

Frequently Asked Questions – Answers for Parents

Note the terms “school” and “academy” are interchangeable across this document.

1. Uniform and Equipment

➤ What is the St Stephens Academy uniform?

Boys	Girls
Dark blue sweatshirt/jumper Dark blue fleece (optional) Plain white polo shirt/collared shirt Grey/black trousers Suitable black or dark coloured school shoes	Dark blue sweatshirt/jumper/cardigan Dark blue fleece (optional) Plain white polo shirt/blouse Grey/black skirt, pinafore dress or tailored trousers White socks or dark coloured tights Blue and white checked summer dress
Uniform items can be with/without the academy logo All uniform/equipment items must be clearly named	Uniform items can be with/without the academy logo All uniform/equipment items must be clearly named

➤ What should be worn for PE?

Indoor PE/Gymnastics	Black or navy blue shorts White t-shirt (without phrases or slogans)
Outdoor PE/Games	As above Navy blue hooded sweatshirt (optional) Plimsolls or trainers with “grippy” soles Football boots (optional for KS2)
All children will need a named PE kit bag All uniform/equipment items must be clearly named	

➤ Where can I buy academy uniform and PE Kit?

The main reception office hold stocks of uniform and PE kit with the academy logo and are able to order particular sizes from our supplier if required. Trousers, shirts, skirts/dresses can be bought at most supermarket stores. PE bags and book bags with the logo can also be bought from the reception office.

➤ Can jewellery be worn in school?

The only items of jewellery allowed are stud earrings and watches. Watches must be removed for PE/games.

➤ Can items from home (e.g. toys and books) come into school?

We do not encourage children to bring toys, books or possessions from home unless it is for a learning or class purpose. We do not want items to be lost, stolen or damaged. Your child’s teacher will let them know when they are able to bring particular items in e.g. for show and tell sessions.

➤ What should I do if my child loses something at school?

Check with the class teacher in case the item is still in the classroom. Lost property is located inside the Class F entrance. If the item is named it is much more likely to be located successfully.

2. Food and Drink

➤ ***What are the options for lunch?***

Children can bring in a parent pack lunch or have a healthy and nutritious hot school dinner at the “Brainbox Bistro”. Children will be asked during morning registration to confirm the meal option for the day. School dinners are cooked on the premises with a termly menu sent home detailing the daily meal choices.

All school dinners can be paid for online via “Parent-pay” or money in a named and amount marked envelope can be sent into school at the start of the week. Payment can be for a single day, week, half term or full term. **Please note that no credit can be given.** We expect children to eat all the food they are provided at lunchtime (including fruit and veg) to ensure they have good levels of energy for learning in the afternoon.

Free school meals are provided for children of parents in receipt of certain state benefits. An application form for free school meals must be completed. These are available from the main reception office.

Packed lunches can be brought from home but we will expect the contents to be in line with our “Healthy School” status. There are ideas for a healthy and balanced packed lunch on the academy website. In suitable weather this may be eaten outside so long as a sun hat is worn.

➤ ***What can children eat at morning playtime?***

Children in the Foundation class and Key Stage 1 (Classes 1 and 2) are provided with a free piece of fruit to eat as a snack at playtime (10.45am). Pupils in Key Stage 2 classes can bring in a piece of fruit or similarly healthy snack for playtime. We do not allow pupils to eat crisps, biscuits, chocolate or sweets at playtime as this goes against our “Healthy School” status.

➤ ***Can children bring a drink into school?***

We encourage children to bring a named water bottle containing **only** water to school. Your child is encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day in school and water dispensers are available for every class. At lunchtime there are water jugs to have with the school meal and packed lunch pupils are encouraged to bring a separate drinks bottle for lunchtime use.

➤ ***Can children bring in sweets or cake to celebrate a birthday or holiday?***

Due to our “Healthy School” status we believe that sweets or cakes to celebrate a birthday or brought back from holiday are not an appropriate way to promote healthy living. Due to the high number of food allergies amongst pupils it is also difficult to safely screen food items brought in.

3. Health

➤ ***What should I do if my child is too ill to come to school?***

Please contact the office on the first day of sickness, ideally before 9.15am. We have an answer phone operating when the office is not staffed so you can leave a message out of school hours. If we do not hear from you we will contact you during the course of the morning to check the whereabouts of your child.

➤ ***How soon after illness can my child return to school?***

Please do not send your child back to school until they are fully recovered as we do not have the staff or facilities to look after sick children. Children who have been suffering from sickness and/or diarrhoea should

not return to school until 48 hours after the last bout of illness. Children who have been prescribed new medication or antibiotics should also not attend school for at least 24 hours after the first dose. This is to prevent problems if side effects or an allergic reaction should occur. Please check with your doctor as to whether or not an illness is contagious.

➤ ***What do I need to do if my child takes medication during the school day?***

You must complete a green “Medicine in School” form available from the office and leave the medication with the school staff who will keep it in a safe place. We generally only administer medicine/medication that has been prescribed by a medical practitioner.

➤ ***What should I do if my child has asthma or an allergy?***

Please get your doctor (or parents can complete for less severe cases) to complete an asthma card available from the school office. This will make sure the school has all the required details for medication. Inhalers are the only asthma medication permitted in the classroom.

You must inform the school immediately in writing if your child has any allergies or if there are any changes to your child’s allergies.

➤ ***How will I find out if my child has had an accident at school?***

Many of the school staff are trained in First Aid. Minor bumps, scrapes and accidents are dealt with as soon as possible. An appropriate slip/letter will be sent home if required. If a child suffers a head injury parents will receive a specific “bumped head” slip with details of the incident. If we have any serious concerns we contact parents/carers immediately.

➤ ***What should I do if my child has head lice?***

It is important that the head lice are treated before sending your child to school. A pharmacist can recommend the most up to date and effective treatment. Please inform the school quickly so that a general letter can be sent out warning parents that their child may have come into contact with head lice. If head lice are observed whilst your child is in school we will contact you so that they can be taken home for immediate treatment.

➤ ***How do I make an appointment to see the school nurse?***

Our school nurse can be contacted via the school office.

4. Charging and School Trips

➤ ***Do I have to pay for school trips?***

When your child is involved in a trip or other school event a voluntary contribution is requested to cover the cost on the understanding that if insufficient funds are received the activity may not take place.

5. Attendance and Punctuality

➤ ***What time can my child arrive at school?***

Children can enter the junior playground when duty staff arrive at the inner gate at 8.45am. If they are waiting in the infant playground prior to this time they must be accompanied by a parent/carers. The school can only

take a supervisory responsibility from 8.45am onwards. Foundation stage children enter their class through their own entrance from 8:45am.

➤ ***What time does the bell go in the morning?***

The first bell goes at 8.55am. At this time pupils line up in their classes (except Class F) and are collected from the junior playground by staff. Registers are then taken in class with the first learning session starting from 9.10am.

➤ ***What should I do if I arrive late for school?***

If you arrive after 8.55am (when the playground gates have been closed) you must take your child to the main school office. Children who arrive after 9.10am will be marked as "late".

➤ ***What time should I collect my child at the end of the day?***

Parents may wait to collect their child/children from the infant playground from 3.05pm (when the playground gate is opened). Year's F, 1 and 2 are then brought out by staff to the infant playground at 3:10pm while classes 3, 4, 5 and 6 are brought out at 3.15pm when the end of school day bell rings. No parents should be waiting on the school site prior to 3.05pm.

➤ ***Where should I pick my child up from?***

Pupils in the Area Resource Base (Class 7) can be collected from the separate ARB entrance at 3.00pm. All other classes are collected from the infant playground.

➤ ***What should I do if my child has a dentists/doctor appointment?***

Please try to notify the main school office prior to the appointment. We will need to see an appointment card or letter. On the day of the appointment you must come to the main school office to collect your child. No children will be allowed to leave the school premises during school hours unless collected. We expect pupils to return to school after the appointment if possible.

➤ ***What should I do if my child needs time off from school for non-health reasons?***

If you want to take your child out of school during term time then you must complete a holiday request form. The Head teacher or Head of School will consider the application using our Attendance Policy as guidance. A valid "exceptional" reason must be provided for the absence request. If the reason is of a personal nature then it is better to speak to the Head teacher or Head of School directly. If a holiday is taken during term time without prior approval then the absence will be treated as unauthorised and referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

➤ ***What is unauthorised absence?***

The school is required to keep an accurate record of absences. If your child is away from school this must be recorded as a particular type of absence (e.g. illness, medical appointment etc.). An absence is classified as unauthorised when no valid reason is provided for the absence by the parent/carer. Unauthorised absences are passed onto the Education Welfare Officer.

6. Parent and School Collaboration

➤ ***What is the home-school/academy agreement?***

When your child joins the school you will be asked to read and sign the home-school agreement. It states the key expectations we have of each other in order to be most effective. A copy of the home school agreement can be viewed on the school website.

➤ ***How will the academy keep me informed?***

We will keep you informed in lots of ways. There is a fortnightly **"Family Newsletter"** which will keep you up to date with the latest school news. It is sent home with oldest children and is also placed on the school website. There is a termly **"Parents Evening"** which will inform you of your child's learning progress and required next steps. Each year group has a **"Class Webpage"** which provides information on the curriculum being delivered each term (including a **"Term Learning Overview"**) plus updates from pupils about aspects of learning. A comprehensive written **"End of Year Report"** detailing your child's attainment, progress and learning attitude is sent out to parents towards the end of the summer term. Specific letters and forms will be sent home as required. Class teachers will often contact parents individually to deal with particular issues.

➤ ***What do I do if I want to talk to a teacher?***

You can catch your child's class teacher at the end of the school day, book appointments to see them via the main school office or phone before/after school. If it is not a convenient time to talk then the teacher will arrange a more suitable time at a mutually agreeable date. We want parents to be pro-active in their child's education so welcome the chance to discuss issues with you.

➤ ***How often do parent evenings take place?***

You will be invited to attend a parent's meeting once a term. If your child is participating in the "Achievement for All" programme then there will be more regular meetings arranged. Parent evenings take place in the main school hall. You will receive an appointment time to meet with the class teacher. If you are unable to make the scheduled date class teachers will happily arrange an alternative.

➤ ***How often will my child get an academic report and what will it tell me?***

Normally it will be produced once a year towards the end of the summer term. It will provide parents with levels of attainment, rates of learning progress and detail learning targets for the following year. Children contribute their view of the year as part of the report. Your child's attendance and its impact on their learning will also be part of the report. A parent's evening is available after the reports have gone home to discuss the report in more detail with the class teacher. All reports are monitored by the Head of School.

➤ ***How do I find out about school clubs?***

Staff running clubs will send home letters at the start of each term. Further details are on the school website.

➤ ***How often will my child bring homework home?***

Details about homework can be found on the individual "Class Webpage" on the school website.

➤ ***What can I do if I have a compliment or complaint?***

The main means of communication with the class teacher is usually through direct contact.

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If you have a concern that cannot be resolved with the class teacher, or want to ensure that your satisfaction with something is more widely known, the next point of call is the Key Stage Leader followed by the Head of School.

Beyond this more informal process you can state your compliment or complaint in writing. This will generate formal consideration by the Head teacher/and or Chair of Local Governors and where appropriate reference to the Local Governing Body.

Historically this last stage has been rarely used as parents generally agree that staff are easily approachable and issues can be resolved at a very early stage.

Thank you for taking the time to read these questions and answers and we hope you have found them useful. Let us know if there are any key questions we can add in the future.

