

St Stephens Community Academy



Frequently Asked Questions – Answers for Parents

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

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

1. Uniform and Equipment

What can my child wear to school?

TOPS

- ✚ Dark blue fleece (optional)
- ✚ Plain white polo shirt/ shirt/blouse
- ✚ Dark blue jumper/cardigan

TROUSERS

- ✚ Grey/black trousers
- ✚ Grey/black tailored shorts

SKIRTS/DRESSES

- ✚ Grey/black skirt,
- ✚ Grey/black pinafore dress
- ✚ Blue and white checked dress

SOCKS/TIGHTS

- ✚ White/grey/black socks or tights.

FOOTWEAR

- ✚ Suitable black or dark coloured school shoes

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)
- ✚ Black or navy joggers for colder weather (optional)
- ✚ Trainers with “grippy” soles
- ✚ Football boots (optional)

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?

[St Stephens Community Academy \(pbuniform-online.co.uk\)](http://pbuniform-online.co.uk)

The main supplier can be accessed through our school website so items can be purchased on line by you and delivered direct to your door. Trousers, shirts, skirts/dresses can be bought at most supermarket stores. Bookbags with the logo can also be bought from the Reception office. Our wonderful PTFA also hold a range of ‘Pre-loved’ uniform and this will be made available upon request and through termly sales. Please ask at the main office if you wish to see what is available in your child’s size.

• 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 a class project. 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 themed learning.

- **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 or cloakroom areas. Each class is responsible for 'their' items as we no longer have a whole school 'Lost Property' area due to the amount of items left unclaimed over time. If anything valuable is found around the school e.g. watches or spectacles, they will be stored safely in the main school office. 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 pack lunch from home or have a healthy and nutritious hot school dinner at the "Brainbox Bistro". All school dinners must be booked in advance and paid for online via our website: <https://eduspot.co.uk/product/schoolmoney/>. Payment can be for a single day, week, half term or full term. Please note that no credit can be given.

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 on our school website and from the main reception office. If your child is eligible for free school meals you still need to book their lunch option on in this way but obviously will not be charged.

Please speak with our office team who will be more than happy to show you how to register, log on and use this efficient system. This enables our school to be cash free. 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. We encourage the children to eat all the food they are provided with at lunchtime (including fruit and veg) to ensure they have good levels of energy for learning in the afternoon.

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 school website.

https://www.ststephenscornwall.co.uk/web/packed_lunches_school_dinner_menu_and_free_school_meals_form/410338

In suitable weather packed lunches may be eaten outside so long as a sun hat is worn or the children are under shade.

- **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/vegetable via the Government Healthy Eating scheme 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. ***We are also very mindful of allergies and highly recommend that all snacks are nut-free.***

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

Yes, 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?**

We all appreciate a treat sometimes, however due to our "Healthy School" status bringing sweets or cakes to celebrate a birthday or to share from a holiday are not advised. Also due to the high number of food allergies amongst our pupils it is also difficult to safely screen food items brought in. We do recognise this is a kind gesture and hope this advice is not taken personally. Cooking and baking is part of our Design and Technology curriculum, so your child will regularly bring items home to you they have made to share. All ingredients used will be carefully sourced and monitored.

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. This website is very useful <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

- **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. Please also look at the following website <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>
- **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. Please ensure your child's inhalers are constantly up to date.

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 treatment ASAP, especially if your child is so distracted by them.

- **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. For residential activities we organise a payment scheme to enable all families to budget the additional expense.

5. Attendance and Punctuality

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

Children can enter the main playground when duty staff/Head teacher arrive at the inner gate at 8.45am. If they are waiting outside the school gate prior to this time they must be accompanied by a parent/carer. The school can only take a supervisory responsibility from 8.45am onwards. All children enter their class through their own entrance from 8:45am. Registers are then taken in class.

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

If you arrive after 9.00 am (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 3.05pm (The playground gate is opened @3.00) in either the KS1 or KS2 playground near to their child's classroom door. Times for collection are: Year F (3.05p.m) Y1 and Y2 (3.10p.m.) Y3-Y6 (3.15p.m)

- **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 children are collected from the playground area nearest to their classroom doors apart from Class 3 who exit through the hall door near to Y1 exit.

- **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 send in a written request to the Head teacher who 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 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 via email 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" and Blog which provides information on the curriculum being delivered each term (including a "Termly 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. Parent evenings usually 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 the class teachers will happily arrange an alternative.

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

Once a year towards the end of the summer term you will receive a full report on your child. It will provide you with levels of attainment, rates of learning progress and detail learning targets for the following year. 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 teacher. Shorter reports on your child's progress and targets are given in the autumn and spring term meetings.

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

A letter informing you of the clubs being offered to different year groups will be sent home at the start of each term. Please sign your child up for any they are interested in ASAP as several have limited numbers. Further details are available on request. The majority of clubs are run after school (3.15-4.15p.m) and are free. If payment is requested we will let you know in the club letter.

- **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.

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 Assistant Heads of school (Mrs Hooper and Ms Neale) followed by the Head teacher (Mrs Furber)

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.