

# Primary School FAQ - Information for Parents

The following information may be helpful to you, especially if your child is just starting in the primary school. The Lower Primary school is located in the corner of the car park on The Crescent in between the surgery and the library, and includes K5 (Reception) – yr3. The Upper Primary building is located in St John's Church Hall, on Forge Road and includes yr 4-6. The Senior Teacher for both buildings is Mrs Connolly.

## 1. What are the timings of the primary school day?

The primary school day begins at 8.30am and ends at 3.00pm. The doors will be open at 8:15am. Please accompany your child to the main school gate and do not leave children unattended on the school grounds or in the busy car park.

Due to the large number of cars which use the car park at drop off and collection times, we would like to ask that you observe an unofficial one-way system when you drive to the village car park. From the main road, please turn down Ffwrwm Road, then turn left to the car park. When leaving the car park, please turn left then use Forge Road to get to the main road. This would greatly help to manage the volume of traffic in Machen during school run times.

Break time is from 10:30am- 11:00am and lunchtime is from 12.30pm-1.30pm.

## 2. What should I do if my child is late?

Please notify the school office (01633 441 582)) as soon as possible. Registration in the primary school ends at 9:15am. Any student arriving after this point should use the sign in sheet/book in their building.

## 3. What do I do if my child is absent?

For absence due to medical reasons (illness or a medical appointment), parents should inform us via the school office ([info@wyclifchristianschool.org](mailto:info@wyclifchristianschool.org)) and we will record it as a medical absence.

For all other absences, parents should request the absence via the school office, explaining the exceptional circumstances, and the request will then be passed on to senior staff. Whenever possible, we ask that this be done before the date of the absence, and that parents wait for a reply before making arrangements.

The school will contact parents to ask for either a medical reason or a request for absence if we have not received one. If we have not received a reply within two days of the absence we will automatically record it as an unauthorised absence.

## 4. What are the arrangements for dismissal?

Children are dismissed to an approved adult at the end of the school day at 3:00pm.

The **Upper Primary children** will be walked down to the car park of the Royal British Legion which is adjacent to the village car park. Please collect your child from here.

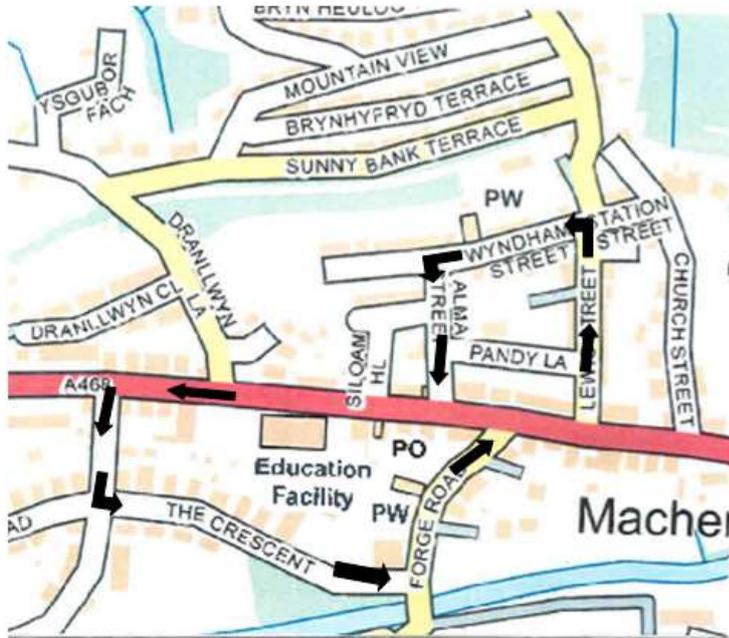
Collect all children from Years 4-6 before collecting any younger children.

The **Lower Primary children** will be dismissed from their building using a one-way system. Please use the gate at the far end of our play yard ('Strawberry Fields') and wait to collect your child in the astroturf area. The children will be dismissed to you at the front of the yard. Exit through the green gate by the library.

Please do not allow your child to play unsupervised in or near the car park.

Please be prompt in picking up your child as they will need to be supervised by staff until you arrive. We would ask you to let the school know if someone else is picking up your child. We cannot take the child's word for who is picking them up.

Please observe the unofficial one way system that WICS parents use around Machen.



#### **5. What do students need to bring for lunch?**

All pupils require a packed lunch each day, and a small snack for morning break.

We encourage healthy eating but do not make any requirements for this. Pupils should bring a water bottle, especially on days when we have sports sessions. Please note that staff cannot heat up meals for the children.

#### **6. Where do students keep their bags, coats etc?**

Students have access to coat hooks and space to put their bags, but due to lack of space we encourage students to limit themselves to one school bag if possible.

#### **7. Do I need to buy any textbooks?**

Primary school do not require parents to buy text or exercise books for the children. All textbooks for Year 4-6 are the property of school, and should be returned in good condition once the course is completed. Pupils are told to write their name in pencil on the inside of the book, and the number of the book will also be recorded by teachers. All textbooks not returned at the end of the year will incur a standard charge of £10 per textbook to cover the cost of replacement.

#### **8. What is the procedure for sports lessons?**

Every Friday afternoon in September and in the summer terms, all primary children have Sports at the recreation field in Machen. Please pick your child up from the field at 3:00pm. An email will be sent to parents if this session is cancelled due to bad weather. In this case, dismissal will be as usual.

From October to March, yr3-6 have their sports lessons at Caerphilly Leisure Centre on Tuesday mornings. Please drop your child there no earlier than 8:45pm. They will be brought back to school by coach. K5, yr1-2 will have their sports lessons at school on Tuesday morning. Please drop your child at school for the usual time.

### **9. What equipment do students need to have?**

Stationery is provided for primary children from K5 – Yr4. Children in Yr5-6 may bring in their own pencil cases and stationery equipment.

### **10. Where can I find lost property?**

Unlabelled lost property is put into the lost property boxes in the foyer. At the end of each term if it remains unclaimed then it is usually donated to charity or thrown away. **We would therefore ask parents to label your children's clothes and possessions.** In particular, we would recommend labelling jumpers, coats, drinks bottles, asthma pumps, pencil cases and lunch boxes.

### **11. What is the procedure for homework?**

Each class has a different procedure for homework which will usually involve reading and spelling. Class teachers will let parents know at the beginning of term what homework is required in each class.

### **12. Is there anything on the school website for primary school parents?**

All key dates for primary school are found on the school website as well as the school uniform policy.

### **13. What is the primary school procedure on the use of mobile phones?**

Primary school children are not permitted to bring mobile phones or smart devices such as watches or cameras to school or on school trips.

### **14. Can my child bring medicine to school?**

As is the procedure for the rest of the school, primary school staff cannot dispense medication. If your child requires medicine during the school day, we ask that you arrange for an approved adult to come into school to administer the medicine. Please let the class teacher know about these arrangements.

Children in K5-yr3 are not permitted to bring any medication into school except for emergency medicines such as Asthma pumps and EpiPens.

Yr 4-6 students are only allowed to bring non-emergency medication into school with parental consent, and should only bring in medication sufficient for that day. Parental consent should be sent in as a note for the teacher or an email to the office along with the details as the quantity of medication. E.g. "Two paracetamol to be taken at lunchtime". Children will not be allowed to take medication unless the school has been notified. Please do not send in full packets of medication, just enough to cover that day.

Please make sure your child's class teacher knows about any emergency medication your child may have, how it is to be used and if your child has a health care plan.

### **15. What are Housepoints? How do students use them?**

As in other parts of the school, students are rewarded with house points both for academic achievements and good behaviour. These can then be "spent" on various rewards. Some primary students may also use their house points to "buy" non-uniform days, but these should always be **agreed beforehand** with class teachers and please ensure children still dress appropriately for a school day.

### **16. When are Parents Consultations?**

Parent consultations usually take place in November. The class teacher will contact you to arrange a suitable time for this. School reports are sent out in June.

### **17. How should I contact primary school staff?**

As a school we firmly believe in working with parents, so if you ever have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us! Please phone or email the school office to pass on any messages or to request a phone call or meeting with your child's class teacher. Please do not contact teachers about school related issues outside of school hours or on social media such as Whatsapp.

### **18. What are the child protection arrangements in the school?**

The school has a written policy for Child Safeguarding which you can read in the student/parent area of the school website. (Contact the school office for username/password details).

We recognize that children are vulnerable and sadly may become the victims of neglect or suffer physical, sexual or emotional abuse. The school provides safeguarding training to all staff and volunteers and follows the statutory requirements for child protection. The school is committed to providing a safe place for all students and works with the local social services and agencies where significant concerns arise. If you have further questions you should contact Mr Andrew Tamplin who is the designated safeguarding lead in the school.

### **19. Parents and School: Six Ways You Can Help!**

One of the best questions we often get asked by parents as they join the school is very simply, "How can we help?"

Even though we've grown rapidly as a school over the past few years this remains our heart: to be a school where parents are central in the education and raising of their children. We want to briefly explain to you the ways you can join us in serving in school life.

#### **Bless Machen by being considerate**

Machen is a small village with limited parking and narrow roads, and as a school we now have nearly 200 students spread across 4 sites. Therefore, we are especially keen to be "salt and light" and "love our neighbour" as a school community in any way we can.

As parents you can do this in at least two practical ways:

- **Drive and park considerately.** As a staff and parents we practice an unofficial "one way system" at drop off and pick up, and parents support us by only dropping off in the village car park or on Wyndham Street.
- **Encourage students to be polite and responsible** in walking around Machen. Many of our senior school students walk around Machen, either to walk home or to another part of the school. Please join us in reminding them to walk (not run!), to cross at the lights on the main road, and to be considerate of members of the public.

#### **Look for ways to serve**

As a school community we expect everyone to serve in some way, and we'd encourage you as parents to consider where and how you could be involved. For example, you could do one of the following:

- Join Friends of WICS,
- Become a registered volunteer,
- Get involved in one off events,
- Increase your giving,
- Commit to praying for staff and students.

If you want more details on any of the above, please contact the school office.

## **Book family holidays, trips and routine appointments outside of school time**

As a school we intentionally keep the school day and the school term short so that family time can be prioritised. We have created 4 “off peak” holiday weeks throughout the year (one in autumn half term, one at Christmas and two in the summer holidays) so that families can take advantage of cheaper “off peak” holidays.

As you can therefore imagine, one of the most disruptive parts of school life is unnecessary student absences. It creates extra work for staff who have to “catch up” students with work they have missed and it disrupts lessons and events in school where students and staff are relying on one another to be in.

We therefore hugely appreciate the vast majority of families who regularly demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the school by avoiding booking holidays, routine appointments and family engagements in school time.

If it is absolutely essential to book a trip during school time (for instance, to attend a family wedding or funeral), then we ask that you continue to request absence from the headteacher via email beforehand explaining the exceptional circumstances.

## **Support school events**

As a school we regularly tell students that we want to be a school where “Everyone does everything!”. That means that rather than defining students as “sporty” or “musical” or “arty” and allowing them to “pick and choose” school events we instead encourage students to participate fully in all of our school plays, trips and sports etc., whatever their ability.

As a school it is therefore a huge encouragement to us as staff when parents turn up and support our events, and when they encourage their children to participate fully and enthusiastically. We are aware that financial costs can be a challenge for some parents, but we ask that this never be a barrier to participation; please get in touch with Mr. Corney via the school office if that’s ever the case.

## **Communicate with staff through the school office**

One of the amazing parts of our school is the close relationships between students, staff and parents, often because of church relationships outside of school.

However, as staff we would still ask parents to always contact staff via the school office ([info@wyclifchristianschool.org](mailto:info@wyclifchristianschool.org) or 01633 441582), and avoid contacting staff about school matters outside of school time or via personal numbers and emails.

Similarly, we always ask that if there is a problem or issue that parents contact school directly to arrange a meeting to speak about it face-to-face. As a Christian school we always want to deal with any issue according to Jesus’ principles laid out in Matthew 18, where Jesus told us to go directly to the person and ask them to listen before taking the issue any further. Therefore we would ask that parents join us in following these principles and come and ask to speak to us before discussing any issues with anyone else.

## **Help us to train students to be equipped and organised**

As a school we look to our students to take increasing levels of responsibility for their equipment, uniform and organization as they grow and mature. However, children often need help with this, which is why we provide a detailed equipment and uniform list for primary school and senior school, and parents can therefore help their children by training them to be properly equipped and presented for school.