

Menston Primary School



Starting School Information Pack June 2023

Please note that for the purposes of this document the term 'parent' is used to include anyone who has legal responsibility for a child and 'child' includes 'children', for example when twins are starting together.

Welcome to Menston Primary School

We want your child to settle at Menston Primary as soon as possible and for you to feel well informed. We understand that starting school is a very important time and we work hard to do all we can to make it a smooth transition for everyone.

Detailed information about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Unit at Menston is available in the EYFS Policy on the school website.

If you have any queries or questions about the school in general do not hesitate to call or email the office office@menstonprimary.co.uk. (Please note that the office is not staffed during school holidays.) Your child's class teacher can be contacted at EYFS@menstonprimary.co.uk.



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN&D)

Menston Primary School is proud to be an inclusive school. Our staff work hard to challenge, inspire and motivate all children to become successful, confident and caring citizens of our diverse world.

Provision is tailored at Menston Primary to support the needs of all children with SEN&D. If you have any queries about this in relation to your child, please talk to your child's teacher or our SEN&D Co-ordinator, (Mrs Gilmour), who can be contacted via the school office. Further information can be found in the SEN&D policy on our school website.

Pupil Premium

Some children are eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Eligibility can be linked to parental income or other criteria, for example, working in the armed forces. Recipients of Pupil Premium funding have help with things such as uniform purchasing and in KS2 (Key Stage 2), school meals. The grant received by schools from Pupil Premium funding is designed to improve children's progress and academic success. If you think you may be eligible for Pupil Premium please contact our Parental Involvement Worker, Mrs Smitheringale, via the school office to arrange a confidential meeting.

The Foundation Unit

There are two classes in Foundation, Acorn and Oak. Miss Hammans teaches Acorn and Miss Lain teaches Oak. Each class has a teaching assistant and over the year, other members of staff support the children as the need arises.

Oak and Acorn are linked by a shared area. Whilst children have their own teacher and class base, for large parts of the day they can move freely between the rooms. Staff build relationships with children in both classes and over the course of the year children will work with all Foundation staff.

Foundation also has sole access to their own well-resourced outdoor area. When the children are not involved in carpet sessions, they can choose to move their learning outdoors. Learning also takes place within the extensive school grounds and the children regularly run on our Daily Mile running tracks.

The Foundation Ethos

Our aim in Foundation is to support children so that they:

- love coming to school
- are kind, respectful and tolerant of all others
- are independent and able to take care of their own needs
- are curious, excited and committed learners
- look after the school environment including our resources
- have a passion for the natural world
- make good or better progress from their starting point
- have a developing awareness of the past and life outside Menston Primary.

Daily Routines

Uniform

All uniform must be clearly named with your child's first and last names, preferably with iron-on or sewn-in labels. Please note that any clothing which arrives in school unnamed may be named by Foundation staff.

Our school website outlines the uniform your child will need and where it can be bought <https://menstonprimary.co.uk/parents/school-uniform/> Please note:

- **Shoes:** Children should wear plain black shoes to school. These can be trainer-style shoes as long as they are plain black with no logos. For the safety of children and to prevent the risk of injury, shoes with a heel, platform soles and flip flops are not allowed due to the danger of tripping whilst running on the playgrounds or on the track. For the same reason we would prefer children not to wear open-toed sandals, but if this is not possible we ask that they wear socks. Children should not wear shoes that are decorative (e.g. with diamantes), have flashing lights, coloured stripes or logos, or are backless sandals. Please do not send children in shoes with laces unless they can tie them themselves.
- **Wellingtons:** Children in Foundation at Menston need a pair of wellingtons that are kept on site.
- **PE kits:** Foundation children do PE from the start of the year. Our PE kit is a plain white T-Shirt, a pair of plain black shorts and a pair of plain black plimsolls. A plain navy sweatshirt and unbranded navy jogging pants are also required as we sometimes have PE lessons outdoors. Leggings are not part of the school PE kit.
- **Hair:** Hair must be neat and tidy at all times. Ideally, long hair should be tied back. Hair accessories should be plain, practical and in the school colours. Novelty or fashion items are not allowed. Jewellery should be limited to stud earrings only.

What to Bring to School Every Day (and What Not to Bring)

Foundation children go outside to learn and play in rain or shine so it is vital that they always bring to school a hooded waterproof coat, which is warm in cold weather. Each day they must also bring a named water bottle containing water (not juice or squash) and any additional clothing needed for the weather (e.g. a hat and gloves in the winter or a sun hat in the summer). During the autumn term, children will also start to receive a reading book, which will need to be brought into school every day.

Children are not allowed to bring to school watches that connect to the internet or that can take photos. Toys are not allowed in school either unless they are part of the learning and have been requested by the teachers. Children do not need to bring in any kind of stationery or other school equipment.

Morning Drop-Off

Entrance into school each morning is via the school gates, which open at 8.45am. Foundation children are to be brought to the classroom door and handed over to staff. The classroom doors will open between 8.45am and 8.55am and learning starts immediately. If you have another child to drop off in school, we advise you to bring your Foundation child over last. Parents must then immediately vacate the site so that gates can be locked.

At any other times during the school day, access into school is by the main entrance only. If you arrive at school after 9am, you will need to bring your child to the main entrance on St Peter's Way.

Afternoon Collection

The school gates will be unlocked at 3.15pm. Parents collect their child from the classroom door, which opens at 3.15pm. Your child will be allowed out of class when a member of staff can see their adult. We will ask for details of anyone else who will regularly collect your child (such as grandparents). This information can be amended at any time in the year. The school gates are locked again at 3.30pm.

If your child is to go home with anyone else as a one-off, perhaps for a play date or in an emergency, it is vital that you inform staff beforehand.

Care Club

Children who attend Care Club (Menston Primary's before and after school provision) are delivered to and collected from their classroom by Care Club staff. The staff in Foundation have a strong relationship with Care Club.

Holidays During Term Time

Menston Primary's Attendance Policy is in line with the Local Authority. The headteacher is unable to authorise term time holidays and will not grant a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances where these include days of family holiday. Requests for other absences are considered on a case-by-case basis once the application form (that is available from the office) has been completed.

Menston Primary School has also adopted the Local Authority's code of conduct for attendance, which allows for Penalty Notices (fines) to be issued to parents who take their child out of school for holidays. Penalty notices cannot be issued for children under the age of 5 at time of travel, but term-time holidays will still be unauthorised by the school. For further information, please refer to the Attendance Policy, which is available on the policies page of our school website here:

<https://menstonprimary.co.uk/key-info/policies/>

Wherever possible, please make doctor or dentist appointments outside school hours. If you are not able to do this, you must inform your child's class teacher and office staff before attending the appointment.

Food and Drink at School

Morning Snack

Free fruit is provided for a morning snack each day through the Fruit for Schools scheme. No other food can be brought in from home for snack unless there is a specific medical reason.

Milk

Children are entitled to free school milk every day until the start of the term in which they turn five. The milk form must be signed before children can have milk in school. Milk is available to purchase for children who turn five in that term. Milk orders are done weekly and any new orders start the Monday after they have been paid for. Please refer to the School Milk UK website for further details:
<https://www.freshpastures.co.uk/parents.php> .

Water

Children need to bring **water** in a clearly named drinks bottle every day. Children have access to their water throughout the day. The bottles are sent home for washing every night. **No other drinks are allowed.** Any squash that is found will be replaced with water.

Lunch

School dinners are free to Foundation and KS1 (Key Stage 1) children. Menston's school meals are tasty and nutritious and the vast majority of Foundation children have them. There is a rotating menu with a daily choice of hot and cold food. This menu will be sent home for you to talk through with your child. The lunch register is taken at the start of each day so please talk to your child beforehand about what they might like to eat.

If your child has specific dietary requirements, or if you would like to talk about how we could support your child's food choices, please contact the school's Kitchen Manager via the office or talk to your child's teacher.

Packed Lunch

If your child has a packed lunch instead of school dinners, their lunch must NOT include food containing nuts, sesame seeds, fizzy, canned or bottled drinks and sweets, crisps or chocolate. An ideal packed lunch would contain a sandwich, a drink of water and some fresh or dried fruit.

Birthday Treats

In order to promote healthy eating, we are not able give out any birthday cakes or sweets that are brought in. We will be celebrating Foundation birthdays in other

ways instead. Please also note that because of GDPR, we are not allowed to give out class lists for birthday invitations.

Mental and Physical Wellbeing

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Menston Primary is a child-centred school. Developing good communication and positive relationships lie at the very heart of the Early Years curriculum. A lot of learning, particularly at the start of the year, focusses on these areas.

Staff understand that some children may find the transition to school difficult and our plans take this into account. Staff are skilled at promoting self-confidence and self-esteem and successfully managing separation from parents.

Menston Primary works with Coram Life Education to support children's mental health needs and Foundation staff will be drawing on their resources to support the new cohort. A mentoring system is also in place to support those children who staff feel would benefit from this. Children access this provision only following discussion with parents.

Illness at Home

Please telephone the school office on 01943 873180 before 8.30am to report an absence due to illness. You do not need to phone every day of that week if your child continues to be off, but you must call on a Monday morning if your child's absence goes over the weekend.

Sickness and Diarrhoea and Other Illnesses

To stop the spread of infection children are not allowed to return to school until **48 hours after** their last bout of vomiting/diarrhoea (this is NHS guidance for all schools). Please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/> for information about common childhood illnesses and COVID-19.

Illness at School

If your child is ill in school, you will be telephoned to ask to collect them as soon as possible. It is essential that you keep the school office informed of all your up-to-date contact details. If we cannot get hold of you, we will call the contacts you have given on the admissions form in the order they are listed.

Accidents at School

In the event of a serious accident, a parent is always contacted immediately. If your child bumps their head, they will always be attended to by a qualified first-aider and a 'bumped head note' will be sent home with your child if they have needed first aid. Children who have been given a bumped head note will also be given a bumped head sticker. Sometimes special stickers are given to children who receive first aid.

Self-Care

Children must be able to go to the toilet by themselves **completely unaided** before they start school. If you have any concerns about this, please raise them with your child's teacher before they start. If there is a medical need for a child to be assisted in going to the toilet, an intimate care plan will be set up between parents and school staff.

Head lice

Head lice are very common in young children. They do not have anything to do with dirty hair and are picked up by head-to-head contact. Head lice spread very quickly in school settings. Please check your child's hair regularly and treat head lice immediately if found. It is best if long hair is tied back, as this reduces the risk of head lice being passed between children.

Medication in School

If your child has a long-term condition (e.g. asthma, food allergies, cystic fibrosis etc.) we will need a copy of their medical care plan so that we can support their needs. Any medication for long-term or short-term illness can only be administered in school once an 'administration of medicines' form has been completed. Any prescribed medication must be clearly labelled with your child's name and the dosage. **No medication can be administered by school staff without the appropriate documentation being completed.** Please see the Supporting Children with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medicines policy on the policies page of our school website here: <https://menstonprimary.co.uk/key-info/policies/>

Nut and Sesame Seed Allergies

Please note that it is not possible to guarantee and enforce a nut/sesame seed-free zone as staff cannot monitor all lunches and snacks brought in from home. However, to help keep our children safe we do request that staff and families **avoid bringing foodstuffs containing nuts and sesame seeds into school.** (This often includes hummus.) A 'free-from' environment creates a false sense of security and does not safely prepare children for environments where nuts/sesame seeds may be present. Age-appropriate education and awareness is important.

Sun cream

Sun cream should be applied at home before school. We advise applying long-lasting sun cream as the children in Foundation have an entitlement to outdoor provision every day, whatever the weather. Your child may bring sun cream into school in a named bottle, but will need to apply it themselves.

Positive Behaviour in School

While recognising that each child is an individual and children are very young when they start school, we still have high expectations for behaviour. Menston Primary has three whole school rules, 'ready, respectful, safe'. These rules fit with our very clear and simple key Foundation rules of 'kind hands, kind feet, kind words'.

Always rules!



Kind hands, kind feet, kind words.

Each week a child who has shown excellence in learning becomes the class Learning Superhero. A Star of the Week is also chosen. Other successes are celebrated in different ways including praise, stickers and certificates. Children are also able to earn tokens during lunchtime when they are spotted doing the right thing (positive noticing).

Communication

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Before the end of the summer term we hope to speak to every parent by telephone at a pre-arranged time. These conversations will enable staff to learn a little more about the new children and we will be able to answer any queries you may have. We hold teacher/parent meetings at different points in the year to discuss children's progress. Parents can also request additional meetings at any time throughout the year to talk about progress or other matters of concern.

The teachers are available to talk to by phone before and after school, apart from Monday and Thursday afternoons. Appointments for more formal meetings can be arranged at mutually convenient times, and can be done online if preferred. Emails for the teachers can be sent to EYFS@menstonprimary.co.uk. If you have an urgent message to pass on, please telephone the school office instead as teachers are not guaranteed to access this email account every day.

Newsletters

Each week, Foundation staff send a newsletter describing some of the learning that is planned for the following week. A school newsletter is also circulated, detailing events in the school as a whole. News and events are published on the school website and on Twitter.

Tapestry

Each child will have their own online learning journey, using the well-respected software, Tapestry. This is much like a traditional printed learning journey or workbook. Once parental permission has been granted, parents will be able to see their child's activities. Parents can also add their own photographs and observations of learning that children have been doing at home.

Photographs and Social Media

Any photographs and videos taken by parents/carers at school events for their own personal use are not covered by data protection legislation. We will ask that photos or videos with other pupils are not shared publicly on social media for safeguarding reasons, unless all the relevant parents/carers have agreed to this. We ask all families to contact the school directly if they encounter a problem, rather than using social media as a forum for discussions about school.

The Curriculum

Children are taught the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum, which covers ages 0-5. This curriculum has seven areas of learning and development. All areas are important and inter-connect.

There are three prime areas:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development.

There are four specific areas through which the prime areas are strengthened and applied:

- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding the world
- expressive arts and design.

Over the year children will be working towards meeting the Early Learning Goal in 17 different areas of learning. Our aim is that every child meets these goals by the end of their first year at school. Any children who are not progressing at the typical rates will be given appropriate support and those who have not reached the required levels in specific areas by the end of EYFS will be supported on their journey into Year 1.

Further information about the curriculum at Menston Primary and how you can support your children to learn will be shared at the Foundation Curriculum Information Evening.

Teaching and Learning

Children learn in Foundation through a combination of more structured teacher-led sessions, child-initiated activities using resources in school, adult-initiated tasks and conversations with peers or staff. Learning through play is key in Foundation and we work hard to ensure there are always engaging and challenging resources available to facilitate this.

There are three carpet sessions a day that cover numeracy, literacy/topic and phonics. Reading is taught through phonics, an approach that breaks down words into sounds (phonemes) that are made up of single or combinations of letters. Children regularly take part in shared and small group reading sessions and also have opportunities to read with adults 1:1. Children are challenged at a level appropriate to them.

At Menston, we teach aim to teach children cursive handwriting from the start, including tripod pencil grip, letter formation and correct posture. Some children need to be supported in developing their fine motor skills before they are physically ready to write. Staff assess children's fine motor skills when they start school. The children are then taught print or cursive handwriting, based on whichever is most appropriate to their level of development.

Assessment

When children start school, we conduct our own baseline assessments through observation and evidence gathering. This is done sensitively and children do not know they are being assessed. There is no expectation that they will have any particular literacy or numeracy skills but our baseline is a useful way of establishing children's next steps.

All children will also be assessed following the statutory national Reception Baseline Assessment Framework within their first 6 weeks of starting school. This will be done by a familiar adult and involve some play-based activities. The government will keep the data and use it to track progress of cohorts of children until the end of Year 6.

Following the initial baseline, children's learning is regularly assessed through further observation and through dialogue and questioning. This information is fed into 'The Foundation Stage Profile', which is the evidence file that we put together for each child.

The outcomes of the profile are discussed with parents at parental consultation meetings. In July, the end of year report is accompanied by written details about your child's characteristics of effective learning and overall attitude to school.

Homework

Talking and reading are the two types of homework set in Foundation. Adults will be asked to talk to their child every weekend about a particular topic. This forms the basis of our Big Talk sessions and feeds directly into the learning for that week.

Children will be given their own reading book or material to read during the autumn term. They will also have access to reading books online that match their level of development. Once children have reading to take home it is expected that children will read with an adult at home **at least 5 times a week. Children who read regularly outside school progress more rapidly than those who only read in school.**

Oxford Owl have some very useful information about preparing children for starting school. Please visit their website at: <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/home/starting-school/>

A Typical Foundation Day in the Autumn Term

There is no typical day in Foundation. Each one is different and interesting. How a day looks will vary between children and timetables change over the year as learning progresses. However, here is a snapshot of how a day might look during the autumn term.

- 8.50am: Doh Disco (playdoh exercises to music to strengthen fingers)
- 9am: Register and lunchtime food choices
- 9.10am: Whole class literacy session about a new book
- 9.20am: Children learning in provision where they can choose to go outside or into the other classroom. They can read, build, craft, have snack, draw, play games, or access any resources. Children may be asked to do literacy and numeracy tasks or read to an adult during this time.
- 10.50am: Tidy up.
- 11am: Snack and story time.
- 11.10am: Whole class phonics.
- 11.30am: Handwashing.
- 11.35am: Eating lunch
- 11.55am: Lunchtime play outside.
- 12.25pm: Running laps on the Daily Mile track.
- 12.35pm: Register and then whole class maths lesson.
- 12.50pm: Children choosing their learning in provision.
- 2.40pm: Tidy up.
- 2.50pm: Story time.

Acronyms

C&L	Communication and Language
CoEL	Characteristics of Effective Learning
COSHH	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DfE	Department for Education
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
EAD	Expressive Arts and Design
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
ELG	Early Learning Goal
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
EYFSP	Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
FMS	Fine Motor Skills
FSM	Free School Meals
GLD	Good Level of Development
GMS	Gross Motor Skills
PD	Physical Development
PP	Pupil Premium
PSED	Personal, Social and Emotional Development
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SLT	School Leadership Team
TA	Teaching Assistant