



Starting School Booklet September 2023/24



Thank you for deciding to send your child to our school. We sincerely hope that the partnership between us proves to be both successful and enjoyable.

The school is open from 8.45 a.m. each school day and both Nursery and Reception pupils must be in class by 8.55am for registration. Punctuality is emphasised as this greatly assists with the smooth running of the school. In accordance with Welsh Office guidelines, pupils who arrive at school after the registration period will be given a "late" mark in the register. If you need to drop off your child before 8.45am we would request that you make use of the School's Breakfast Club as no supervision will be provided for your child before this time.

We are aware, of course, that the vast majority of parents are well able to prepare their children without assistance. However, we still see value in issuing this document, if only to reassure our "family of families" that they are working in similar ways.

Please now find below a number of suggestions for ways in which you might prepare your child for this exciting new phase in his/her development.

"Preparation" is the key word

Nobody knows your child as well as you do. You are in the best possible position to decide on the most effective way to prepare your child for this new experience. Attendance at Parent and Toddler groups and Pre-school Play groups are of undoubted benefit. A visit to the school in order to familiarise your child (and yourself!) with the set-up can often prove beneficial. We are only too willing to accommodate your wishes in this respect, but please contact the Headteacher first in order to make your visit at a mutually convenient time. You and your child will be invited to spend a morning at the school, along with his/her peers, as part of our Induction Programme and will be very well cared for by our Foundation Phase Staff.

Positive attitude!

Please present a positive attitude towards school – we are sure that you will. It is important that all of our pupils arrive in school each day in a happy frame of mind, and prepared to learn and enjoy their day.

Leaving your child

Should your child exhibit any signs of distress on coming to school initially, it is best to set the pattern of behaviour as soon as possible; a prolonged farewell will only compound the distress for parent and child. Please, give your child a kiss and a hug, and then leave, and try to resist the temptation to "hover" outside the door and then peep to see if they have settled down. It is extremely rare for children to upset themselves so much that it takes longer than a few minutes for them to settle down. Nevertheless, please feel free to contact school upon your return home for an up-date on your child if you were concerned when you left them. Rest assured that we would contact you first if we think it necessary. None of us like to see a child in undue distress!



Snack Time

We ask parents to provide a healthy snack.

Collecting your child

At home time you can collect your child from Nursery at the front gate at 11:30am. Your child will only be released upon your arrival. Children are only able to go home with someone else if we have received prior notice of this from their parents, either verbally or in writing.

Reading

Please don't expect your child to come home with a reading book straight away! Reading is, and should be, a pleasurable experience. There are many pre-reading skills, which need to be mastered first. The class teacher will allocate your child an appropriate book when she feels your child is ready. In the vast majority of cases this will be done during their first full year of full-time education, i.e. in the Reception Class. If your child appears ready to start some of these pre-reading skills before he/she starts school, please note the following:

- If you would like to teach your child to write his/her own name, please do not use capital letters, except for the first letter of their name.
- If you would like to start teaching your child the alphabet, please use the letter "sounds", e.g. "ah" (a), "buh"(b), "cuh"(c) NOT "ay, bee, see".
- Please feel free to contact school for advice/support before tackling either of these areas, particularly letter formation skills

Reading books and wallets

- Nursery children will be allocated a book when the teacher deems it appropriate, which is usually in the summer term.
- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children are allocated a book on a weekly basis, if listened to at home and at school.
- Reception and Year 1 will be listened to by an adult every Tuesday.
- Year 2 children will be listened to by an adult every Friday.
- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 also have guided reading sessions in school to further promote and develop their reading skills.



Ideally, we would encourage all pupils to have their own school wallet/reading folder as it helps each pupil to be responsible for, and have a special place to keep their reading book and record, and for teachers to send letters home. If a child needs to bring money in for a special occasion such as a cake sale you will be notified in advance and the school folder has its own built in purse to keep such monies safe.

Please resist the temptation to attempt to compare your child's reading ability with that of their brothers/sisters and his/her peers. Each child is an individual and learns to read at his/her own pace. The Reading Scheme Books are not read in any specific order, unless the class teacher places them as such for a particular child, e.g. for ease of record keeping, or if a child shows enthusiasm for a particular set of books. Thus, each child may have a different order, making comparison meaningless.

Reading folders can be purchased from Monkhouse in Mold or My Clothing online.

P.E. kits

All children must come in, in their PE kits on a Monday.

Forest Schools

Children must wear suitable clothing for outdoor activities every Friday

Uniform

With regard to uniform children in Nursery are under no obligation to wear school uniform, however, over the past number of years parents have sent their children in uniform as the children themselves feel more part of the school. Please ensure that your children have the appropriate clothing to suit the weather i.e. a warm coat in the winter and a sun hat during the summer months. In addition to the uniform please note the following:-

- No jewellery should be worn
- No nail varnish
- Long hair needs to be tied back
- Black shoes (no sandals or trainers).

You can purchase school uniform from Forrester Sports in Mold.

Spare clothes

Please ensure your child has a spare change of clothes, including underwear, with them at all times, even if "accidents" aren't a problem. They can occasionally occur and we only have a limited number of clothing available.

Children are always instructed to wear aprons for work that involves glue or paint. However, accidents do sometimes happen and so we try to use paint or glue which will wash out of clothing.

Sending letters

If you need to send any letters into school, please place them in a sealed envelope, marked with your child's name and hand to a member of staff.



Communication

Communication regarding school dinners/trips/general information/school events will be forwarded to you via email and/or our text messaging service. Please ensure the school have your up-to-date email address/mobile phone number and if you change these at any time in the future please let us know.

School dinners

School dinners are provided for all full-time pupils who require them or alternatively children can bring their own packed lunches. School dinners are £2.50 per day. Hot meals are available or you can choose a cold, packed lunch style meal. Menu can be found on our website.

Children who intend to go home for lunch should inform their class teacher at morning registration.

Families who receive income support may qualify for free school meals. Forms of application are available from the School Meals Department, County Hall, Mold. After completion, these should be forwarded to the Director of Education, County Hall, Mold. This procedure is strictly confidential.

School Life

If you want to become more involved with the school, we would welcome your support and involvement with the School PTA and help with fundraising events, for which meetings are held termly. Parents will be informed of times and dates through pupil post.

Finally, may I thank you in anticipation of your co-operation and look forward to a happy and successful partnership throughout the years ahead.

If you should have any queries or suggestions regarding this document, or any other aspect of school life at Ysgol Y Foel, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Walker
Acting Headteacher