

Starting school at



A guide by parents, for parents





The thought of your child starting school can be stressful... but don't worry! Some of the parents from Year R got together to answer the extra questions you might have as your child starts at Uplands.



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The First Day

What should we take to school on the first day?

Just bring your child, their water bottle and their coat. They'll definitely need a coat in case the weather changes.

That's it!

When needed, you'll be asked to bring in things like wellies, but you don't need these on the very first day. Concentrate on getting your little one to school on day one, and don't worry about the stuff.

Do I need to buy my child a book bag and a water bottle?

Book Bag No – all children will be given a book bag

Water Bottle Yes – you will need to provide a clear labelled water bottle for your child, plastic not metal please.

What about stationery?

No, it's all provided for them and kept in the classroom in Year R. From Year 1 you will be given details of what stationery is needed.



Where do I drop my child off and pick them up?



Come through the metal gate, walk down the long drive and turn right. Walk past the school towards the playground, where there is a wooden gate. You can wait here if you are early and the gate is shut. If it's open, walk through and wait in the playground. The teachers will open the gate to the Year R area and call you in for drop off/ send the children out to you for pickup.

At pickup time, they won't be allowed to leave school until they and their teacher can see you in the playground. This is the procedure until the end of Year 4.

If someone other than their usual person is coming to pick them up, remember to let the teacher know, in person or call the school office on the day and show them a picture of this person so that your teacher recognises them at home time.



Uniform and labelling

What uniform should I buy, and how much?

It's entirely up to you, but your child will get messy at school, so you'll need enough to get you through the week. You might want to get:

- At least one jumper/cardigan/fleece with the school logo on.
- Two or three spare plain blue jumper/cardigan/fleece
- Five plain pale blue polo shirts
- Three pairs of trousers/ skirts/pinafores
- Socks and tights to last the week
- A spare pair of cheap black school shoes (for accidents – they do happen!)

Other top tips:

- Your child might prefer the logo fleeces to the jumpers, as the zip means they're easier to take off
- Girls wearing skirts will need tights or decent long socks in winter. Most children wear grey ones (any shade of grey)
- In Year R it's a good idea to put spare socks/tights and pants in their book bag, for emergencies!



Where is the best place to buy school uniform?

Skoolkit on Fareham West Street is the only local place for shirts/jumpers/cardigans with logos. Sainsbury's stocks the blue polo shirts in-store in their back-to-school section.



All the supermarkets and M&S have suitable coloured uniform to buy online all year round. Matalan is also good for some things.

When it comes to PE kit, Skoolkit is also the only reliable place to buy royal blue PE shorts, although keep an eye on Aldi, as they've been known to get them in the 'aisle of wonder' and they're cheaper. They can also wear black shorts, and they will need to wear Trainers.

If school are able to hold an in school induction event, there'll be a second-hand sale. It's all good quality, and the people running the stalls can advise you on what kinds of things to buy.

How should I label my children's belongings?

Label them everywhere!! **For clothing, Petit Fernand labels are really good** (petit-fernand.co.uk). They have a picture on as well as your child's name, which helps them recognise their own belongings even though they can't read yet. They come from France, but delivery is quick, they're super cheap and best of all they don't come unstuck in the wash! Keep an eye on their Facebook page for offers. Biro and Sharpie writing comes off in the wash!

Please make sure that you name your child's water bottle. Sharpies tend to rub off, so a sticker is better. **Stickers by TinyMe (tinyme.co.uk)** are waterproof and really good for bottles and snack boxes. TinyMe may also do a promo in the summer; on Facebook they'll say "all children whose



names begin with the letter E (for instance) get free stickers this week!”, and you just pay postage. (They do clothing labels too, but reviews are mixed). Please make sure shoes have labels as all their shoes look the same!

Also, do get something distinctive to clip/stick on your child’s **book bag**, like a colourful small keyring, so they can pick it out from the muddle of other bags in their box. Please make sure it is small as the classroom boxes are snug, about the size of a 50p piece maximum!

If you were thinking about getting a **book bag strap**, unfortunately the school doesn’t allow them. There is not enough room in the storage boxes and they may get broken.

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Easyfundraising easyfundraising turns your everyday online shopping into free donations for your favourite cause. Every time you shop the school benefits at no extra cost to you! There are over 6,000 retailers to choose from!

THANK YOU!



Snacks and lunch

What sort of snack can I give my child for snack time?

We've all found this tough! It's tricky because it must be **healthy**; it needs to be **one small thing** that they can open on their own and eat easily, quickly, without any spoons or cutlery; and it will be kept in a box in the classroom, so it needs to be **suitable to be stored out of the fridge**.

The children can't bring in things like chocolate bars, crisps, sweets, biscuits and cakes. They also **can't bring in anything with nuts** – see the section on 'food allergies' for more information.

Some ideas for healthy snacks include (please choose one):

- A few rice cakes
- Another piece of fruit or vegetable
- Nut free fruit bars such as 'School Bars' / 'Bear Yoyos'
- One or two crackers and cheese
- Babybels (if they can open them ok!)

Make sure the snack is **labelled**. It is preferred to put it in a **small labelled snack box**. Snacks are eaten in the afternoon. School provides fruit and milk for morning snack time.

Please note: **no popcorn** for under 5's and any small round fruit or veg e.g. grapes or tomatoes, must be cut in half length ways.

Do you have any tips for packed lunches?

Whilst most children will have a school lunch, if you choose to give your child a packed lunch, you might choose a sandwich, roll or wrap with cheese, meat, fish, hummus or marmite, or alternatively some crackers and cheese/hummus. You could add another piece of fruit or some vegetable sticks, and you might choose an extra different snack like the ones listed above.



How will I know if my child is eating enough at lunchtime?

The children normally have to put their hand up to leave the table at lunchtime, and are encouraged to eat enough before they go out to play. Some of the Year R teaching assistants are in the hall at lunchtime to supervise, the teachers also support for the first part. If you are worried that your child isn't eating enough, have a chat with their teacher or one of the assistants, and they'll keep an eye on them for you.

Really important advice about food allergies

Any food you give to your child for school has got to be **completely nut-free**. We all need to be so careful about this because some children at Uplands are allergic to the point of anaphylaxis. Check labels before you buy, and ensure:

- the item does not contain nuts or 'traces of nuts'
- the item does not even feature the wording 'may contain traces of nuts'
- the item was not produced in a factory handling nuts

Some children have different allergies. If a little one in your child's class has an allergy to nuts or something different (coconut, sesame, etc.), the teacher will let you know.



Preparing your child for starting school

What should I do if my child is upset about coming to school?

All year R children get upset about coming to school at some point. Some take a long time to settle in. First of all, don't worry! It's such a big change for them and it's totally natural for them (and you!) to feel anxious. Our tips would be:

- **Talk about school positively.** Use a bright and happy voice that makes it all very normal!
- **Get everything ready the night before school.** Sort out their uniform, bag, snack etc. so that you're calmer in the morning.
- **Talk them through their day.** The night before, chat to them about what they might be doing – “You'll get in, you'll hang up your coat and put your bag/bottle away, you'll put your snack in the snack box, then you'll get a chance to do an activity, and you'll get to play with your friends” etc. etc.
- **Read about school.** There's a great book called 'Starting School' by Janet and Allan Ahlberg which you can use to talk your child through the typical school day. If you don't want to buy the book, there's actually a video of it on YouTube!
- **Talk to your teacher if you're worried.** Let them know at the beginning of the day and they can keep an eye on your child for you.



Who to speak to if you have more questions

The teachers are lovely and will help you with any queries about the school day. Once the first week of school has passed and the children have started to settle in, it's best to speak to them at the end of the day when they have more time.

Lisa in the office knows all about the multitude of forms you'll be filling in, as she puts together the welcome packs. And if you have any other questions about school life generally then you're welcome to find one of the other mums and dads and ask us! We've all been there and we know what it's like.



**We wish you and your child the best of luck
starting Uplands!**

