

St Christopher's CE Primary School

"BE THE BEST WE CAN BE FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS"

Parent Handbook



Lechlade Road

Langford

Near Lechlade

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Tel: 01367 860318

www.st-christophers.oxon.sch.uk



Welcome to our School

 **Succeed** ~ **Happy** ~ **Independent** ~ **Nurtured** ~ **Excited** 
with perseverance ~ with respect & honesty ~ and courageous ~ with compassion ~ with teamwork

We are very pleased to welcome you to the St. Christopher's school family. We hope that this booklet gives practical information about the organisation and routines in school. It contains the school's aims, curriculum organisation and teaching, together with other legal requirements. The booklet is subject to change with information being updated, but the latest version can always be found on the school website at:

www.st-christophers.oxon.sch.uk

Newsletters containing important information including current and upcoming events, clubs and school lunch menus are sent home regularly, normally fortnightly on a Friday and are available on the school website.

We look forward to working together with you to provide the very best education for your child.

Yours sincerely

Rachel Veeder
Executive Headteacher

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School Vision

“To be the best we can be for ourselves and others”

*This is illustrated by the parable the Good Samaritan.
(Luke 10:25-37)*

who showed compassion, respect and courage.

We aim for all individuals to SHINE as children of God, within our ever changing world to be the best we can be for ourselves and for others.

Succeed with perseverance

Happy with respect and honesty

Independent and courageous

Nurtured with compassion

Excited with teamwork

“The school’s vision of ‘be the best’ is truly part of day-to-day life. The vision is threaded through everything staff and pupils do. The ‘Shine principles’ ensure that pupils strive to be the very best version of themselves” Ofsted February 2023

Oxford Diocesan School Trust

St. Christopher's school is an academy and a member of the Oxford Diocesan School Trust (ODST). The Trust was founded in 2012 from a commitment to excellent education for academies in the Oxford Diocese.

The trust supports schools right across the diocese, which covers Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Milton Keynes. An ODST school is a special place, which values its individual identity and serves its local community.

ODST are committed to the highest professional standards from staff, ensuring that all their schools have high aspirations for their pupils, not just in the key curriculum areas but in those wider aspects of education that ensure our young people leave school fit to be caring and effective citizens in the world of tomorrow.

ODST is a place where all are welcome; for both CofE schools and community schools, for staff and pupils of all faiths and none, where academic excellence abounds and where pupils and staff are enabled, valued and encouraged to become outward looking, resilient learners and professionals.



Safeguarding – including Child Protection

Safeguarding our children is everyone's responsibility. St. Christopher's recognises its responsibility for Safeguarding. We want to work closely with you to establish a safe and nurturing environment free from discrimination or bullying where children can learn and develop happily.

The school's policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in school and focuses on the 4 main elements;

- Staff recruitment and selection – ensuring that all staff (volunteers etc) who have unsupervised access to children, have been appropriately checked for their suitability through the DBS procedures.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep themselves safe.
- Developing and implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her child protection plan.

A full copy of the safeguarding policy can be found on our website; it is also available from the school office.

Mrs Rachel Veeder is the school's designated safeguarding person and can be contacted at school; 01367 860318.

Ms Wendy Brown is the School's deputy designated safeguarding person and can be contacted at school; 01367 860318.

Staff Team

Executive Headteacher
Head of School
& SENCO)

Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher

Cherry Class

Maple Class
Ginkgo Class
Oak Class
Willow Class

Mrs Rachel Veeder
Ms Wendy Brown

Mrs Gemma Cross
Mrs Heather Timms
Mr Garth Lenton
Mrs Freyja Clark

Higher Level
Assistant Teachers
Assistant Teachers

Miss Justine Best
Mrs Joanne Brownjohn
Mrs Sian Brook
Mrs Kate Greenslade
Ms Stef Pedro
Miss Faith Thomas
Mrs Debbie Wiles
Miss Opal Winstanley
Mrs Lynne Woolaston

Lunchtime Supervisors

Miss Justine Best
Mrs Janet Hobbs
Ms Stef Pedro
Miss Faith Thomas
Miss Opal Winstanley

Extended Services:
Breakfast Club
After School Provision

Miss Shannon Gough
Mrs Janet Hobbs
Mrs Laura Kinchin
Mrs Lorna Leach
Ms Stef Pedro
Mrs Debbie Wiles

Business Manager
Office/Finance Administrator
Caretaker

Miss Sadie Fletcher
Mrs Sarah Jones
Mrs Janet Hobbs

School Governance

The school is governed by Governors who are responsible for the conduct of the school and the promotion of high standards of educational achievement at the school.

The governing body is comprised of

Foundation/Skills/Community based governors

Parent governors

Staff governors

What Governors do:

- Offer challenge and support to the headteacher and the senior leadership team.
- Agree the aims of the school
- Represent the views of the community to the school
- Monitor the school's curriculum with the headteacher
- Agree the school's organisation and teaching methods with the headteacher
- Help keep in good order the schools premises
- Help interview and appoint new teaching staff
- Attend termly meetings at the school, minutes of which are available on the Governors notice board
- Monitor finance
- Monitor legal changes/responsibilities and ensure appropriate action is taken
- Share the responsibility for the health and safety of staff and pupils

The full governing body delegates many of its responsibilities and decision making to two sub committees:

Performance and Standards (P&S): This committee is responsible for monitoring the school's academic achievement and standards of behaviour. It sets annual challenging targets for continual improvement.

Resources (Resources): This committee is responsible for the monitoring and strategic development of the school's budget and resources, whilst ensuring that the school meets its health and safety responsibilities.

The current governors are:

Joanne Thompson	Chair Parent & Safeguarding
Catherine Jones	Foundation & Resources Committee
Wendy Brown	P&S - Staff
Ann Choyce	Foundation
Freyja Clark	Staff
Dominic Hunter	Parent
Tony Worgan	Parent & Resources

Occasionally a vacancy occurs and we may ask for nominations and hold a ballot. If you are interested in knowing more about becoming a Governor please ask.

Admissions and Class Structures

All schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than available places. As an academy we are our own admissions authority which means that we set our own criteria. Although the school determines the criteria it must make every effort to ensure that these arrangements comply with the School Admissions Code 2014 and all relevant legislation, including that on infant class sizes and equal opportunities.

At St. Christopher's we have one main point of intake in Reception. The school uses Oxfordshire County Council to fully coordinate admission arrangements. Parents wishing to apply for a place in Reception must complete the common application form provided by their home local authority.

All admission policies are available on the school website.

St. Christopher's provides education for children from Reception (age 4) to Year 6 (age 11). The seven year groups are taught in 5 classrooms. There are a number of positive outcomes to having split year groups in one class— aspiring to be like the older children, learning to support and 'mentor' the younger children and building a broader group of friends.

Due to the variations in year group sizes class structures can change from year to year. For the academic year 2026- 2027 the class structure is:

Cherry Class	Reception (EYFS curriculum)
Maple Class	Year 1 & Year 2
Ginkgo Class	Year 2 & Year 3
Oak Class	Year 3 and Year 4
Willow Class	Year 5 and Year 6

Our School Day – Every Minute Matters

For our pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

From 7:30am	Breakfast club is available from 7.30am
From 8:40am	Please enter the playground via the pedestrian gate. The children will then go straight to their classes.
8:40am	The children are welcomed into their classrooms.
8:45am	Morning activity and registration
8.55am-9.15am	Our daily act of Collective Worship
9:20am-10:30am	Learning Session 1
10:30-10:45am	Playtime
10:45-12:00	Learning Session 2
12:00-1:00pm	Lunchtime
1:00-3:00pm	Learning Session 3 & 4
3.00-3.15pm	Class Time
3:15pm	End of the school day. Please enter the playground via the pedestrian gate. The children will be dismissed directly from their classrooms/hall, as appropriate.
3:15pm-4:15pm	Clubs
3:15pm-6:00pm	Afterschool provision

Start and End of Day Information

- The pedestrian gate will be opened at 8.40am. Upon arrival in the playground children will go straight into their classrooms.
- Children who use the school bus will be supervised on the bus until a member of staff is out on duty.
- It is important that children are on time as it helps them to start the day in a calm manner and ready for the start of the day activity. If you do however arrive late and the pedestrian gate is locked then please come to the main entrance where you will be asked to sign in your child.
- If your child is absent due to illness please phone school before 8:45am and leave a message on the Absence Line (this does not need to be followed up with a letter). If a child is frequently late or absent without explanation we will contact parents and try to offer help.
- Please try and make routine dental and doctors appointments outside school hours wherever possible.
- Please try and collect your child on time – being late can really worry children. However if you are running late please let us know as soon as you can so that we can make appropriate plans. If we have not heard from you your child will be brought in from the playground and will wait outside the office. A member of staff will then contact you to find out what has happened and agree a course of action.
- Children who travel home by bus are expected to wait sensibly at the internal “bus stop” by Cherry Class. A member of staff will check the bus register and supervise children on to the bus.

The service is run by Oxfordshire County Council Integrated Transport Services Department, please contact them on 0345 241 2487 with any queries.

Collective Acts of Worship

Collective worship is a daily event at St Christopher's. As a church school we view this time as an integral part of our ethos. Collective worship largely takes place through daily acts of worship, led by staff, pupils, clergy and other invited guests. The children are invited to participate and respond.

Acts of worship generally include one or more of the following:

- Listening to music
- Singing hymns and songs
- Stories and readings from the Bible
- Talks on themes that are thought-provoking and deal with moral, social and spiritual issues
- Drama, mime and dance
- The use of pictures and artefacts to
- A prayer and/or an opportunity for children to reflect in silence
- Reflection time

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Religious Education and Collective Worship if they wish. If you are concerned about your child please contact the headteacher.



Curriculum

Our Curriculum enables all children to SHINE.

At St Christopher's we offer a broad and balance curriculum making the most of cross curricular links in topic themed teaching and learning. We like to give our children real life experiences including trips and visitors. The National Curriculum is followed for all subjects to ensure breadth and progression. We have peripatetic music teachers who teach a range of musical instruments if you wish for your child to learn an instrument.

Special Educational Needs

St Christopher's is committed to ensuring each child attending the school achieves their full potential. To support this vision, the Headteacher, special educational needs (SEN) co-ordinator and staff liaise with parents to help ensure the school meets the physical, emotional and intellectual needs of every individual child. The Governing Body regularly review the policies and procedures that underpin this objective.

The school caters for any child with a learning, medical or behavioural condition which calls for special education provision to be made for him/her, additional to that normally available in a primary school. Early identification and assessment of need is made by referral to a range of observations. Each child is monitored and reviewed in a series of stages. These are carried out with sensitivity and in close consultation with parents and may involve the school seeking specialist advice. There is full wheelchair access to all facilities and the staff and governing body regularly review the school environment to ensure it can meet the needs of all pupils.

Religious Education

As a Church School we believe that spirituality has an important role in our lives. We aim to set foundations in children's lives where they are able to recognise their own growing understanding of faith, whilst gaining

a respect and knowledge for the beliefs of others. It is in implementing our curriculum that we maintain a distinction between the teaching of RE and worship. RE does not seek to impose religious beliefs on children nor to compromise the integrity of their own beliefs by promoting one religion over another. It is not the same as collective worship, which has its own place in school life.

Health Education

At St Christopher's we have a broad and balanced programme of health education. For the older children (Year Group 5 & 6) this includes relationships and sex education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education if they wish. If you are concerned about your child please contact the headteacher.

Educational Visits

These are planned carefully to support learning within our curriculum. You will receive details of visits throughout the year and may be asked to make a voluntary contribution towards the costs of these trips or activities. Children can only be taken out of school with your permission. When your child is being taken out of school you will be asked to sign and return a consent form, otherwise your child will not be able to take part. The school does have travel insurance. Please ask if you require more details.

When your child starts school we will ask you to sign a local visits permission form which we will keep on file throughout your child's time with us. The form asks your permission for us to take your child out in our local area – these trips will not involve any transport, but will be local walks, ie a walk to visit St Matthew's Church in Langford, or a nature walk to explore the history of the village.

Swimming

All children at St Christopher's have the opportunity to swim. Swimming lessons take place at RAF Brize Norton Swimming Pool in Carterton. Swimming lessons are during school time, and further information will be given to you before your child starts these lessons. We ask for a voluntary contribution for this activity, to help cover the cost of swimming instructors, lifeguards, and coaches.



Homework

We believe that reading at home is really important. We encourage all children to read every day. Children have a home reading journal which is to be shared at home. The children each have a set of maths key facts to learn each half term.

Behaviour

The behaviour of everyone in our school is a shared responsibility. The school has a behaviour policy and each class follows the three school rules. The behaviour policy links directly to our School Vision “to be the best we can be for ourselves and others”. The policy and rules apply in class time, play time, lunch time, before and after school including Out of Hours School Learning (for instance after school clubs).

Expectations of behaviour are taught through PSHE, Circle times, and Collective Worship (themed on values). Children are encouraged to view behaviour as a choice. Adults are asked to use the language of choice eg ‘you can either continue to... or you can choose to... then I will have to ask you to... If you stop and make the right choice then we can...’

3 Whole School Rules

- Ready
- Respectful
- Responsible

Consequences

- Warning
- 10 minutes time out in another class.
- Reflection form completed during break/lunchtime and copy sent home to parents
- Sent to Headteacher and parents asked to come in to school for a meeting.

If we are concerned about your child’s behaviour we will contact you to discuss the matter. If you become aware of any problems please do contact us.

Anti-Bullying

At St Christopher's, we take any bullying very seriously and through consultation with parents, children and staff have developed a policy and procedures to deal with concerns raised. The policy is available on the school's website but the core of the policy is reproduced below.

At the point that a parent/carer, child or member of staff raises concerns that bullying might be occurring we make a record of the concern. If there has been a specific incident, we will investigate what has happened and deal with it as with any other behavioural incident. This means that we will listen to both sides of the story, try to get the bottom of the incident and if appropriate apply sanctions in line with our behaviour policy. At this point we would not necessarily categorise it as a bullying incident.

We define bullying as:

The wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten, belittle or frighten someone deliberately - repeated over a period of time.

Bullying can be:

- Physical – hitting, kicking, pinching, punching, scratching, spitting and taking belongings.
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, making offensive remarks.
- Indirect – spreading nasty stories about someone, exclusion from social groups, being made the subject of malicious rumours, sending abusive mail, email, text messages and picture messages. Sending abusive messages through social networking sites.

So for us to categorise it as bullying there needs to be evidence of repeated incidents over time. Each time a child who has been accused of possible bullying, is involved in a behaviour incident we make a record of the incident. Each incident will be dealt with independently; following the behaviour management process. These records are regularly reviewed and monitored

and if there is a pattern of behaviour we feel demonstrates bullying we will follow our anti-bullying process:

- Those who bully will be subject to sanctions in line with the school's Behaviour Policy; and the targets of bullying will continue to receive support from identified members of staff.
- Adult mediation may be used between the child being bullied and the child doing the bullying to discuss what has happened and how it has made the children feel.
- The target of the bullying will be assured that they should immediately report any future incidents and know that they will be listened to.
- We will ensure extra supervision and monitoring of the children's behaviour over the following few days to check that all is well.
- We will inform parents of the outcome of the investigation and keep in touch until it is felt there is no longer any risk of bullying.
- If there are repeated or serious incidents, parents will be informed and invited to meet with the class teacher or Headteacher.
- In extreme cases, the school may involve the Behavioural Support Services, Anti-bullying LA coordinator and the Educational Psychologist.
- The school also reserves the right to exclude children whose behaviour remains wholly unacceptable (withdrawal of playtime privileges; withholding participation in school activities e.g. trips; fixed term exclusion or permanent exclusion).

It is important to make the distinction between bullying and friends falling out with each other. However much we would like it not to be, falling out is an inevitable part of a child's life that they need to learn to cope with.

As part of our internal monitoring procedures we also have a designated governor who checks on a termly basis that the school is following our behaviour and anti-bullying procedure.

Breaktimes

Morning Break

Children are encouraged to bring a piece of fruit or raw vegetable as a healthy snack for morning play.

All Foundation & KS1 children are provided with a piece of fruit or vegetable as part of the Healthy Schools scheme.

Lunch Time Break and School Meals

Lunchtime is between 12 noon and 1pm. A two-course meal is cooked in the school kitchen every day by the School lunch Company, who provide our meals. There is a choice of menu of one main dish, with vegetables and/or a selection of salads and fresh bread, jackets potato or packed lunch followed by a pudding, fruit yoghurt or cheese and biscuits. We aim to be a nut free school. The menus are designed in accordance with the National standards for school meals and are generally printed in our newsletters.

Payments for school meals should be made at the time of booking. We have an online booking and payment system (MCAS). Dinners must be booked online. Please make sure your child knows which they are having!

Free meals are available for those eligible. Full information can be obtained from the school office. All Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children are eligible for free meals under the government's universal infant free school meals initiative.

Packed lunches are eaten in the hall or outside during the summer months, under the supervision of lunchtime supervisors. Lunchboxes should be clearly named. Please respect our healthy eating policy and do not put fizzy drinks, sweets or bars of chocolate in your child's lunchbox. Trained staff are responsible for the children during lunchtime. Other members of staff are always available.



Other Information

Water bottles

Children should bring a sports style water bottle into school daily to ensure they stay hydrated. This may be kept in the classroom, and should be clearly named.

Valuables

Children should not bring toys or money to school unless they have been asked to do so. Valuable items that could be broken or lost should not be brought into school.

Children should not bring in to school electronic and mobile devices. Unless there are specific reasons, agreed in advance with the school, children should not bring in mobile phones. Staff will look after any devices found in school and return them home. The school cannot accept responsibility for loss, theft or damage of electronic devices or phones.

Security

Parents and children should use the pedestrian entrance at the beginning and end of the school day. This entrance is locked between 8:50am and 3:10pm, and access during these times should be through the main entrance, accessed from the car park.

All visitors are requested to report and sign in at the school office.

If your child arrives after morning registration, or is collected during the school day, i.e if they become unwell, or need to leave for a medical appointment, please use the main entrance and sign him/her in or out with the school office.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Parents of all year groups will be offered individual timed appointments for a discussion with your child's class teacher during the Autumn and Spring Term. An annual report on your child's progress will be sent home during the Summer Term.

If, however, you wish to discuss your child's progress or have any concerns at any time, please contact your child's class teacher who will be happy to make you an appointment.

School Council

We have a thriving school council which is comprised of children from all classes. Potential Councillors apply for the role on an annual basis.

A School Council should encourage pupils to develop:

- A sense of ownership over policy and practice
- A consensus over school issues, such as behaviour
- Responsibility towards the school community environment

A School Council should give pupils experience of:

- Planning, organising and monitoring small projects
- Speaking, listening and debating
- Mediation and negotiation skills
- Basic budgeting and managing money

A School Council should prepare pupils for citizenship by:

- Teaching them about roles, rights and responsibilities within the school system and in the community

Weekly clubs

We offer a fantastic range of out of school clubs, these are run by staff, external sports coaches or other specialist providers. Details are given out termly.

Breakfast Club

We are delighted that St Christopher's offers a Breakfast Club between 7.30am – 8.40am, in the school hall. Children are provided with breakfast and activities under the supervision of a member of staff, allowing parents an earlier start to the day. If you think you may require the use of Breakfast Club at any time please let us know. We do accept childcare vouchers from a number of issuers. Costs, subject to review, is £5.00

Afterschool Provision

The school offers afterschool provision between 3:15pm and 6:00pm from Monday – Thursday and on Fridays from 3.15pm – 4.30pm. Bookings will need to be made a short (half) term in advance. Costs, subject to review, are currently:

£8.00 for a half session 3:15pm-4:30pm

£10.00 for a half session after a club 4:15pm-6:00pm - including a light tea.

£14.00 for a full session 3:15-6:00 - including a light tea.

We recognise that parents will not necessarily know about which clubs are being run in advance and so if bookings are made for a full session and your child uses a club, this will be amended. Subject to places being available, there is also the possibility of 'ad hoc' use of the provision. This would be offered at the slightly higher cost of £10.00, £12.00 and £16.00 respectively.

Ways to help your child have a good start at school

- Encourage your children to dress themselves (including shoes) and use the toilet independently
- Young children learn through play. Spend time with them as they play, listening and watching so that you can add a little extra to what they are already learning
- Talk to them a lot – always try to add to their spoken vocabulary
- Make sure they can listen carefully and repeat and obey simple instructions
- Encourage games that help them recognise similar shapes – snap, happy families, picture lotto, jigsaw puzzles, also counting games such as snakes and ladders
- Let them help you with jobs, especially 'sorting out and putting in order' eg tidying a cupboard or setting a table
- Learning to tidy away is an important skill
- If they want to learn some letter shapes, make sure they are lower case (small letters), not CAPITALS. Tell them the letter 'sounds' and names at the same time
- Let them experience many different materials – paint, play-dough, sand, water, paper, scissors and paste. A painting overall and plenty of newspaper or a large sheet of plastic for the floor will help!

We hope you will find this list useful. If you would like any further ideas or advice, please contact the school.

Reading

When your child starts school, we ask you to buy a book bag. Your child will be given a reading record to carry in their bag, along with their reading book. When you share your child's reading book at home, please make a comment and sign the reading diary so teachers know the book has been shared.

Reading is one of those key areas of your child's learning which relies on home and school working closely together. To support your child's progress we ask that you treat this as a key priority.

- Read to your child as often as possible, bringing the story to life. Enthusiasm for books and stories is generated by parents.
- Re-read favourite stories chosen by your child even when you become bored and want a change.
- Talk about the stories, and encourage your child to predict what might happen next in the story.
- Sing and say rhymes, songs, and jingles with your child and encourage him/her to join in so that they know them by heart.
- Point out print and talk about signs, shop names, advertisements and packaging.
- Choosing and owning a book can be a great pleasure. Make use of the local library – choose some books and let your child choose others. Sometimes your child will choose books you might not have selected, but learning to make choices is all part of becoming a reader.
- When possible buy books for your child. Exciting and interesting books can be found in jumble and car boot sales as well as second hand bookshops.
- When you watch television with your child, chat about the characters, plot etc.
- Audio CDs and dvds are an additional source of pleasure and interest.

- Make sure your child sees you reading for purpose and pleasure. Newspapers, letters, cookery books, instruction manuals and magazines are all varieties of reading material, and demonstrate to the child that reading is not limited to reading a story.

St Christopher's Parents Association (SCPA)

We are lucky to have an active group of parents who organise fund raising activities for children and parents throughout the year to raise funds for our children. We really appreciate all the support they give us, and would like to encourage you to support their really valuable work in any way you can.

School Policies

I'm sure you will appreciate that for the school to work efficiently and happily there is a need to have in place policies that set out procedures and expectations of the school, parents and children. All school policies are available from the school website, but the following are some of the policies that you are likely to need on a regular basis.

School Uniform Policy

It is our school policy that all children wear school uniform when attending school, or when participating in a school-organised event outside normal school hours.

Our policy on school uniform is based on the notion that school uniform:

- Promotes a sense of pride in the school
- Engenders a sense of community and belonging towards the school
- Is practical and smart
- Identifies the children with the school

- Prevents the children from coming to school in fashion clothes that could be distracting in class
- Makes children feel equal to their peers in terms of appearance
- Is regarded as suitable wear for school and good value for money by most parents
- Is designed with health and safety in mind.

Uniform & the Role of Parents

We ask all parents who send their children to our school to support the school uniform policy. Please send your children to school correctly dressed and ready for their daily schoolwork,

If any parent would like the school to modify the uniform policy, they should make representation, in the first instance, to the headteacher. The school welcomes children from all backgrounds and faith communities. If there are any serious reasons, for example on religious grounds, why parents want their child to wear clothes that differ from the school uniform, the school will look sympathetically at such requests.

Please remember that all uniform should be clearly named! If an item of school uniform is lost, please check in your child's classroom in the first instance. If the item is not located there, check with the school office. We do our best to return found items, however this is made much easier if everything is named!

Spare Clothing for Emergency Use - We keep minimal articles of spare clothing in case of emergency. If your child is lent items of clothing please wash and return these items as soon as possible.

Footwear

For Health & Safety reasons children are not allowed to wear shoes that have platform soles, open toes or high heels.

Jewellery

On health and safety grounds we do not allow children to wear jewellery in our school. The exceptions to this rule are earring studs, and small objects of religious significance, such as a crucifix on a chain. We ask the children to either remove these objects during PE or cover them with a plaster, to prevent them from causing injury. During swimming lessons all jewellery and earrings must be removed. This is in line with Oxfordshire County Council's policy and the policy at the swimming pool.

Haircuts

The school does not permit children to have 'extreme' haircuts or colours that could serve as a distraction to other children. Children with long hair should have it tied, especially for PE.

Nail Varnish

Nail varnish is not permitted to be worn at school.

Medicines

It remains the parents responsibility to administer medicine to children during the school day. Please try to give the medicine at home or come into school during lunch time. However, if this is not possible we want to be helpful in this matter and staff may be willing to carry out this task. The medicine must be brought into the office by an adult and clearly labelled with a completed permission form (available from the school office). It is parents' responsibility to collect the medicine at the end of the day and children will not be allowed to take the medicine home themselves. Asthma inhalers should be clearly labelled in a sealed plastic box with a photograph of the child clearly displayed. Any particular known health requirements or allergies should be fully discussed when your child is first admitted into school and our records kept up-to-date.

Illness or Accident

The school has a Health and Safety policy that may be seen by parents on request and is available on the school's website. In the event of illness or accident, parents will be contacted immediately. It is therefore very important that we have telephone numbers which we can contact you on. When a child bumps his/her head, we will telephone a parent and send a letter home to inform you of the accident. **Please inform the office of any changes in contact numbers immediately or update via MCAS.**

The School Health Nurse makes regular visits to school. If parents wish advice or to discuss health concerns about their children her telephone number can be obtained from the school office.

Head lice are a recurring problem in all schools. The best aid to preventing infestation is to comb or thoroughly brush your child's hair regularly long hair should be tied back. Please inform the school if your child has headlice.

Charging Policy

Introduction

All education during school hours is free. We do not charge for any activity undertaken as part of the National Curriculum.

Voluntary Contributions

When organising school trips or visits which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost of the trip.

All contributions are voluntary. If we do not receive sufficient voluntary contributions, we may cancel a trip. If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents have not paid any contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others.

Breakages

We greatly value the fantastic learning environment we have created at St Christopher's school. We encourage everyone to look after the environment and know that breakages to happen. If we feel any damage or loss results from a lack of respect or misbehaviour, we may ask parent to pay the cost or repair or replacement.

School Emergency Closure Procedure

We avoid closing the school whenever possible, but under certain conditions are required to do so for health and safety reasons. The most likely reason for closure will be severe weather conditions. We will inform you via Class Dojo message.

Car Parking

The roads around the school can get very congested in the mornings and at the end of the school day. We ask parents to be considerate when parking, and not to block the driveways of local residents or park on the junction to The Elms. We also ask, for the safety of the children coming out of the school gate, parents NOT to park on the zig-zag yellow lines.

The staff car park should also NOT be used unless there are specific reasons and prior agreement. This includes picking up from after school clubs due to safety issues surrounding children exiting through the main entrance and having to walk through the car park.

For health and safety reasons no dogs should be brought into the school grounds.

We do also ask parents to refrain from smoking anywhere on the school premises or grounds as we operate in accordance with Oxfordshire County Council's no-smoking policy.

Complaints Policy

A happy community makes the best environment for learning. However, if a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school we are keen they let us know as soon as possible. They should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. Most matters of concern can be dealt with in this way.

Where a parent feels that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the headteacher. Most complaints are normally resolved at this stage.

Should a parent have a complaint about the headteacher, he/she should first make an informal approach to one of the members of the Governing Body, who is obliged to investigate it. The Governor in question will do all he/she can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if a parent is unhappy with the outcome he/she can make a formal complaint as outlined below.

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the governing body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint and how the school has handled it so far. It is also really helpful if the letter explains what sort of action the complainant feels would resolve the problem. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors. The Governors do all they can at this stage to resolve the complaint to the parent's satisfaction.

If the complaint is not resolved, a parent may make representation to ODS. Further information about this process is available from the school or from ODS. If any parent is still not concerned that the complaint has been dealt with properly, then he/she is entitled to appeal to the Secretary of State for Education.

School Term and Holiday Dates

The dates for the next academic year are below. Please note that regular school attendance is essential to your child's progress and, therefore, all absences should be agreed with the Headteacher in advance. Please ensure that family holidays are taken during school holiday periods.

Term	Dates
Term 1 – Autumn	3 rd September 2026 – 18 th December 2026
<i>October Half Term</i>	<i>26th October 2026 – 30th October 2026</i>
<i>Christmas Break</i>	<i>21st December 2026 – 4th January 2027</i>
Term 2 - Spring	5 th January 2027 – 25 th March 2027
<i>February Half Term</i>	<i>15th February 2027 – 19th February 2027</i>
<i>Easter Break</i>	<i>26th March 2027 – 9th April 2027</i>
Term 3 – Summer	12 th April 2027 – 20 th July 2027
<i>May Half Term</i>	<i>31st May 2027 – 4th June 2027</i>

Inset/teacher training – 1st & 2nd September 2026
4th January 2027, 7th June 2027 & 21st July 2027

ADDITIONAL INSET DATE – 2nd November 2027

ODST will be having a whole trust INSET day on Monday 2nd November 2027. This is an additional INSET day over and above the usual five days which is a benefit of the flexibility we have as being part of an academy trust.

And Finally!

We hope you have found this booklet useful. We are constantly seeking ways to improve, and as such if you feel there was anything missing from this information, please do let us know.

