

St George's C of E Academy

New Starter Booklet

Welcome to RS & RG



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Welcome

Welcome to Upper Foundation. The class teachers are Mrs Gent and Miss Robinson. We work together to help guide and support your child to reach their full potential in all aspects of their learning and to have a happy, enjoyable, interesting, safe and secure start to their school life.

Our classrooms are set up to develop your child's independence. Your child is taught and encouraged to access the areas in the classroom without adult help, as far as possible. The reason for this because young children learn best through first-hand experience and when they are interested and motivated to learn. Our environment changes in response to children's interests, their developmental level and also in preparation for the next phase in their education.

We follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum as required by statute. This follows on from your child's experiences at their pre-school setting. Records from pre-schools are transferred and discussed to help ensure continuity and progression. Your child's experiences as they enter reception will be similar to those that they have experienced at nursery but become more formal as the year progresses.

Getting your child ready for Upper Foundation

Starting school is a milestone, not only for your child but also for you. You may be excited or perhaps a little concerned about your child taking these first steps towards independence. However, the Upper Foundation team feel that it is important that your child's experience of starting school is as positive as possible.

You are the first and most important educators of your child. It is vital that a good relationship is built between home and school so that everybody involved can help your child get the best out of their Upper Foundation experience. By taking an active interest in supporting your child's development before, during and after their time in St George's Academy will help your child feel happy and fulfilled.

It will be very helpful if your child can complete the tasks listed below independently before they start Upper Foundation.

- Dress and undress themselves. Velcro on shoes or buckles make this easier, as do elasticated waists on skirts and trousers. Try to ensure their coat can be easily fastened.
- Recognise their own name.
- Use a pencil with some control.
- Recognise their belongings with names on them or initials on sweatshirts/cardigans
- Use a knife and a fork

We acknowledge that children do develop at different rates and that they are not all the same, so please do not worry if your child struggles with any of the above skills just let their class teacher know.

Settling in at St George's Academy

For the first few weeks in Upper Foundation we will be getting to know each other. Some of our children come from a range of different settings and may not know any other child in the class. Do not worry about this - it is amazing how quickly children establish friendships!

During these first few weeks the Upper Foundation staff will observe and work with your children to make judgements regarding the best way to engage your child, move their learning on and establish rules and routines. The team will build a trusting relationship with your child and also between their parents/carers. During the Autumn term parents/carers will be invited to a parents evening to talk about how your child has settled in and what learning has been occurring.

Children will learn both inside and outside during the school day so they will need to come to school dressed for the weather. Please ensure that all coats etc... are machine washable as play and learning can get a little messy at times! Children will be learning as a whole class or in small groups led by a team member when settling in. Children will have lunch in the school hall with the rest of the children. This can be daunting for some children initially, However, a team member is consistently present for the first few weeks in the dinner hall so that each child is happy and is consuming their dinner. We feel it is important to observe lunchtime initially so that we can inform parents if there are any issues promptly.

Working with Parents and Carers

It is vital to the Upper Foundation Team that parents and carers feel welcome and confident to speak to any of our staff about their child. Mrs Gent and Miss Robinson are always available before 8:45am or after 3:20pm to talk about any concerns or anything you wish us to know about your child. We also know that when parents work full time they can feel out of touch with school and would encourage those parents to use the school telephone number of 01325 332230 to call us or leave a message. Don't think there is anything too small to contact us about!

As well as these informal ways of keeping informed, we also hold parents evenings during the school year. Class letters and our school letters are sent home regularly but are also available on our school website or through an app called SEESAW. We also keep parents informed about our learning and achievements on our class page of our website, titled 'RS' or 'RG'.

Contributions from home are very much encouraged. These can be in the form of learning stories or WOW moments where you have the chance to share anything that your child has achieved at home that is new. This evidence contributes to the teacher's assessments of your child.

The Curriculum in Upper Foundation

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum is a play based curriculum which becomes increasingly formal throughout the academic year to prepare children for the National Curriculum that begins in Year 1.

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) has 7 areas of learning and development. All of the 7 areas are important and interconnected, but three areas have been identified as crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning. These three areas are known as the 'Prime' areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development

These prime areas are strengthened and applied through the remaining 4 areas, known as the 'Specific' areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

Each child is assessed in each of these learning areas. Teachers report each child's assessment at the end of the year, where you find if your child is emerging, expected or exceeding the learning area. Each area of learning has its own 'Early Learning Goal' which is a set of developmental descriptors outlining that area (attached at the back of this booklet), which are to be achieved by the end of Upper Foundation. More information about the EYFS can be found on the GOV website: <https://www.gov.uk/early-years-foundation-stage>

First Day Routine

Times and details of the day may change due to COVID and the school's risk assessment. Please note that we will inform you of any changes.

8:50am onwards:

- Arrive at school and wait with your child in the key stage 1 yard where the Upper Foundation Team will meet you (*for the first few days parents/carers can accompany their child in the playground outside the classroom however after that period we do ask if parents/carers can leave them at the gate due to the health and safety of the other children using that playground*).

9:00am:

- Please line your child up on the playground with their class.
- Leave your child as soon as you feel they can cope - prolonging separation tends to make matters worse, so if you feel your child is struggling just ask a member of staff to help. We will always give you a call to let you know when they have settled.

3:20pm:

Return to the playground where your child's classroom door is. The teacher will dismiss your child when she is happy that they have seen their parent or carer. This can take a while at the beginning of the year as the teacher is very conscious about keeping the children safe.

If your child is attending our after school club or being picked up by different adults please inform the class teacher on the morning.

What will my child be doing on the first few days?

- Firstly your child will wave you goodbye and meet with their class on their carpet area. The teacher will do the register and show your child where to hang their coat and bag but also where they can put their belongings in the classroom, in their own tray.
- After carpet time your child can go and explore the environment. Your child will choose to play inside or outside.
- At about 11.30 your child will help tidy the classroom and gather on their carpet for a story.
- 11.55 is lunch time! The teacher will help your child get ready for lunch and accompany the whole class to the hall.
- Your child will play outside at lunchtime on the Key Stage 1 playground (where you drop and pick them up) as we share a yard with Classes 1, 2 and 3. At this time the lunch supervisors will look after your child.
- After lunch your child will have another carpet time. The teacher will do the register again and the class will get to know each other even better!
- After carpet time your child can go and explore the environment again. They might choose to play in the same area as they did this morning or they might like to try something new!
- At about 3 o'clock we will tidy all of the toys away in preparation for home time.
- Your child will have another carpet time, say goodbye to their new friends and then it will be time to tell their families about all of the fun they have had!

Additional Information

School Day times: 8.55am - 3.20pm

School phone number: 01325 332230

School website: <http://www.stgeorges-darlington.co.uk/>

UF Teachers: Mrs Gent, Miss Robinson

Lunch

All children eat in the dinner hall with the rest of the children in the school. Children will be accompanied during the first few weeks so that they can get used to the routine and to make sure that they are enjoying their dinner. Older children are on hand to help with this routine too.

Dinner Money

Every child in Upper Foundation and Key Stage 1 is entitled to a free lunch. If your child dislikes the hot or cold options for dinner then you can provide them with a home packed lunch. The Upper Foundation team is more than happy to monitor this for you.

Snack

Fresh fruit, milk and water is available daily for your child. They can help themselves to two pieces of fruit a day. We ask that no other snacks are provided because we have children with allergies in the setting and need to ensure their safety.

House Teams

Your child will be allocated a 'house team' which they will belong to during their time at St Georges. Each house has a colour and your child is required to wear the team colour for P.E. If you have an older sibling in the school, your child is likely to be in the same house team.

P.E

Your child will require a P.E kit in school. They will need a t-shirt which is the same colour as their house team and a pair of white shorts. They do not require any P.E footwear until the warmer weather arrives. Class teachers will inform you in plenty of time as to when P.E footwear is required.

Medicines/Injuries

If your child requires any medication whilst at school or they have obtained an injury, our School's Medical Team is your first point of call. They will ensure the correct procedures are being followed for your child.

If your child has a minor injury at school a member of staff will treat your child immediately and write a note home to inform you (so please check their school bag daily). If a major injury occurs you will be contacted immediately.

Outdoor Learning

We love to learn outdoors in all types of weather! Please ensure that your child has a pair of wellies, labelled with their name, to be kept in school.

School website

We update our 'RS' or 'RG' class page on a weekly basis. Please look at our website as you will gain an insight into our weekly activities and achievements.

For further information about the rest of the school or school policies please visit our school website:

<http://www.stgeorges-darlington.co.uk/>