

WELCOME TO ALVER VALLEY SCHOOLS



ALVER VALLEY SCHOOLS INFORMATION BOOKLET

We would like to warmly welcome you to The Federation of Alver Valley Infant & Nursery and Junior Schools.

This booklet has been written to help prepare you and your child as you join our school. We aim to give you the essential information that you need so that your child has a really positive start and go on to have a successful education.

At Alver Valley Schools we recognise the value of parental support to children's all-round development and learning, and we want to work in partnership with you to help your child develop as a valuable member of our school community, going onto achieve their full potential.

If, after reading this booklet, you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact Executive Headteacher Jill Roseblade or Head of Schools Ali Lockwood via the school office. We look forward to welcoming you to our school community.



Jill Roseblade



Ali Lockwood



School Contact Details:

The school office opening hours are 8 am to 4:30 pm, Monday to Thursday, and 8 am to 4 pm on Friday, during the school term time.

Address:

The Federation of Alver Valley Infant & Nursery and Junior Schools,
21 Falcon Meadows Way, Gosport, Hampshire PO13 8AA.

Telephone:

023 9258 3029

023 9258 1777

Website:

<http://alvervalleyschools.co.uk>

Email:

adminoffice@alvervalley-inf.hants.sch.uk

adminoffice@alvervalley-jun.hants.sch.uk

Executive Headteacher: j.roseblade@alvervalley-inf.hants.sch.uk

Head of Schools: a.lockwood@alvervalley-jun.hants.sch.uk

Chair of Governors: Mrs Joan Kerr (contact via the school office)

Local Authority

Alver Valley School is maintained by the Children's Services
Department of Hampshire County Council.

Alver Valley Schools Vision

We believe it is our responsibility to empower individuals to have high aspirations, creating a school community that shines. Challenge, resilience, independence and confidence form the backbone of our drive to excellence.



At Alver Valley Schools, learning starts with children's own experience and interests, as this promotes ownership of, and motivation in, learning. We strongly believe that creativity in the curriculum is an essential. It has the ability to enthral, can be the hook to fire the imagination, and drives motivation. It is what gives the curriculum excitement and makes learning irresistible.

At Alver Valley Schools, there are plenty of opportunities to realise these ambitions. It is critical to embrace the wider aspects of children's learning, their backgrounds, their home life, their families and the varied experiences they bring, to fully understand the individuals we are educating. Only then can we be supportive, ambitious and ultimately successful. Building strong links with the community is imperative to bring life and energy in to our school. We need to be proud and strong, and celebrate and promote what makes Alver Valley Schools unique, exciting and challenging.

The School Day

The school day starts at 8:45 am in the Infant school and 8:40 am in the Junior school, when a teacher will blow a whistle and welcome children into their classrooms. Please ensure children arrive at school in good time for the whistle.

The register is then called in the classroom. Registers close at 8:55 am in the classroom. If children arrive after 8:55 am they will need to go to the school office, where they will receive a late mark. If they arrive after 9:05 am

it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. *(In line with Hampshire County Council policy which requires all arrivals after 9:05 am to be recorded as unauthorised absence.)*

The school day ends at 3 pm in both schools.

Attendance

Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly. It is very important that children attend school everyday so that they can make good progress in their learning. It is very tricky for children when they miss days and need to try to catch up with their learning. As a school we really believe that every day counts and we do lots to encourage and reward good attendance.



If your child is unwell and, as a result, will be absent from school it is your responsibility to ring the school office that morning to inform us of the reason for absence. Please also send a letter into school with your child, on their return to school, outlining the reason for absence, including any medical advice that you sought, to enable us to look at each case and make the decision about if we can authorise the absence.

If a child's absence falls below the expected level we will inform parents and offer support to improve this.

Further information can be found in our school attendance policy, which is available on the school website or from the school office on request. We encourage parents to familiarise themselves with the policy fully.

Behaviour for Learning

We believe that the most effective and efficient learning is achieved in a

happy, calm and caring community. In order to develop and foster such an atmosphere we aim to be positive and consistent in all our relationships. The school has developed a Behaviour Policy, which embodies our aims to encourage, praise and promote good behaviour.

We believe it is essential that children understand their role in keeping a disciplined and orderly learning environment in school and as such the learner values and school expectations are shared and discussed with children so that they understand what is expected of them.

The values which the pupils and staff recognise as underpinning school life are:

- Resilience
- Respect
- Independence
- Boundaries
- Self-regulation
- Focus



Learner awards are given at our celebration assemblies and are one of the ways we recognise when children demonstrate these values in school. We invite parents along to join in this celebration, and these are held on a Monday in the Infant school and on a Friday in the Junior school.

Our School Expectations form part of our behaviour policy, which we have written through working with children, staff and following consultation with parents. They set out what we expect of all members of our school community:

- *We make the right choices*
- *We always try our best*
- *We are kind and considerate*
- *We take care of our school*
- *We are always safe and sensible*
- *We have fun together*



From time to time some children may become involved in incidents of poor behaviour where a school expectation is broken. All staff endeavour to take a positive approach to dealing with such incidents and aim to develop the child's understanding of the mistake they have made and how it can be put right or avoided in the future. Further information can be found in our school behaviour policy, available on the school website and from the

school office. The school asks for the co-operation and support of parents in maintaining a disciplined atmosphere.

Communication

Good communication between school and home is crucial to the shared responsibility the school has with parents. The school has a responsibility to keep parents informed about what is happening in school. Much of this communication happens in the form of Newsletters. Parents also have a responsibility to inform the school of any important events and issues that might be taking place at home.

The school also uses texts and phone calls to communicate with parents.

Please ensure that you keep all contact details up to date so that you receive all relevant information.



We have an open door policy in school, meaning that teachers are available for a quick word before the whistle is blown in the mornings and at the end of the day after they have seen the children to their responsible adult. We encourage parents to discuss any questions or concerns that they may have about their child with their class teacher. If you need to speak with the class teacher in greater depth you can make an appointment

to speak with them directly or through the school office. Mrs Roseblade, Executive Headteacher, and Mrs Lockwood, Head of Schools, are also available to meet with, and again you can arrange to do so via the school office.

School Office

The school office staff team hope to be able to help parents with any queries and concerns. The office opens each day at 8 am and is staffed throughout the school day.

If you would like to leave a message for a member of staff, or for your child, concerning arrangements for collection at the end of the day for example, the office staff will be more than happy to help with this.

It would be extremely helpful to the office staff if any monies coming into school could be sent in on Mondays. This makes collation and banking of any funds more manageable. All cheques coming into the office should be made payable to 'Hampshire County Council'.

There are times of the day when the school office is very busy and we ask parents to be patient at these times.



If you would like to contact the school office please telephone either numbers: 023 9258 3029 or 023 9258 1777.

Alternatively, you may email adminoffice@siskin-jun.hants.sch.uk, or adminoffice@siskin-inf.hants.sch.uk.

School Uniform

Children are encouraged to clearly identify themselves as belonging to Alver Valley Schools and to take a pride in their appearance. Therefore, we expect all children to wear school uniform.

Our school uniform consists of:

- Grey or charcoal short or long trousers for boys
- Grey or charcoal school skirt, dress or trousers for girls (Green gingham dresses can be worn in the warmer months)
- Plain white polo shirt
- School jumper or cardigan with the school logo (or plain Jade jumper)
- Black shoes – not trainers

PE Kit

PE is an important part of our school curriculum and even the very youngest nursery children take part in weekly sessions using the equipment in school. Children need to bring a PE kit into school in a suitable bag – this should stay in school each day, and should include:

- Plain White t-shirt
- Plain Black shorts
- Trainers or plimsolls

Jewellery

On health and safety grounds, we do not allow children to wear jewellery at school. Pupils with pierced ears may wear plain gold studs, but please send your child without them on PE days, or cover them with tape if the piercing is new. Looped or hanging earrings are not allowed.

Tattoos – real or fake – nose studs or any other facial or body piercings, are not acceptable in school at any time or under any circumstances.



Hairstyles

Parents should be aware that extreme hairstyles for children, such as mohicans, dyed or coloured hair or tramlines, are not suitable for school.

Other Essential Equipment

Children will need to bring a book-bag to school each day for their reading book, any home learning activities and for letters. Letters will usually be sent home on a Monday so

it's always worth checking your child's book-bag for this.

All equipment such as pencils, pens, scissors, rulers, glue, coloured pencils and books are provided in children's classrooms. In the Junior school children may bring a pencil case if they wish but this is not essential.

School jumpers, cardigans and book-bags are available to purchase from the school office on a Tuesday and Thursday.

Please ensure all children's clothes and belongings are clearly named with either labels that can be sewn or ironed in or with a fabric or marker pen.

Lunchtimes

The school kitchen cooks delicious and healthy school lunches each day. Children can choose from the red option (meat) or green option (vegetarian). Photographs of the meals are provided in the classrooms to help children choose, and menus are available for parents so that you can discuss the options with your child at home.



If your child would prefer a packed lunch they can bring a healthy lunch box to school. We do ask that children have healthy foods, so no fizzy drinks or sweets in their lunch box, please.

Infant-aged children – all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 – are now entitled to free school meals. In the Junior school some children are entitled to Free School Meals.

Although school meals are currently free for all infant-age children, if you think you may qualify for Free School Meal Funding – also called Pupil Premium Funding – it is really important for your child that you apply for this funding as it provides valuable extra money for the school to support your child's learning further. You can register online for this at the website below where you will also find further details: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hc3s/freeschoolmeals.htm>. If you would like further information regarding this please pop into the school office.

Snack Time

Children in all Infant classes are provided with a free healthy snack of fruit or sometimes vegetables, such as carrots, each day. Children are also entitled to free milk in Reception. For Year 1 to 6 a small charge is required if they wish to continue.

In the Junior school children are encouraged to bring a healthy snack into school each day.

All children have access to water in school – their first water bottle is provided – and we encourage all children to bring a water bottle to school each day and to drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Supporting Your Child with Their Learning

Parents always ask what they can do to help support their child with learning at home – the answer is: lots!



Most importantly, we ask all parents to read with their children as often as possible. This includes hearing children read their school reading book and also reading stories to your child as this helps them to develop a love of reading and good story language, and it also develops their understanding. Children who love stories, and who are able to talk about and retell stories, have a brilliant starting place when it comes to writing. Reading also includes listening to your child read to you. Little and often is

the key – children who read regularly at home for just 5-10 minutes a day in the early years, and for longer as they grow older grow in their confidence as readers. We encourage all parents to set aside some time each day in a comfortable quiet space, when distractions are minimised, to enjoy reading together. If you would like any advice or support with reading we are always happy to help – please speak initially with your child's class teacher regarding this.

Assemblies

Assemblies are an important part of school life where children come together as a community. Parents are invited to attend celebration assemblies to celebrate the children's achievements. Parents who do not want their child to attend assemblies for religious reasons are asked to notify the Headteacher in writing.

Updates on Your Child's Progress

We endeavour to keep parents informed about the progress their child is making on a regular basis. Parents are welcome to talk to the class teacher whenever they feel necessary. The school offers three more formal occasions for parents to receive information about the progress their child is making. These are as follows:

Autumn Term Parents' Evening

This evening is an opportunity for parents to have an appointment to speak with their child's class teacher about how they have settled into their new class. Key strengths and areas for development will be discussed as well as targets for the year. Parents will be informed if their child requires additional support.



Spring Term Parents' Evening

At this second parents' evening the class teacher and parents will discuss the child's progress. The class teacher will explain in more detail the areas of strength and if relevant, any areas of concern.

Annual Progress Report

The class teacher will write a full progress report for each child. This gives detailed information about the progress made in all subjects and comments on progress towards the most recent targets. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss any issues in relation to this report but there is no formal parents' evening during the term that the written report is received.

At the end of the summer term there is an Open Evening for parents to meet informally with the class teacher. This is a very informal event that aims to celebrate the work of all children and to give parents the opportunity to come into school to share in this celebration.

Special Educational Needs

Our educational aims are the same for all our children. We respond to all children's diverse learning needs but recognise that some children may experience barriers to their learning. Such children may need additional or different help from their peers throughout or at any time during their school career. Where a child has a specific individual need, this will be identified as early as possible, working in close partnership with parents and other professionals.



The school makes effective provision for children with special educational needs (SEN), in accordance with government requirements and Hampshire's SEN Policy.

Class teachers and the school's SEN coordinator (SENCO) are available in school to discuss any concerns parents may have in relation to SEN.

More Able Pupils

We strive to ensure that all children, whatever their ability and needs, are given equal opportunities to develop their gifts and talents. All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum that offers challenge, enrichment and extension. We also focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning to ensure that this challenge and extension is placed in a context that will support these more able children throughout their school life.

Children of school age grow in their interest and desire to improve and broaden their skills and abilities in a range of activities. It is often rewarding to see how these skills develop into real talent. It is very much a part of our joint responsibility with parents to see that we do everything to encourage children to develop these talents, whether they are academic, sporting, musical, artistic or other. We are keen to share successes and achievements so that these can be celebrated.

Educational Visits

Children's learning is often enhanced by first-hand experiences. Educational visits are organised as part of the normal curriculum in school time. We ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the costs of these trips. We consider these visits to be of vital importance and no child will be excluded from any activity because parents are unable or unwilling to contribute.

Complaints

If you do have a concern or complaint please approach the class teacher in the first instance. If the concern or query is of a serious nature or the matter is not resolved, please contact the Head of Schools or Executive Headteacher via the school office. The school complaints procedures are available on request from the school office.



Governing Body

Every school has a governing body. This is a voluntary group of people who work with the Headteacher and other school staff to help manage the school. Governors are involved in monitoring the work of the school and ensuring that the highest standards are achieved.

The whole governing body meets regularly. In addition, there are committees that meet once per month. Any correspondence for the governors should be addressed to the Chair of Governors and handed in at the office.

The governing body includes elected parent representatives. Vacancies are always well advertised and parents are encouraged to put themselves forward when these opportunities occur.

Medical Information

It is important that the school has all relevant medical information about children at the school. Parents are asked to ensure that the school is kept informed of any changes in relation to medical conditions and allergies.

If a child requires regular medication, parents are asked to complete a form for staff to administer this, with clear instructions about timing and dose. Medicines can only be administered in school if they have been prescribed by the child's GP in accordance with our medical policy.

Children who require inhalers to control asthma are able to keep these in the classroom to ensure that they are nearby when required. Inhalers must be registered in the office in the same way as any other medication.



If a child requires an EpiPen in school for any reason, we ask parents to supply two. This means that one can be kept with the child in the classroom and one in the medical room for emergencies or school trips.

If a child is unwell during the school day we will contact parents. It is important that we have up-to-date information about contact numbers as it can be very distressing for a child to have to remain in school when they are unwell if we cannot contact anyone to collect them.

If your child has an accident in school, first aid will be administered by a member of staff. We have qualified first aiders in school who will supervise in the case of any more serious injury. If we have any concerns about a child following an accident in school, parents will be contacted.

Parents in School

We offer many opportunities for parents to become involved in school life including parents meetings, workshops and information meetings.

We also invite parents into school for celebration assemblies, performances, sports events etc., when the children share their achievements.

All parents who volunteer to help in school must have a Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) check. This involves completing a form and showing three forms of identification. If you would like to help in school, please speak with a member of staff about this and also call into the office to enquire about completing a DBS.



Safeguarding

‘All those who come into contact with children and families in their everyday work have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.’ (Working Together to Safeguard Children, Children’s Services)

All staff are trained in Child Protection. This training covers how to spot signs of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect and how and who to report any concerns to.

All staff and volunteers are screened using the Criminal Records Bureau (DBS) check. This involves completing a form and showing three forms of identification. All staff have to prove that their qualifications are valid. Staff involved in recruitment have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training.

New staff undertake an induction process which covers aspects such as Confidentiality, Health and Safety and Child Protection.

If you have any concerns regarding any child at the school please contact the Child Protection Liaison Officers via the school office.

Child Protection Liaison Officers

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Roseblade

Head of Schools: Mrs Lockwood

SENCO: Mrs Russell

If you do not wish to contact the school you can contact:

Hampshire Children's Services

8:30 am to 5 pm: 0845 603 5620; out of hours: 0845 600 4555

Hampshire Police: 101

NSPCC Child Protection Line: 0808 800 5000

ChildLine: 0800 1111

Safety and Security on the School Site

For your child's safety we ask all visitors to ensure they enter through the main entrance to the school and report to a member of the office staff, signing into the visitors' book and receiving a visitors' badge.



If a parent wishes to speak to their child's class teacher, please ask a member of the office staff if this is convenient before proceeding into school. Classroom staff will not be available after the start of the school day.

Please do not enter the school through the cloakroom area doors. These entrances are for the children's use only. These measures are in place for the security of all members of the school community.

Car Park

Parents are not permitted to park in the school car park. This is for staff

only. There is limited parking in the community car park. If you do park here to ensure safety of all pupils please drive onto the site carefully.

School Site

Please:

- Do not smoke on the school site.
- Do not bring dogs on to the school site.
- Do not swear on the school site.



Once the children leave school at the end of the day, or after a club, our schools are closed until the morning. The schools are also closed during staff training days and in school holidays. This means that no-one should be on the premises (including the field) during these times, unless they are attending an organised activity. The schools are equipped with CCTV surveillance, and the Police are aware of the need to monitor our site. Please make sure that your children are not on site when the schools are closed.

Secondary Education

Children transfer to secondary school at the end of Year 6 when they are aged 11. The local secondary schools include Bay House, Brune Park and Bridgemary. We have good induction programmes set up with all local secondary schools to ensure that this is a smooth transition.

Information about this process is made available to parents by the Local Authority during the autumn term of the child's final year at primary school.