

New to Finstall First School?

Some notes that we would have found helpful when our kids started – by Finstall Mums

Uniform

Pupils from reception wear shirts and a tie. Don't buy a traditional tie for lower school kids – get one on elastic (from school shops in Bromsgrove) or one with Velcro (much better design) (from M&S/ School office)

You don't need to buy all branded green jumpers/ cardigans. Most people have a mixture of ones with the logo and ones without.

If you have a boy, don't forget to buy shorts too for the hotter days (difficult to find in September) and green checked dresses for a girl.

Painting apron: paint is not washable. Some teachers do not use them that often (depends on what sort of art is on the curriculum), but get one anyway. They use it throughout the school. *These are provided by the school for Reception children.*

Communication books

Your child will be given a book to help you communicate with their class teacher. In reception this needs to be given to the teacher/TA at the start of the day and in later years they need to place this in a tray as they enter the school.

Use this book to... say if they are being picked up by someone different/ going home with another pupil in a different class; arrange a chat/ meeting with the teacher – they will call you; and any other concerns/ questions you may have. It's also good to use it to store any information/ small slips that need to be returned to school!

Timetable

Find out ASAP the day for games, forest school (doesn't start in Sept) and show and tell. These are the days you will have to take stuff in.

Show and tell - in reception the group your child is in for show and tell is determined by the colour of their in-tray. Your class might not have a set day to start with.

Bags

You will get a free book bag; but you will need an upgrade at some point. When you do, there is more than one design. The one with an external pocket at the back is excellent for putting your drinks bottle/ communication book in. (You need to make sure you carry your bottle separately to school in case of leakages).

You will need one bag for PE and one bag for games. Make them easy to distinguish from each other for your young child. Make sure both are clearly labelled. Neither have to be official Finstall ones.

The PE bag lives at school each half-term with the indoor PE kit inside (white t-shirt with school logo, green shorts, black plimsolls and socks (for girls who wear tights). You will get it back before half-term holiday to wash.

You will send in the games kit each week on games day. This comes back the same day - so your child's trainers don't live at school. In this bag should also be a grey tracksuit - branded top (from M&S and School shops) and bottoms (from anywhere). The top is a light grey. A plain white t-shirt is also essential in this bag as well as trainers, socks (a matching colour e.g. white/black/grey/green - note they are not always used or important) and shorts are a good idea for the hotter weeks (again matching colour).

Forest School

In Reception and Year One all pupils will do a morning of Forest School (e.g. learning outside in all weathers). **Make sure you label everything** they can (and will) take off especially gloves, hats, scarves, wellies... They need wet weather gear for this morning. Waterproof trousers are essential; ski trousers are superb when it is freezing and can be bought relatively cheaply from Aldi amongst other places. Snow gloves are also essential (from Muddy Puddles/ Trespass/ Next...). You can attach the gloves with elastic running down the back of their coats! Snow boots also help keep feet snug and warm. It gets very cold. Make sure they have thick socks/ thermals etc!

Note: don't buy all-in-one waterproofs. Difficult when they are in a rush for the toilet.

When it is warm, they don't need the thermals, but they do need to cover their arms and legs from the scratches. Don't send them in light coloured clothes or anything precious. Clothes WILL come back covered in mud. Try to wash it ASAP as it will go mouldy if left for a week!

Reading books

In reception books get changed on - Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays by parent helpers. They will only change the books if you have left a comment in the reading journal (e.g. Read and Enjoyed or New book please). All pupils have bookmarks with lists of things they need to do to progress to their next level. These can be referenced too.

Note: To start, you will be reading to your child. They will be given books to read to you when the teacher thinks they are ready. Don't worry if yours do not get reading books at the same time as others; they all learn at their own pace and they need to want to read before being asked to do it! It's not a race! Don't get hung up on what they can or cannot do. All children at Finstall do well ☺

Snack time

They have snacks at morning break and in afternoon break. The school provides fruit for the afternoon break and we need to bring in a healthy snack for morning break. Note: pupils have to carry any container you give them around all break time so put their snack in a bag (or container) that can be thrown away.

Drinks bottles

Make sure they do not leak or have the potential to leak. Make sure they are labelled clearly. Vinyl name labels are crucial - everything else washes or falls off. Do not put the bottle inside the book bag in case of leakage!

Websites

There are lots of links to excellent educational game websites from the school website.

See if anyone has created a Facebook group for your reception intake year (e.g. Finstall Reception 2015). Join it. Excellent way to communicate with other parents, catch up with missed information, clarify queries etc.

Parent's Association

Get involved; help raise money for the school and support fun events!