

Newberries Primary School

F.A.Q

Starting school is a big step in your child's life. We aim to make this an enjoyable and happy experience to help both you and your child prepare for this important and exciting transition.

Sadly, we are unable to invite prospective parents to visit our school as Government and County guidance advises restricting visitors onto our school site. This allows us to keep our school staff and children as safe as possible by limiting the risk of introducing any new infections to our school community.

Although we are proud to be putting our children and staff health and safety first, it does leave us disappointed that we cannot show you around our wonderful school in person to:

- highlight how special our school is
- allow you to experience the warmth that our school community is centred around
- emphasise the amount of fantastic resources and outdoor spaces we have
- to see how happy our children are
- understand the High Quality Teaching that our pupils receive

We do hope that you have had a chance to watch our Information Video and explore our photographic virtual tour. We do hope that these resources complement our Frequently Asked Questions information below and help give you a flavour of Newberries Primary school.

Please note that the below information has been created through using real questions that we have received from prospective parents via email.

Q. How can we find out more about Newberries Primary School and what to expect in September?

A. On our website you will find a video and tour of the school which we hope will provide you with a flavour of Newberries School. We hope that this along with our FAQ will answer any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Slade or Mrs Woods in our school office who will be happy to help you with any further questions. Email admin@newberries.herts.sch.uk or 01923 857180

Q. How long have the teachers been working at Newberries Primary School?

A. We are a very established staff with most staff having worked at school for a number of years. Mrs Peters and Mrs Traxon are in their eighth year of co-headship after serving the school in other capacities for many years prior. At Newberries, our staff share a common theme. We want what is best for our children and, as a result of this, we believe that we are a forward thinking, proactive group who are keen to try new initiatives, based on educational evidence, to keep developing our children the most effectively.

Q. What are the school times?

A. Under "normal circumstances" school starts at 8.50am and end at 3.15pm for Infants and 3.25pm for juniors. During COVID 19 restrictions we have adapted our school day to provide staggered start and end days, limiting the amount of parents on our school site at one time, and including a reduced lunch break. Currently we operate the following times however must state that these are under constant review:

- Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 start school at 9.10am, finishing at 3pm
- Years 3 and 5 start school at 9am, finishing school at 3.20pm
- Years 4 and 6 start school at 8.50am, finishing school at 3.10pm

Q. How does drop off and pick up work in terms of car parking?

Due to the location of our school, drop off and pick up times can make our nearby roads congested. We therefore promote Walk To School (a Living streets initiative where children earn badges, made from recycled materials, for each month that they have managed to walk, park and stride, scoot and/or bike to school at least once a week). If you are unable to take part in Walk To School, then we ask families using cars for drop up and pick up arrangements to use the following information and map to follow our one way system. <https://newberries.herts.sch.uk/download/one-way-system/>

Q. What is provided for lunch?

A. All reception children are eligible for a free Universal Free School Meal or you may wish to provide a packed lunch. School meals are provided by Herts Catering Limited (HCL) for all children and cooked onsite by our School cook and her assistant, both of whom have been with Newberries for many years. School meals are healthy and well balanced. Pre-Covid 19, children would choose their lunch options from a hot meat, hot vegetarian or packed lunch meal. Currently children can choose from a hot or cold roll/baguette/wrap which has meat and vegetarian options. To accompany this, children are given vegetable sticks, fruit and a pudding. Please visit the HCL website <https://hcl.co.uk/> to view the menu options available.

Q. Can my child have milk at break Time?

A. All children under 5 are entitled to free school milk. If you wish your child to receive a carton of milk each day please complete the cool milk form <https://www.coolmilk.com> that you will find in your "Welcome to Reception" pack or register online. Once your child reaches their 5th birthday you can continue with the scheme but will be required to pay.

Q. Is there a breakfast club on site at Newberries Primary School?

A. Yeas. Breakfast club is run at school by TOPKIDZ please contact Dupe Balogun on 0345 430 9331 for further information

Q. Is there an afterschool club on site at Newberries Primary School?

A. Yes. In September 2020 Newberries started its own "Extraberries" after school club run by Newberries Staff. The club runs from afterschool to 5.30pm. The Club is £12 per session. Further information about the club is available from Mrs Woods (School Business Manager) or Mrs Allen (Afterschool Club Leader).

Q. What does a typical day in Reception class look like?

A. A typical day in Reception class is full of fun and opportunities to learn through play following the Early Years' Curriculum. Children are able to free-flow around the Early Years Setting accessing learning through play opportunities with and without adult support both inside the class and outside, in their outdoor learning space. The Reception classroom is bright, engaging and inviting – a place where children truly feel happy and safe. Lessons for Reception children take place in small groups and focus on the Early Learning Goals set by The National Curriculum with children accessing protected time in class for PSHE, PE, Phonics, Reading and Number sessions. As the year progresses, children are slowly introduced to more formal education as and when they are developmentally ready.

Q. Do you use Tapestry in school?

A. Yes. Tapestry is used within the Reception classroom. Tapestry is a digital software program where teachers can upload photographic evidence of a child's learning. Equally parents can do the same when children are learning through play at home. We find that by using Tapestry, parents and teachers are able to work together enabling a child to succeed.

Q. What does a typical day in a classroom look like in the Infants and Juniors?

A. A typical day in a Year 1 to Year 6 Newberries Classroom is structured in the following way. All lessons are active and engaging through video or photo stimuli as well as creative contexts and outlets such as Art, D&T, Drama and PE as well as regular opportunities for outdoor learning, using our vast outdoor spaces.



Newberries Primary School - Weekly Timetable



Monday	Mindfulness s Soft Start – Staggered Arrivals	Whole School Jigsaw lesson	English	B	Spelling, Phonics & Handwriting	Maths	L	Mindfulness	Maths Fluency	Topic	*** Tidy Up, Collect Belongings, Letters, Newsround, Story Time, Stars of the day + Rewards ***	
Tuesday		Guided Reading	English	R	Spelling, Phonics & Handwriting	Maths	U	Mindfulness	Maths Fluency	Topic		
Wednesday		Guided Reading	English	E	Spelling, Phonics & Handwriting	Maths	N	Mindfulness	Maths Fluency	Topic		
Thursday		Guided Reading	English	A	Spelling, Phonics & Handwriting	Maths	C	Mindfulness	Maths Fluency	Topic		
Friday		Guided Reading	English	K	Spelling, Phonics & Handwriting	Maths	H	Mindfulness	Maths Fluency	Art		

Q. What is the staff to pupil ratio?

A. When at full capacity, our classrooms accommodate 30 children with 1 class teacher and 1 Teaching Assistant. For classes with additional needs, classes may have an additional adult at additional times to support children with interventions and/or booster sessions.

Q. How much homework do children receive?

A. At Newberries Primary School, homework is referred to as Home Learning. Children are asked to read daily and practice their times tables and number bond skills. Children are then given 3 additional, optional tasks to complete at home if they wish which focus on a Maths and English skill as well as a creative task. Currently, during Covid-19, children are receiving and submitting work via Google Classroom.

Q. When does PE take place?

A. PE is scheduled twice a week for all children across the week. On PE days, children come into school wearing their PE kits. Before Covid-19 struck and as part of our two PE lessons each week, Years 3, 4 and 5 visited our local swimming pool for swimming lessons once a week for a full term, each academic year. We very much look forward to this continuing once Government Guidelines allow.

Q. When do you teach Art?

A. Art is taught every Friday afternoon and is taught through a variety of methods. Most commonly, Art is taught expressively through trial and error rather than continuously into completing a set piece. Children enjoy learning their own artistic styles and methods and by doing so we ensure that we are teaching resilience as well as provide opportunities to be mindful of the choices they make.

Q. Do you teach any languages?

A. Throughout school we teach words in Makaton sign language to promote inclusivity as well as communication for children who may have an additional learning need. However, from Year 2 through to Year 6 we teach French.

Q. Why do you block Foundation Subjects?

A. Foundation Subjects include: Science, Computing, Music, Design and Technology, Art, Religious Education, Physical Education, History, Geography, PSHE and Modern Foreign Languages. At Newberries Primary School we teach these subjects via topics. Topics create a captivating and engaging focus point for the children but within these topics, our learning objectives are based on the skills set out in The National Curriculum. By teaching these topics weekly, children benefit from deeper understandings as pre-learning is from the day before, rather than stereotypically the week before. By teaching topics in units, put simply, children engage more, progress more and achieve and deeper understanding.

Q. What is PSHE, why is it important and how do you teach it?

A. PSHE stands for Personal and Social Health Education and, at Newberries, we take this very seriously. We teach PSHE following a whole school initiative of Jigsaw and commit protected time throughout our week to complete PSHE lessons and activities. We complete PSHE lessons on Monday mornings so that we start our week positively and then complete Mindfulness activities after lunch to ensure that we start our afternoons well.

Q. Do you have any after school activities available?

A. Usually, we are very proud of the enrichment and extra-curricular activities that Newberries Primary School offers. Our after school clubs include, but are not limited to, football, netball, musical theatre, violin, kids yoga, guitar, cricket, Samurai Karate, Dodgeball, Piano and Fencing, some of which are of an additional charge and some of which are free, offered by teachers. Sadly, at present, we are unable to offer these clubs however do look forward to being able to offer them again when Government Guidelines permit.

Q. Do you have any involvement with the local church / synagogue throughout the year?

As a school we have strong links with the local religious leaders. Our RE curriculum covers all faiths and we celebrate many different festivals throughout the year as part of the curriculum and through our whole school assemblies. Religious Leaders from the local community are often invited into school for these celebrations and to support RE sessions across the school. There would usually be planned trips during the year to local places of worship to support the RE curriculum.

Q. How do you handle children at either end of the spectrum: those that are struggling and those that excel?

A. Newberries Primary School believes in inclusion for all and that every child matters no matter their attainment and/or additional need. Children with a Special Educational Need or Disability are included in learning through a variety of ways explained in our SEND local offer and SEND policy found on our school website. <https://newberries.herts.sch.uk/statutory-information/> Our school SENCO works with teachers, teaching assistants and a child's family to ensure that support is in place to make a child successful and progress at their own pace.

Within every classroom setting, work is highly differentiated for all through a variety of challenges and all children are stretched to reach mastery and deeper thinking skills. As a school, we believe in HOTS (higher order thinking skills) rather than MOTS (more of the same) and therefore all children will be asked to justify, reason, explain and predict their thinking and understanding and be given the opportunity to complete extension activities to continuously push learning and understanding deeper.

Q. How do you support children's learning from home during the Covid-19 pandemic?

A. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we have supported children's learning by transitioning onto Google Classroom. Google Classroom has allowed our children to access learning from home when they have been unable to be in school due to isolating and/or quarantining. Children have been set tasks by their

teachers, which are similar to the content within the classroom and received feedback from their teacher once work has been submitted. This way of learning is referred to as Remote Learning and is fully accessible to all in case of a full school closure or bubble closure.

Q. Will Newberries Primary school stay open during any Lockdowns?

A. Newberries Primary School has stayed open throughout the National Pandemic of Covid-19, supporting and continuing to teach Key Worker children and children with SEND within the school grounds as well as teach children remotely and electronically when at home. Following Government Guidelines, Newberries Primary School will remain committed to supporting and teaching their pupils either in school or remotely.

Q. How do you handle behaviour?

A. At Newberries Primary School we take a positive and proactive approach to behaviour management. We believe that positive behaviour is essential in order for effective teaching and learning to take place, and that both pupils and staff have the right to work in an environment which is safe, friendly, peaceful and fair. We believe that high self-esteem promotes good, effective learning and positive relationships, and that these arise from emphasising potential, rewarding success and giving praise for effort and achievement. Our behaviour strategy is aimed at improving educational outcomes for all pupils by promoting and supporting their engagement with education and is based upon two basic principles:

- We believe that when a child demonstrates unacceptable behaviour, it is the behaviour which is unacceptable not the child
- We believe it is our duty to promote and encourage positive behaviour and not just react to that which is unacceptable

Everyone at Newberries Primary School has a part to play in the promotion of high standards of behaviour. It is important that our clear code of conduct is reinforced by a balanced combination of rewards and consequences within a secure and positive environment. For more information, please read our behavior policy on our school website

<https://newberries.herts.sch.uk/download/behaviour-policy/>

Q. How do you address bullying?

A. Bullying is deemed unacceptable at Newberries Primary school as we enforce a zero tolerance on unkindness to anyone. Please see our Anti-bullying policy for further information

<https://newberries.herts.sch.uk/download/anti-bullying-policy/>

Q. How do you settle unhappy and anxious children?

A. Children suffering with anxiety are more and more common especially in today's unprecedented times. Firstly, we pride ourselves at Newberries Primary School in being a school full of kind, nurturing and thoughtful staff, who want to ensure the happiness and positive Mental Health and wellbeing of pupils.

At school, we use the Zones of Regulation to monitor and identify our emotions as well as understand choices that we can make to regulate our feelings as well as react proportionally to a situation.

Q. What is Zones of Regulation?

A. Zones of regulations is a visual way of sorting our emotions into 4 colours. By sorting our emotions like this we are able to: learn to identify our emotions, understand the reaction our emotions have on our body and understand that all people have their own "toolbox" that they can use to react to their emotions positively. After all, as Charles Swindon once said, "Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it." We believe that:



Our aim is that our school and classrooms are always a Green Zone. This means that we have children who are calm, feeling happy, are ready to learn and focussed. To help us, each classroom now has its own characters representing each colour and have chosen their own tools to put into their classroom box to use when they are feeling a certain way.

For example:

- Green Zone – give someone a compliment or do a job at home!
- Yellow Zone – do some yoga or play a puzzle!
- Blue Zone – colour your worries away and draw!
- Red Zone – squeeze your whole body as tight as you can, take a deep breath and count to 10!

Q. How are transitions managed between Year groups?

A. Change is an inevitable fact of life and the fact that children transition from classrooms and year groups to new classrooms and year groups at the end of each academic year is an example of just that. At Newberries Primary School we do take transitions seriously and aim to ensure that children have the tools they need to be able to deal effectively and resiliently with change. Every year, children have additional planned times to meet their new teacher and ask them questions as well as spend time in what will be their new classrooms. During the Summer term in Year 6 there is a focus on transitioning to secondary school. This is supported through our PSHE curriculum.

Q. Can I volunteer at school?

A. Normally, Newberries Primary School, welcome volunteers inside our school building to read with children and/or support year groups going on school trips and we hope that one day soon, we will be able to accommodate this. For now, we have to accept that no additional help from parents is viable at the moment and that school trips are cancelled, at least for this academic year.

Q. What secondary schools do your pupils go to?

Children, who leave Newberries Primary School in Year 6, transition to a variety of both state and independent Secondary Schools within the local area. These schools include but are not limited to: Queens, Verulam, STAGS, Parmiter's, Yavneh, Watford Grammar Schools, Marlborough, Hertswood, Bushey Meads, Dame Alice Owen, Haberdashers' Aske's (Boys and Girls), St Alban's High School for Girls, St Columba's College.