

## Life at Ark Conway

### PARENT FORUM: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Made in collaboration with parents and staff*

**Ark Conway Website:** [www.arkconway.org](http://www.arkconway.org)

#### The School Day

The school day begins at 8.30am and the gates open at 8.20am. If you arrive after 8.30am, your child will be marked as late and you must sign your children in at the front office. School finishes at 4pm, except on the last day of each full term when it finishes at 1.30pm.

The main gate is at the end of The Curve. There is a small gate on the Hemlock Road side that is open briefly for drop off (8:20 – 8:30am) and pickup (4:00 – 4:10pm).

**Breakfast Club** runs from 7.30am - 8.30am and **Afterschool Care** from 4pm-6pm. If you want your child to attend either of these, you just need to book in with the front office and pay on Wisepay. Childcare Vouchers can be used to pay for this – please speak to the front office team if you would like to use these.

**Term Dates** (including inset days) are on the Ark Conway Website and are circulated by the school as soon as they become available.

**Timetables** for each class can be found on the school website. Every class will have a morning break. Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive a piece of fruit from school to eat in this break. Children in older year groups may bring in a piece of fruit from home if they wish. Children also have a break after lunch and younger children will then additionally have a short break in the afternoon too. Play equipment including footballs, skipping ropes and hoops, are all provided during these breaks.

**Lunch** - We have an onsite chef and catering team who make fresh food every day. The focus of the Conway Kitchen is on nutritious, healthy meals with lots of variety and using seasonal produce. There are two choices every day followed by a (healthy) pudding. The children eat in a 'family dining' approach, ensuring that they have time to talk with other children and staff, learn to use their cutlery correctly and also how to serve themselves and others. You must order your child's lunches on WisePay by 9 am on the Tuesday of the previous week. If you miss this deadline, your child will be given the vegetarian option. The form to apply for free school meals is online or via the Front Office.

#### Communication

The school often communicates by putting letters in your child's book bag. They also send reminders by text message.

You can speak to the front office at any time in person, by email [info@arkconwayprimary.org](mailto:info@arkconwayprimary.org) or phone **020 3249 1180**. Talk to them about attendance, punctuality, health, uniform, lunches, school visits, clubs, breakfast club and after school care.

If you have a query about your child's wellbeing, achievement or learning, you should in the first instance speak to their class teacher. You can often catch them at drop off but it is better

to speak at collection time when they will have more time available. If you want to make an appointment to see them, you can do so via the front office.

If you need to speak to school management about the above, you can arrange an appointment with the Assistant Principals, Mr White and Mrs Faupel.

Mrs Ross Wood holds clinics each week, on Wednesdays at 8:30am or on Fridays at 4:00pm. You can make an appointment via the front office if you have any queries or concerns that have not been answered by the class teacher or Assistant Principals.

**Absence** - If your child is not well enough to come into school, you need to call the front office by 8.10am. They should not come back to school for at least 24hrs since they have last been sick. If your child falls ill during the school day, we will call the named contacts, using the details you have provided. The attendance and punctuality policy is on the school website, under policies - safeguarding, for further information.

### **What makes Ark Conway special?**

**Classes** - Each class is named after a famous author and that author's work will play a part in the year's curriculum.

- Reception – Carroll Class (Lewis Carroll – Alice in Wonderland)
- Year 1 – Potter Class (Beatrix Potter – Peter Rabbit)
- Year 2 – Dahl Class (Roald Dahl – Fantastic Mr Fox)
- Year 3 – Lewis Class (C. S. Lewis – The Chronicles of Narnia)
- Year 4 – Dickens Class (Charles Dickens – A Christmas Carol)
- Year 5 – Austen Class (Jane Austen – Emma)
- Year 6 – Shakespeare Class (William Shakespeare – A Midsummer's Night Dream)

**Value of The Week** - Ark Conway has five key values: Honesty, Respect, Aspiration, Perseverance and Happiness. Each week, the school focuses on one of these as the 'Value of the Week' and they all appear in the school song that is often sung at Assemblies.

**Composer of the Term** - The school choose a composer each term who is discussed in assembly and whose music is played around the school. The name of the Composer of the Term is announced in the newsletter so you can listen at home too.

**Assemblies** - The children attend three Assemblies a week. On a Monday afternoon the assembly introduces the Value and Composer. On Tuesday there is a 'singing assembly' where the whole school gets together to sing. On **Friday Morning** there is a **CELEBRATION ASSEMBLY** from 8.35 - 9.15am in the main school hall. Parents are warmly invited to attend this assembly on alternate weeks (Reception and Key Stage 1 one week, Key Stage 2 the next – dates are in the newsletter). Celebration Assemblies remind everyone of the Value and Composer of the Week and celebrate the week's achievements including Star of The Week, Great Behaviour Game Time, The Punctuality Cup (the class with the fewest late sign-ins) and there are often performances from the children and Parent Band. The school really values parents attending this weekly event.

**Star of the Week** - Each week, 2 children from each class in either Reception+KS1 or KS2 (depending on whose assembly it is) are nominated by their form teacher for having modelled the 'Value of the Week'. These children receive certificates in the Friday Assembly. If your children is going to receive this, you will get a text message the day before so you can come to assembly to celebrate with them.

**Great Behaviour Game Time** - Each class has a 'behaviour chart' that their names can be moved up or down during the school day. If a child's name reaches the top on any given day, they get a star. Once that child reaches 10 stars, they get a 'Great Behaviour Game Time' which is an extra playtime (including a Jammy Dodger biscuit!).

**Newsletter** - A newsletter is sent home in your child's bag every Friday. It contains School News, Dates for Trips, Events and Assemblies and Home Learning topics. It is also available on the School Website under 'Life at School'.

## Enrichment

**Home Learning** - Every week, form teachers set home learning questions or suggestions of things that children could do to enhance their learning at school. Home learning is listed in the weekly newsletter. Their completed home learning is then shared with the class the following week, usually a Friday.

**After School Clubs** - Each term the school offers a selection of After School Clubs that run from 4-5pm. They are designed to be a 'taster' and change from term to term and are mainly run by teachers from the school. Reception children can join clubs from their second term, in January, to ensure that they have had time to get used to a longer school day. A letter will be sent home in your child's bag detailing what is available for each term and clubs are allotted according to preferences and space available. If you have an idea of an After School Club provider, please let the front office know.

**School Trips** - Each class will go on at least one trip per term. The school often needs parents to come along to help supervise and will ask for that support in a letter - without parent support the trips can't go ahead.

**WisePay** - WisePay is an online ordering and payment system. You will need to use it to choose and pay for school lunches, order uniform, pay for after school clubs, care and trips, as the school is now a cashless school. You'll get login details from the school when you first start and can find it through the school website (there's a WisePay logo on the top right). If you have more than one child you can 'merge' their accounts so you can access them all from the same login.

**Uniform** - Full uniform must be worn at all times with black shoes. PE kits should be worn on the day your child has PE (with black plimsoles or white trainers) which is communicated at the beginning of term. Long hair must be tied up. Uniform can be ordered through WisePay.

**Lost Uniform** - Parents can ask Class Teachers to check in classrooms for misplaced uniform or it may be put into the Lost Property Box. You can ask at the front office if you wish to look in the lost property box.

## Parent Community

**Parents' Forum** - Parents' Forum raises money to support and enrich the curriculum. They take the lead on organising events for the for the school and community, sometimes to fundraise and sometimes just for fun – discos, fairs, bingo and quiz nights, Mad Hatter's tea parties, cake sales and parent/teacher drinks. They also provide a forum for parents to hear and give feedback about school matters at regular meeting. They support the Conway Family Fund (we donate 15% of our takings to the Fund which helps families in need).

**Class Links:** Each class has at least two Class Links from the parent body who sit on the Parents' Forum. These links help lead fundraising and social events, provide a point of contact between a class and school management and manage the class contact lists.

If you have suggestions for events, fundraising or broader issues to do with school life that should be raised by Parent's Forum you should contact your Class Link.

**Parents' Forum Meetings:** Each Autumn, the Parents' Forum holds an AGM to hear what the school would like to spend PF funds on and to outline the plan for the year. It is also a forum in which broad issues regarding school life can be discussed with school management. All parents are invited to come to this and take part in the discussion. During the Spring and Summer Terms, Class Links meet with School Management to discuss any questions or issues raised by their classes and minutes are circulated to all parents, following the meeting.

**Google Groups** - Parent Forum uses Google groups to communicate as a parent group about life at school - pleas for lost uniform, organising events, asking about help with childcare, recommendations for holiday activities. There are groups for each class and then one for all parents. Your Class Rep can add you to the group - and remove your name if you no longer want to be part of the group - at any time.