



New Parent Information Pack

All the things you need to know
when your child starts at Speen Church of England School

Your child will also need:

- School bag*
- Pump bag*
- Drinks bottle
- A pair of black shoes for indoors and another pair for outdoors (in order to keep the floor as clean as possible for circle time, indoor PE etc.)
- A named towel with a robust hoop for hanging on the peg (these will be returned on a Friday for washing and need to be returned on Monday morning)
- A named pair of wellington boots (these can be kept at school)

If you would like to order any items of school uniform, this can be done using the website www.differentclassschoolwear.co.uk

Visits to their shop in Bourne End are by appointment only but they do offer a delivery service into school. It is wise to order items well in advance of school term starting as they can get busy! The PTA also runs second hand uniform sales, normally at the start of term.

Please ensure all items of uniform are clearly labelled with your child's name, if you hope to see them again!! This also applies to shoes and water bottles – you can get waterproof stick on labels printed very easily at online stores such as www.easy2name.com



Top Tip!

Use sew in or iron on name labels in EVERYTHING! 30 Speen School sweatshirts all look the same and pen often becomes illegible or wears off after a few washes! Also, it is a good idea to show your child where their name tags are to help quick identification.

Checklist for your child's first day

- School bag
- PE kit in a pump bag
- Black pumps
- Indoor shoes and wellingtons
- Named towel
- Drinks bottle
- Healthy snack for morning playtime (if required, see p.16)



Top Tip!

Many children like to hang something, for example a small key ring, to their school bag and pump bag so they instantly know which one is theirs.

Dropping off your child at school

First day in school

If your child is starting in Reception, you will need to take them to the EYFS classroom door and wait to hand them over to the class teacher or TA.

If your child is joining Speen School in KS1, take your child into the school's main entrance at 8.30am and one of the school office team will accompany your child to their new classroom.

Subsequent days at school

If your child is in Year R, then please continue to escort them to the EYFS classroom door to hand them over to a member of staff. We ask that you do not enter the classroom (unless signing them out – see pg. 5) as too many giants can be intimidating for some little ones!

We ask that KS1 parents say goodbye to their children at the gazebo by the gate and watch them walk down the school path. This is to help the children gain their independence – a member of staff will be waiting in the classroom for them.

Collecting your child from school

The school day finishes at 3 pm every day. The teacher in charge of the class will walk the children up the school path to be released to parents. We ask that you wait by the gazebo as children will not be released to parents standing outside the gate.

If somebody different is collecting your child from school on a regular basis, please send a letter to the office along with a photograph of that person. If the teacher does not know the person collecting your child and has not received a letter, they will not allow your child to leave with them.

Unless it is a regular arrangement that school are aware of, then any child going home with a different person that afternoon must be signed out on the forms found in both cloakrooms. Again, if it is someone that school does not know please tell their teacher or let Mrs Moore know.

If your arrangements change during the day and you need your child to go home with someone else, please email Mrs Moore if it is before 11.30am. If it is after that time then please call the school in case there is no one in the office to pick up the email.

The waiting area is packed at home time so try to stand in a similar place each day and when you see your child is next in line, give the teacher a wave so they spot you quickly. This helps enormously and speeds up the process for everyone!

A typical school day

Time	Event
8.35 am	School doors open to children
8.45 am	School doors are locked
8.50 am	Registration
9:00 – 10.15 am	Session 1
10:15 – 10:35 am	Mid morning break followed by milk/water
11.00 – 12.00 noon	Session 2
12.00 – 1.00 pm	Lunch
1.00 – 2.30 pm	Session 3
2.30 pm	Assembly
3.00 pm	School finishes

Key Staff Profiles:



Mrs Coles:
Executive Head Teacher



Mrs Hayman:
EYFS and English Leader



Mrs Lidington:
KS1 and Science Leader



Mrs Moore:
School Bursar and your first point of contact by telephone and email.

Communication with school

We know how important it is to feel well informed and in touch with the school, so there are lots of ways that school communicates with parents and helps you stay up to date:

Speen School Newsletter

At the end of each month you will receive Speen School's newsletter via e-mail. It showcases events that have happened during the month and tells parents what has been happening in school.

PTA Newsletter

Each term, the chair of the PTA sends out a newsletter highlighting the success they have had and what they have planned for the next term. It is also a way for them to ask for help to support some of the excellent events so keep an eye out if you would like to get involved in school life!

Classlist

This is an email-based system used largely by the PTA for parents to share information easily. It is also used to help notify parents at other times e.g. if a school trip is returning home late.

Mrs Moore's Monday reminders

Mrs Moore sends out an email at the start of each week containing a wealth of information. This includes: what the children are studying that week, events that are taking place that week, a list of letters that have or are about to go out, and a list of events coming up in the near future.

School website

www.speen-cofe.bucks.sch.uk

The school website is a fabulous information tool. Have a look here for the school calendar, information on all staff, academic results and lots more.

Meeting other parents:

The PTA organise many social events throughout the year and this is a fantastic way to meet and socialise with other parents. Often raising valuable funds for your child's school in the process. Typical events include:

- Fish and Chip supper and quiz – Autumn term
- Year group social evenings – throughout the year
- Safari supper – Spring Term
- Summer ball or party - June

Letters from school

Sometimes, especially when replies are needed, you will still receive paper communications from the school. Letters will be given out in class for things like trip consent forms and confirmation of contact details in the form of an annual data collection sheet. These need to be returned as soon as possible.

Talking to your child's teacher

If you want to contact your child's teacher you have a number of options. If you need to ensure the teacher receives the message on the day then you can:

- Give your child a letter to hand to their teacher
- Catch the teacher at the end of the school day for a quick chat
- Phone the school office and leave a message for the teacher – remember to say if it is urgent and they will call you back when they can.
- Leave a message in their school reading journal as these are checked daily



**Top
Tip!**

Go through your child's school bag daily to see what is lurking inside! And please try to make sure they do not carry water bottles in their bags in case of leaks.

Some frequently asked questions

How do I let the school know about medical and hospital appointments?

If the appointment really can't be organised outside of school hours then you'll need to write a letter to the teacher who will pass it to the office. The letter should state the date, time, and type of appointment - e.g. hospital, doctors etc. If possible, you should include a copy of the actual appointment letter as well.

How will the school let me know if it's closed due to snow?

Whilst the school is determined always to stay open, severe inclement weather such as snow can mean that it isn't safe for pupils to be in school. On these rare occasions the school will use a cascade system. Parents will be issued with an orange form at the start of term telling them who to call to pass on the message of school closure. There will also be a number for the next person on the list. If you cannot get through to your first contact please leave a message and then call the second name. It is vital that the line is kept going. If you are the last person on the list then please phone school so that we know who has been informed. The local radio also lists school closures and it will be on the Buckinghamshire County Council web site.

What should I expect at parents' evenings?

Parents' evenings take place twice a year, normally in November and March. Year R will have a further appointment towards the end of their first half term. They usually take place immediately after school. Appointment sheets will be put up on the classroom notice boards and Mrs Moore will let you know when it is time to sign up. You are able to see your child's books and see the progress they have made. Reading their journal often provides much entertainment! It's also a chance to hear from the teacher, as well as to ask any questions you have.

Request for absence during school time

If parents need to request that the child be removed from school during term time they need to send a letter to Mrs. Coles outlining the reason why and the time required. There is also a leave of absence form to fill in too. This will then be passed on to the governors for discussion. It is worth noting that, following government guidelines, requests for family holidays will not be granted. If you choose to take your child out of school it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. There are only a few exceptional circumstances when leave will be given e.g. following the return of a serving military parent from a deployment overseas.

What should I do if my child is unwell and unable to go to school?

Please phone the school office first thing in the morning to let them know, otherwise school will phone you once the register highlights your child's absence after 9.30am.

When your child returns to school, send in a letter to explain the absence. Please clearly indicate the first and last day of sickness. If a child had longer than five days off then a doctor's note will be required. Please ensure that you send your child in with this letter upon return to school, even if they were originally sent home during a school day. Keep Mrs Moore informed of your contact details just in case your child is ill and needs to go home. Should your child have a gastric illness such as sickness or diarrhoea a period of 48 hours is required before they can return to school.

Will the school administer medicine to my child?

If a doctor has prescribed medicine for your child that has to be taken four times a day, the school office team will give it to your child at lunchtime. Please ensure that the medicine is clearly labelled with your child's name and you have completed a medicine form. Medicines must be handed to the office team by an adult.

My contact information has changed whom shall I inform?

If any personal contact details for either parent change during the year please inform the school in writing by email as soon as possible so you can be contacted should an emergency arise.

What do I do if my child has specific medical needs or an Individual Health care plan:

Please provide the school with as much information as possible to ensure the school can best support your child at the earliest opportunity.

How can I find out what's going on in school in advance, so that I can plan ahead of time?

Just before the end of term, you will receive an email from Mrs Moore with a list of most of the events for the next term. A weekly update is also sent for the next week's events. Term dates are shown well in advance on the school web site.



Top Tip!

It can be easy to think one or two days absence is insignificant. But a child with an average attendance record of 90% during their school life will have missed the equivalent of one and a half years' worth of maths lessons!

Homework

In Year R and KS1, children will be set some form of homework. In Year R, children are issued with a maths folder and they will generally have one piece of homework per week. It is normally set on a Thursday to be handed in the next Monday. In KS1, children will have access to a maths portal where they will be set a piece of work unique to them. They may also get a piece of written maths work and some form of English homework. This is also set on a Thursday to be handed in on a Monday. If children in Year 2 come home with their spelling book, they will need to learn the words they got wrong.

How we teach your children to read and write

Every child deserves success right from the start. We know that the sooner children learn to read, the greater their success at school. This is why we put reading at the heart of what we do.

We use a teaching programme called Read Write Inc. Phonics to teach our children to read and write. We make sure every child can read the last set of phonic stories before they progress to our higher level programmes - Literacy and Language, and Spelling. Some children complete the programme in Year 1 and others in Year 2.

Books are changed each day and the first ones that are sent home have no words so that your children can learn new vocabulary through telling the story from the pictures. Always expect your child to speak in sentences.



Top Tip!

Once you have listened to your child read their book, fill in their reading diary to record their progress and improvement. Books will not be changed without your signature.

School library

Each class visits the school library every Friday morning to choose a book to bring home from a large range of fiction and non-fiction books. These are not necessarily for the children to read alone, especially in KS1 they are often for parents to read with children. Parent helpers direct children to age appropriate shelves. Children will not be able to take a library book if they have not returned their old one. All books need to be returned at the end of term.

How do we make writing simple for children to learn?

We teach handwriting, spelling and composition separately, gradually bringing each skill together step-by-step. We teach children to form letters with the correct pencil grip and in the correct sitting position from the very beginning.

They practice handwriting every day so they learn to write quickly and easily. Make sure your child takes their reading journal with their home reading book into school every day, as individual and group reading in class could be on any day. <http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/> is a useful website for parents to check out the Read write Inc. scheme.

Celebration Assembly

Every Thursday afternoon completed sticker charts, in school rewards and out of school achievements (certificates, trophies, medals for sport, dance etc.) are celebrated. Your child will be called up to the front to be presented with their school certificate or to explain how they won their award. Out of school awards can be brought in to school on any Thursday and put on top of the school piano. Look at the Special Book to see who has won the awards; it's kept by the front door.

Birthdays

The whole school will celebrate your child's birthday in an assembly on or after their special day by singing the birthday song and receiving a Happy Birthday pencil and sticker.



Children really do love having their parents come into school and there are lots of occasions where you will be able to come and visit.

Key events throughout the school year:

Parent forums

Parent workshops take place throughout the year where parents are invited into school to experience the learning. These are fabulous opportunities to come into school and get an insight into what and how your child learns. These generally take place in the school hall during the evening and are run by Mrs Hayman and Mrs Lidington.

Cross country

Speen School has hosted a KS1 cross country event on the village playing field for many years. Children are invited from neighbouring schools and all Speen School pupils go along to support those chosen to participate. This normally takes place in the spring term and your support is always welcomed either as a spectator or to help serve tea and cakes which are now as much a tradition as the running itself!

Speenschoolfest

This is often one of the busiest weeks in the school calendar that culminates with a presentation by the children and a ball for the parents! This is an arts and creative event with a theme, that provides children with a different learning experience not always possible in the classroom. During the week Year 2 often participate in activities with St Johns School, the school to which many children go to for Year 3

Country Dancing at Speen Summer Fete

The second Saturday normally in July is when the village holds a summer fete and the Year 1 and 2 children demonstrate their country dancing skills. It is a real pleasure to watch the children and last year they were even accompanied by a live band!



Top Tip!

If you are unable to attend an event in school, feel free to ask someone else to go in your place whether it is a grandparent, uncle/aunt, older sibling etc. It really matters to the child that they have a grown up there to look for and show off to!

Nativity

Year R put on the Nativity production each year during the church service on the last morning of the autumn term. However, every year group sing group songs and say the readings and prayers throughout the performance. All parents are welcome to this festive event.

Christmas Play

Every Christmas the school puts on a production that every child takes part in. There will be great excitement as the children rehearse and you may be required to supply a costume! There is always an afternoon performance when younger siblings are welcome and an evening performance to ensure everyone can attend.

Christmas dinners and party

During the last week of term there will be a school Christmas lunch that the children really love. Roast turkey and crackers are provided and the staff sit down to eat with the children. The Year 2 parents also cook and serve the staff a wonderful Christmas lunch to say thank you for all their hard work. Finally, the children have a school Christmas party where they have treats, play games and get into the festive spirit!

Sports Events

The school has a very strong link with the local secondary school who run regular sports events throughout the year. Multi sports, hockey, netball and gymnastics are to name but a few. As we are a small school all the children get to have a go and staff ensure that everybody has their turn. Parents are also able to watch and cheer on their child!

During the last full week of the summer term, the Year 2 students help to organise a sports day. Children belong to one of two houses and the departing students create a range of events for everyone to take part in. Make sure you bring a sun hat and some change to purchase an ice cream at the end!!

Rewards and recognition

Speen C OF E School promotes learning and good behaviour through praise, encouragement and by celebrating success. There are a number of ways children are rewarded and recognised.



Sticker cards

These are used to collect stickers and the children receive these for their individual achievements including good work, effort and behaviour. Once the card is complete, the child puts it in the "Special Book" and at the next Celebration Assembly they will be called up to talk about how they earned their stamps and will be presented with their effort certificate.

Pupil Premium

It is important for us to know if you are in receipt of certain benefits, have an adopted child or a looked after child. Additional funding can be claimed for the school if you are (currently £ 1,300 per child each year) and this money is spent on improving your child's education in school. Pick up a form from the school office if you think this applies to you. Pupil Premium is also given for children of serving members of the armed forces, so please make us aware if this is the case so that we can access the extra funding and support for your child.

Universal Free School Meals (UFSM)

Under the Government's Universal Free School Meals Scheme, all of our children can receive a free school meal. If you prefer them to bring their own from home, just send them in with a packed lunch. There is a rack for the children to store their boxes in. During the warmer weather it is a good idea to use a cool pack to keep the food cooler. And please remember to include healthy foods and refrain from including any fizzy drinks, sweets, crisps and chocolate.

Milk money

All children receive a free carton of milk every day until the week preceding their fifth birthday. After that, if the children wish, you can pay for them to continue with this drink at mid-morning break. The forms for this can be found at www.coolmilk.com

Trips

School asks that all children go on trips, as they contribute to the child's learning of a current or future topic. Make sure you sign and send back the consent form; otherwise your child won't be able to go on trips with their class. The PTA have traditionally paid for the coach trip but we do sometimes have to ask for a contribution if other costs, such as entry tickets, are incurred. Although this is a voluntary payment, we will not be able to run trips if we cannot cover the costs. If there is a financial reason why you cannot pay, please speak to Mrs Moore .

Sending things into school

There are various times when you'll need to send things into school. These should be sent in with your child who should give them to their teacher who will send to the school office.

As you can imagine, the school office is inundated daily with letters and reply slips and so on. Always write your child's name, class and what it is that you are sending in on the envelope so that it will quickly be given to the correct person in the office.



**Top
Tip!**

Don't feel you need to buy a load of envelopes, save and re-use old envelopes that come through the post to send things into school. So long as there is room to write your child's name, class and what is in the envelope they would be perfect!

Food

School lunches

There is a weekly menu, which can be seen on the school website, offering a wide range of options. See info on p13 regarding Universal Free School Meals. If your child has a food allergy, it is vital that you inform Mrs Moore so that the necessary procedures can be put in place. There is no need to inform us that your child is having school dinners – a register is taken in the morning and the children will put up their hands if they are having hot lunches.

Sandwiches

Where parents opt for their child to have sandwiches brought in from home, rather than hot school lunches, these are eaten in the same hall. Please ensure that you stick to healthy eating principles and please ensure that you do not include any nuts in the lunch box as we do have children with allergies. There is no need to inform us that your child is having packed lunch – just remind them to put it on the rack in the cloakroom.



Top Tip!

Children who behave well at lunchtime are recognised and rewarded. There are daily "Good Eating" stickers handed out and "lunchtime award" stickers handed out by Mid-day supervisors for good behaviour in the playground. Great for confirming to you that your child has done well at lunchtime.

Healthy snacks

In KS1, fruit and/or vegetables are offered free of charge every morning. For morning break, you can send in your own fruit/vegetable snack in their school bag, so long as it's healthy. No crisps, chocolate or sweets are allowed.

Ways to get involved with our school

Governing Body

The Governing Body is made up of representatives from many different areas of the community. They have a strategic role within the school and work as a supportive group who challenge the head. There are two parent representatives on the governing body who are elected by parents for up to a four-year term.

Parent and Teacher Association

The PTA helps to raise funds for school with a range of events throughout the year. They generally meet once a term although there are several smaller committees working on different projects who will meet up as necessary.

Parent Helpers

Parent helpers are parents who give a few hours per week to help in some way, for example they may listen to children reading or help run the Friday library or an after school activity such as a cookery or gardening club.

If you would like to get involved with any of the above groups, speak to the school office for more information.

Other useful info

Mufti Days

These are non-uniform days where children can wear their own clothes to school. These are often held to highlight a theme in school (World Book Day) or raise money for a charity (Red Nose Day).

Teacher training days

There are 5 teacher training days throughout the school year where school is open for teachers only, pupils have an extra day off! They are usually just before or just after a school holiday.

PPA

Teachers use 10% of their teaching time for PPA (Planning, Preparation and Assessment) each week. This gives the class teacher time to prepare their future lessons away from the classroom.

Do you shop online?

If so please sign up to www.easyfundraising.org.uk, link yourself to Speen C of E School and then whenever you shop online, open the site via the easyfundraising home page and we will receive a donation each time.

It's totally free for you, but raises money for school. Last year, one local primary school received over £2000 from easyfundraising. So whether it's food, clothes, travel or insurance, whether you use ebay, Next, Amazon, M&S, Argos or Tesco, go via easyfundraising and help raise money for Speen for free. There are 100's of different companies and retailers signed up, so have a look if the one you're buying from is listed.

How much uniform to buy?

Many parents have asked for guidance on this. Questions to ask:

- how messy are your children?
- how often do you do the laundry?

We'd recommend having at least:

- 5 shirts 1 for each day as the sleeves often get messy
- 3 pairs of trousers/skirts/dresses
- 2 sweatshirts/cardigans
- PE kits - 1 set is usually enough as children keep them in school and they only come home for washing at the end of each half term.



**Top
Tip!**

Some final top tips!

If your child is in Reception or Year 1, find out which days your child has PE so you can make sure your child is wearing clothes that are easy to get off and back on. Imagine 10 or so 5 year old girls all fighting with their pinafore dresses and tights!

Buy shoes with velcro straps until your child is confident doing buckles or laces.

Only wear a watch if your child can tell the time!

If you have missed any order forms or letters, email Mrs Moore who can put another one in your child's bag.

The school office phone number is 01494 488321. Save it on your mobile phone in case you need it in an emergency.



Speen Church Of England School

Flowers Bottom Lane
Speen
Princes Risborough
Buckinghamshire
HP27 0SX

Telephone: 01494 488321

Email: office@speen-cofe.bucks.sch.uk

Website: www.speen-cofe.bucks.sch.uk