each child and give consents for clubs and trips, book parents' evening appointments as well as view their child's attendance. You can also pay for trips and breakfast club via Arbor as well. Please could we therefore ask all parents to review information on a regular basis, especially when you change your mobile phone number.

Arbor will used to inform parents of school closures due to the weather, late returning from school trips and cancellation of after-school clubs. It is also used to send out our letters and newsletters.

**Parents need to ensure that any changes to mobile phone numbers on Arbor or sent to the school office as soon as possible.**

# ETHOS AND BEHAVIOUR

*Because we believe that we are all one in God,  
we acknowledge Jesus taught values of:*



St Mary's Academy is a Church school believes its Christian values provide a caring environment in which every child can integrate happily and flourish academically and spiritually. It is our aim to strengthen and develop positive attitudes and emotional well-being through work, play, prayer and reflection.

The rules of the school are simple and require each child to demonstrate Kindness, Friendship, Trust, Respect and Responsibility. These values are linked to our Christian values and we regularly reflect on these through our daily acts of worship and prayer. These simple rules help to ensure the well-being of all members of both the school and the wider community.

On occasions when a child's behaviour causes concern and fails to respond to supportive practice in school, parents/carers are asked to be involved. This will ensure we can work in partnership to ensure a happy and safe environment for all our children.

Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated at St Mary's Academy. All concerns of this nature will be carefully investigated and monitored. In the event that a bullying situation is confirmed, both sets of parents will be informed and involved in agreeing an action plan to resolve the situation. We are required to keep a record of racist, homophobic and sexist incidents involving pupils or adults on the school premises. Parents will be informed and involved in agreeing a strategy to resolve the situation if such behaviour is repeated.

Our latest positive behaviour policy is available on our website along with our Safeguarding policy. If you require a copy, please ask the School Office.



# HEALTH MATTERS

## Accidents and Sickness whilst at School



If a child has a serious accident while at school every effort will be made to inform parents immediately and, if necessary, arrangements will be made to take the child to hospital. Minor cuts and bruises will be dealt with in school and several members of staff are trained in first-aid.

If a child becomes unwell during the school day, parents/carers will be notified and asked to collect the child.

**It is important that the school always has an up- to-date emergency contact number for you and also names and contact details of someone else we can contact if, for some reason, you are not available.**

## Head lice

Head lice are an unfortunate fact of school life. Cleanliness is no barrier and lice can spread quickly if appropriate action is not taken. Please check your child's hair regularly for the presence of lice and if found treat appropriately and immediately. If live head lice are seen on a child, then parents will be contacted to collect their child and treat immediately before return to school. Information can be obtained from the school office and a pharmacist will be able to advise on treatments. It is important that the whole family is treated. If you suspect your child has head lice, please treat them and inform the school so that we can alert other families.



## Medicals

The school nurse attends termly to see new entrants for development checks. Any concerns will be discussed and further support will be given if necessary. All children have height, weight, vision and hearing tests in their first year. Parents will be invited to attend consultations if they wish.

## Medical Information



If a pupil has a serious or recurring medical problem, please inform the school. For example, parents of children with asthma are asked to supply school with full information concerning the extent of the asthma and to ensure that a usable inhaler is always available for use in school hours. Inhalers will be kept in classrooms so that they can be used as and when needed.

School needs to be informed if your child suffers from allergic reaction of any sort.



## Medicine

Some staff are able to administer prescribed medicines if the medication dose is required **four times or more** in one day or with lunch. A disclaimer form should be signed giving us permission to do so, and precise instructions concerning dosage, times etc. Medicines and tablets must be taken to the school office where they will be stored away for safekeeping. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to collect medicines at the end of the school day.

**PLEASE NOTE: We can only administer prescribed medicines.**

## HOME-SCHOOL LINKS



Regular letters, newsletters, calendar of events and other notes are sent home via e-mail – please check their book bag daily for any additional letters and take time to read the contents and transfer any information onto your calendar. If you have more than one child at the school, many general pieces of information will be sent home with the younger sibling only. Please ensure the school office has your current e-mail address.

Further information about the school including recent letters, policies and dates can be found on the school website <http://www.beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk>.

### Helping in School



There are many areas of life in school, which would be almost impossible without the help of parents/carers. Help can be given on a regular or occasional basis covering such things as art and craft, sewing, cooking, technology, listening to children reading and going out of visits/trips.

In order to become a helper in school, parents/carers must have obtained an enhanced disclosure clearance from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS). Please make initial contact with your child's class teacher.

### PTFA

#### PTFA

Parents, Teachers, Friends Association (PTFA) is one, which as a parent/carer you are automatically a member of. The purpose of the PTFA is to raise funds for activities and equipment that falls outside funding provided to the school by the Government. In the past the PTFA have provided an outside classroom, help towards funding for school trips and additional resources for children's learning.

If you would like to join, please come along to the meetings or ask at the school office for further information.

## HOMEWORK



All children are expected to read at home with parents on a regular basis. Each child has a Reading Record, which you should complete when your child has read indicating what they have read and if they experienced any problems. Children in key stage 2 are expected to also login to Spelling Shed and TT Rockstars and complete their weekly challenges.

Children are expected to be heard read at least 3 times per week. For older children you do not have to listen to them read but asking them a few questions about the story really helps.

Each child should have a book/home/school bag when they join school in which they carry their reading book, homework and any messages to and from school. Please ensure this bag is cared for and brought into school every day and checked at the end of the day for messages/homework.

## LOST PROPERTY

To ensure items that are “lost” can be returned to children, **please label** all articles of clothing. Items found are usually placed in the Lost Property Box located in the Learning Hub.

# MEALS AND BREAK TIME SNACKS

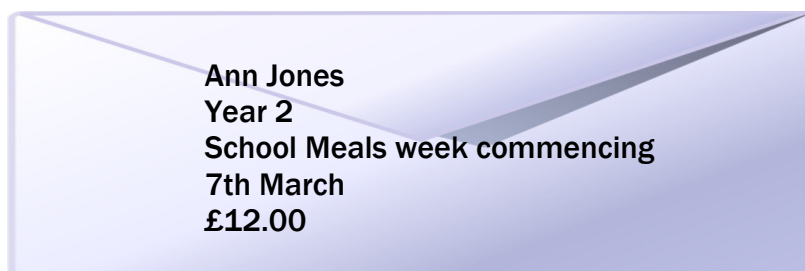
## School Lunches



School meals are prepared, cooked and served on the premises. If your child would like to have a school meal then you will need to complete the menu form that is sent home with your child every 3-4 week. Local Food Links prepare the menus going a variety of choice throughout the weeks and comply with government guidelines for healthy eating.

School meals can either be ordered online by yourselves (a special code for each child can be obtained from the school office) or you can send in the order form and dinner monies to the school office who will be happy to order your child's meals.

Please put money in a sealed, clearly named envelope with the amount of money marked on it.



The schools' meals service is provided by Local Food Links if you have a query regarding menus or online orders/payments please contact Kathy on 01308 428909.

## Hot Lunches

All Key stage 1 children (YR, Y1 & Y2) are entitled to a free hot school meal funded by the Government. Should you not want your child to receive a hot school meal there will be the opportunity to opt out. However, we strongly encourage children to eat a hot school dinner, as research shows a healthy, balance meal in the middle of the day will aid learning.

## Free School Meals

Are you entitled to free school meals and other funding?

If you are receiving income support, receiving income-based job seekers allowance OR receiving child tax credit, it is important to register your entitlement with the Dorset County Council on 01305 221000 and inform the school office. This means the school has extra funds in order to support your child at school, this includes support with educational visits and uniform. Please note that even if your child is receiving hot lunches in Key stage 1 you can still register. The registration is all done over the telephone and an answer can be given straightaway.

## Lunchboxes



Children who do not wish to have school lunches can bring a packed lunch however, we strongly encourage parents to ensure that their children eat a healthy and well-balanced meal and avoid processed foods. For advice on providing a well-balanced packed lunch see:

[www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/mostof\\_childrenlunchbox.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/mostof_childrenlunchbox.shtml)

<http://www.schoolfoodtrust.org.uk/schools/projects/packed-lunches>

## Break time Snacks



Children in Early Year's and Key Stage one will be provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable each school day, normally before the morning break, as part of the government programme.

**NO SWEETS, CHOCOLATE, CANS OR FIZZY DRINKS** are allowed in school.



## Water Bottles

To encourage children to drink water during the day, children can bring in a water bottle to leave in the classroom. Children also have access to water throughout the day.

## PHOTOGRAPHS



Throughout the year children may have their photograph taken for school purposes as part of recording their learning or showcasing their experiences. We will sometimes use these photographs as part of an internal display, on our own Newsletter, or on our website

Parental permission is required when the child joins the school to allow them to take part in this process. Individual, siblings, class and whole school photographs are taken by a professional photographer each year for you to purchase.

## SCHOOL MERCHANDISE

Our school uniform is available to purchase from MyClothing online or Kitzuk, prices may vary / change:



School Sweatshirts	£ 9.99 - £12.99
Blue Polo Shirts with school logo	£ 6.50 - £6.99
School Fleece Coats	£19.99
PE shirts with school logo	£ 5.50
PE bags	£ 5.99
Book bags	£ 5.99
Rucksacks	£ 8.99
Hats (Sun hats & Beanies)	£ 5.99

The website is <https://myclothing.com>

Kitzuk is a local company based in Sherborne. You can visit their shop or purchase online using the following website: [www.kitzuk.co.uk](http://www.kitzuk.co.uk)

## SCHOOL OFFICE

The school office is manned from 8.30am until 4.00pm, Monday to Wednesday and 8.00am to 3.30pm Thursday and Friday - during term time. After these hours the telephone is diverted to the answer phone.

During holiday periods the school office is not manned.

# UNIFORM AND APPEARANCE

Children should be sent to school clean, tidy and appropriately dressed. Long hair must be tied back.

It is of great help if children have been taught to manage buttons, laces and zips before starting school.

**PLEASE ENSURE ALL CLOTHING AND BELONGINGS ARE NAMED.**



**Uniform** (available from <https://myclothing.com> or [www.kitzuk.co.uk](http://www.kitzuk.co.uk))

Black/grey skirts or trousers, in the summer black/grey shorts may be worn  
Royal Blue polo shirts and a St Mary's Academy Sweatshirt or Cardigan.  
Blue and white checked dresses may be worn in the summer.



## Footwear

Sensible dark coloured shoes are required. Brightly coloured trainers, crocs and slip on dolly shoes are not acceptable types of footwear. Children who come to school repeatedly in bright coloured or unsuitable shoes will be asked to change into their trainers or provided with black plimsolls.

Children in **Early Years (reception)** are also required to have a pair of wellington boots in school. These should be clearly named and clipped together with a clothes peg.

## PE, Games and Swimming

Black shorts, short sleeve white t-shirt or blue school polo shirt and trainers.



In the winter, dark coloured tracksuit bottoms can be worn. School Sweatshirts/Hoodies must be worn, no sports branded items are to worn.

Children may have the opportunity to **swim** during the school year and will need a costume and towel, in school for their swimming sessions.

## Jewellery, make up and nail varnish

For Health and Safety reasons, school policy advises that jewellery should not be worn. Watches may be worn but remain the responsibility of the child. If you are considering pierced ears for your child, please ensure that this is done during the summer holidays, so that, if possible, the earrings can be removed at home when your child attends school. If earrings need to be worn, please ensure they are plain stud earrings. Make up and nail varnish should not be worn in school.  
Any child wearing nail polish will be asked to remove it.

## TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL



In the September following their 11th birthday, children transfer to Secondary School (usually Beaminster School). The Local Authority School Admissions Service sends out details early in the year of transfer.

## VALUABLES AND TOYS

We ask that children do not bring money, jewellery and toys into school. If watches are worn, they remain the responsibility of the child.



Some classes hold “show and tell” sessions when children can bring in items of interest from home but these should be placed in the child’s tray when arriving at school and taken home the same day.

Staff and the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust cannot be held responsible for the loss of, or damage to, personal property.

## VISITS AND EXCURSIONS



We like to provide opportunities to extend children’s learning outside the classroom and provide first hand experiences beyond the scope of our own resources. This may involve taking the children out on an educational visit to enhance the curriculum or provide new experiences, such as visiting religious buildings; or we may invite visitors to school, such as theatre groups, people from a different faith or culture, charitable organisations and others relating to a topic or theme the children may be working on.

For such activities, parents will often be asked to contribute, which we receive most gratefully. There is no obligation to contribute towards such activities although many activities will not be able to take place if sufficient contributions are not received.

## **LOCAL GOVERNING BOARD**

As an Academy within the Diocese of Salisbury Academy Trust (DSAT) we uphold the vision and ethos of the Trust.

As a Local Governing Board, we will hold the school to account for its academic performance. We oversee the finances for the school, ensuring that the school provides value for money and that resources are used wisely. We agree the priorities for the school, review the school development plan and the school's self-evaluation, ensuring that outcomes and impact are evidenced and responded to. We ensure policies are up to date and adhered to, including ensuring all statutory requirements and regulations are met.

We provide the appropriate level of challenge to the school and foster trust and openness in the work that we do. We promote the relationship the school has within the community, including working together to preserve and develop the ethos of the school and its religious character.

In all of the work that we do the children of Beaminster St Mary's Academy remain our priority and focus. The meetings are call Academy Standards and Ethos Committees (ASEC).

The LGB has a Clerk and all communication for the attention of the LGB should be addressed to the clerk, via the school office or email: [clerk@beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk](mailto:clerk@beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk)

### **COMPLAINTS**

The staff and members of the ASEC hope that all the time your child spends with us will be happy and purposeful. However, if you have any concerns regarding the curriculum or any other aspect of school life, please discuss these with your child's class teacher, in the first instance, by making a mutually convenient appointment through the school office. Please do not e-mail a teacher directly but through the school office e-mail address which is: [office@beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk](mailto:office@beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk)

The majority of issues can be resolved in this way but if a parent/carer feels dissatisfied by the outcome of the discussion or unable to discuss the issue with the teacher, an appointment should be made to talk to the Headteacher. If parents feel these discussions have not resolved the issue satisfactorily, they should submit a formal, written complaint to the Headteacher. If following further action and discussion parents feel the issue is unresolved, they may inform the Headteacher and submit a formal written complaint to the Chair of the Local Governing Board.

The Chair of the Local Governing Board is: Mr Steven Loveridge  
C/o Mrs Sharon Vaughan, Clerk to the Governors via the School Office.

The Academy Trust's Complaints Policy is available on the school's website.

**[www.beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk](http://www.beaminsterstmarys.dsat.org.uk)**