

Thakeham First School



'smiling, shining, soaring superstars'

PROSPECTUS



MAKING LEARNING FUN



“Knowledge is changing so fast that we cannot give young people what they will need to know, because we do not know what that will be. Instead we should be helping them to develop supple and nimble minds, so that they will be able to learn whatever they need to. If we can achieve that, we will have a world-class workforce comprising of people who are innovative and resourceful.” **Guy Claxton, Professor of Learning Sciences, Bristol University**

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SCHOOL INFORMATION

Name and Address: Thakeham First School
The Street
Thakeham
West Sussex
RH20 3EP

Telephone number: 01798 812133
Fax number: 01798 815121

Email: office@thakeham.w-sussex.sch.uk
Website: <http://www.thakeham.w-sussex.sch.uk>

Headteacher: Mrs Janet Sharp

Chair of Governors: Mr Roger Taylor

This prospectus should give you an insight on how the school is organised and the many opportunities available for pupils. It does not give you the complete picture - for this you need to visit the school and experience it for yourself! We would be delighted to show you around and answer any questions you may have.



**‘APPLE’ CLASS IN SOME OF THE DRESSING UP CLOTHES
PURCHASED BY THE ‘FRIENDS OF THAKEHAM’.**

Welcome to Thakeham First School

This is probably your child's first school and we are delighted that you are considering Thakeham First School as a place where your child's formal education begins.

At Thakeham First School our aim is to provide the best possible experience for each child so that they can happily learn and achieve their full potential within a caring and secure environment. We work with each child to help them achieve their goals through the recognition of and careful monitoring of their individual abilities. Lessons are planned with significant challenges incorporated so ensuring that each child's needs are met and that they feel encouraged and supported to achieve their best.

We teach all subjects included in the National Curriculum and have an ICT suite where all children regularly develop their skills as well as use them for curriculum related learning.

The curriculum is enhanced by the provision of many extra-curricular activities. These take the form of clubs after and during school. During the course of the school year we may offer Film Club, Multi-Sports, Dance, Choir, Board Games and Pottery Clubs.

We take Year 4 and 5 away on a school residential trip during the summer term. This is a valuable learning opportunity which incorporates challenging problem solving activities, team work and helps develop a mature attitude. All year groups experience a wide variety of visits throughout the school year, making use of the excellent environment to enhance and support their learning.

We are very fortunate to have committed and skilled staff. Thakeham First School also benefits from its very supportive and proactive 'Friends' Association which helps the school in so many ways. Thakeham First School has a long and very close relationship with the village and it has been part of Thakeham life for well over a hundred and twenty five years. We work hard to ensure that this relationship between school, parents and the village community remains one of friendly co-operation for the benefit of everyone.

Thakeham First is a school where every child really does matter and we are very proud of everything that our school has to offer the children in our care.

I look forward to meeting you.

Mrs J Sharp
Headteacher

Aims

- ❖ Teach each child to acquire basic skills enabling him/her to use these skills effectively in a secure and caring environment.
- ❖ Help each child acquire an attitude of care and concern for others at all times.
- ❖ Teach each child to attain autonomy in their learning through the provision of a well-organised, stimulating environment and a broad and balanced curriculum.
- ❖ Encourage each child's natural curiosity so that he/she learns through direct experience and continues to develop an enquiring mind.
- ❖ Enhance each child's awareness of her/his local environment and the world beyond.
- ❖ Work in partnership with parents to encourage and ensure each child develops responsibility for achieving their full potential, reflecting a positive attitude to learning

About our School



The school was built in 1875. We have a small garden with a wildlife pond. An electronically operated security system makes the school grounds safe and secure.

Our School Building

In addition to our three classrooms, our School consists of a recently refurbished hall, in which we serve lunches and where we have a wide range of physical education and music equipment. We also have a library, an ICT suite, cloakroom and administration facilities. Adjoining the school there is a hard surface play area equipped with a wide range of activities for children during their breaks. We use a games field situated about 150 metres away, reached by a bridle path, for outdoor physical education, a vegetable garden and of course, Sports Day! There have been extensions to our school in 1991, 1999, and 2002. We have a large covered area for Early Years structured play, and a pond for environmental work.



Outside play area



Sensory Garden

Governors of Thakeham First School

Chair of Governors	Mr Roger Taylor	
Governing Body:	Mr Graham Leaney	Mrs Janet Sharp
	Mrs S Thompsett	
	Mrs Sarah Covington	Mr Adam Phillips
	Mrs Natalie Wills	Mrs Kim Morgan

The people who care for your children

Teachers:	Apple Class (R & Yr 1)	Mrs Doney & Mrs Trott
	Oak Class (Yr 2 & Yr 3)	Miss H Trower
	Willow Class (Yr 4 & Yr 5)	Mrs S Thompsett
Special Educational Needs Coordinator:		Mrs S Jones
Music:		Mrs E Hopkins
Teaching Assistants:		Mrs E Elvery
		Mrs J Younger
		Mrs F Linfield
Mid Day Meals:		Mrs T Galloway
Premises:		Mr P Gilligan
Garden/Allotment		Mr G Lee
Bursar:		Mrs L Diez
School Secretary:		Mrs L Constable

Induction Arrangements

Parents thinking about applying for a place for their child are encouraged to visit Thakeham beforehand to observe the school at work and see the facilities at first hand.

A visit also offers an important opportunity to discuss the curriculum and organisational matters with the Headteacher and to meet teaching and support staff, and above all find out whether the school would suit the particular needs of your child.

Children start school in Apple Class. During the half term prior to their admission children will visit school and are encouraged to attend nominated sessions in their new class. This is an essential preparation for starting school since it gives each child the chance to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings and more importantly, to get to know their classmates.

New parents have the opportunity to meet the class teacher and to become acquainted with the school and some of its routines. They may ask any questions they have during these visits or by appointment at any other time.

Children are grouped into three classes on a mixed ability basis, usually within an age range of two years. This organisation is necessarily flexible depending on our admission numbers.

Inclusion

It is Thakeham's Policy that every child has a right to equal access to the curriculum. The school's Special Educational Needs and Accessibility Policy & Plan states clearly the importance the school places upon the provision of each and every child regardless of ability and background.

Disabled Provision

Whilst our provision is limited due to the structure of the building, we do provide some facilities for pupils with physical disabilities. These facilities include wheelchair access to the ground floor level covering Apple and Oak classes. There is also access to a toilet.

Equal Opportunities

It is the School's policy to recognise individual differences. We aim to ensure that no person or group experiences unfair discrimination. All parents, pupils, staff, Governors and Friends of the School have a part to play in making our policy work.

Behaviour

We actively promote positive behaviour with clear class and school rules to which all are expected to adhere. All classes use 'circle time' activities to develop self-esteem. Good behaviour and positive attitudes are encouraged through our Golden Award, Class Rewards and a range of certificates and stickers.

We do not tolerate any form of bullying and children are taught that, should any incident occur, they will be listened to by a member of the staffing team who will then ensure that action is taken promptly and with sensitivity. We also seek to work closely with parents on this issue so that the subtler forms of bullying can also be picked up and dealt with effectively.

Admissions

Thakeham is a community school and serves a local catchment area.

The Parents Information Pack includes all the information a parent needs to apply for a school place and is available at www.westsussex.gov.uk - then follow links to 'Education' and 'Admission to School'.

Under the Education Act parents can express a preference for any school but parents do not have a right to choose a school. West Sussex Education Authority does however make every effort to meet parental preference where possible.

Further information can be found in the Authority's Information for Parents Booklet, a copy of which is available from the school office or the Pupil Admissions Office. Other information can be found on the West Sussex Grid for Learning: wsgfl.westsussex.gov.uk

Our published admission limit is 14 for the year 2013/2014.

School Times and Holiday Dates

School Times

08.55 - 12.00 hrs
13.00 - 15.15hrs

The total weekly teaching time at Key Stage 1 is 22hrs and 30mins.
The total weekly teaching time at Key Stage 2 is 23hrs and 45mins.
These times exclude registration, assembly, break and lunchtimes.

Children should not arrive at school before 08.45 hrs. There is a teacher on duty in the playground from 08.45 hrs and also after school.

Please ensure your children arrive at school on time and are collected promptly. If you arrive late at school please inform the school office. Children and the school must know the arrangements for picking them up from school, particularly when, for any reason, the usual arrangements are altered. A brief note or telephone call to the school office will help avoid confusion or even distress at the end of the afternoon.

If your child is absent from school please let us know by 09.15 on the first morning of absence, otherwise we will ring you to ascertain the reason for absence.

SCHOOL YEAR 2013/2014

AUTUMN TERM 2013

Tuesday 3rd September
Wednesday 4th September
Thursday 5th September
Friday 20th December

Inset Day - School closed for pupils
Inset Day - School closed for pupils
First Day of Term/ Academic year
Term Ends

HALF TERM

Monday 28th October – Friday 1st November

SPRING TERM 2014

Monday 6th January 2014
Tuesday 7th January 2014
Friday 7th March 2014
Friday 4th April

Inset Day - School closed for pupils
First Day of Term
Inset Day - School closed for pupils
Term Ends

HALF TERM

Monday 17th - Friday 21st February

SUMMER TERM 2014

Tuesday 22nd April
Monday 5th May
Thursday 5th June
Wednesday 23rd July

Term Begins
Bank Holiday—School Closed
Inset Day - School closed for pupils
Term Ends

HALF TERM

Monday 26th - Friday 30th May

AUTUMN TERM 2014

Wednesday 3rd September
Thursday 4th September
Friday 5th September
Friday 19th December

Inset Day - School closed for pupils
Inset Day - School closed for pupils
First Day of Term/ Academic year
Term Ends

HALF TERM

Monday 27th October – Friday 31st October 2014

NB: 3 more INSET DAYS ARE TO BE SET FOR THE YEAR 2014-5

School Uniform

We have a strong commitment to school uniform. A uniform looks smart, wears well, is comfortable and contributes to a feeling of belonging to our school.

The uniform consists of

White polo shirt or blouse, with or without the school logo
Bottle Green jumper or cardigan with/without the school logo
Plain grey trousers, smart shorts or skirts (jogging pants, sports shorts and leggings are not acceptable)
Green and white small checked summer dress
Sensible black or brown shoes, not trainers or boots

For P.E. children should have the following kit in a P.E. bag clearly marked with the child's name.

Green or Black shorts

White crew neck T-shirt (with or without logo)

Plimsolls or trainers

Additional items of uniform include: Book bags,
PE bags,
Water bottles

Most of the uniform can be purchased from local stores and items with a school logo can be obtained from:

Broadwater Sports

37 Broadwater Street West

Worthing BN14 9BY

Tel: 01903 234589/01903 755505

www.schooljumpers.co.uk

One of the most important things we ask parents to do when their child starts school is to **PLEASE LABEL EVERYTHING!**

School Lunches

Currently children either bring a packed lunch to school, or eat a hot lunch that is prepaid for and provided by Chartwells. Hot meals are ordered on line at www.mealselector.co.uk . Free school lunches are available for families who are receiving income support. Application forms are available from the school office. Packed meals are also provided by Chartwells - visit their website to have a look at a sample menu and order your lunches.

The Curriculum

All maintained schools deliver the National Curriculum to their pupils. It is designed to ensure that children are given a firm foundation of knowledge and skills which will enable them to become literate, numerate, well informed, confident, and capable of learning throughout life.

At the beginning of their school careers the children work towards 'Early Learning Goals'. After the Reception Year they move smoothly into Key Stage One of the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum provides guidance on what children should know and be able to do at each stage of their learning.

As your children move through the school they are assessed continuously to ensure that their learning progresses. In addition, at the end of Key Stage One in May and June of Year 2, the children are assessed in line with national criteria through SATS (Standard Assessment Tasks) and teacher assessments. These will indicate the strengths and weaknesses in your child's attainments and provide information on which the teachers of the next key stage can build. You will receive a printed certificate giving your child's end of Key Stage 1 assessments.

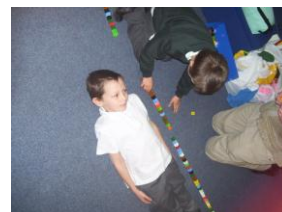
Most teaching takes place in the children's own classrooms, and they spend most of their time with their class teacher. Teaching groups and strategies vary and are adapted to suit the needs of the children.

Our school curriculum encompasses far more than just the National Curriculum; it includes everything your child does. We look to develop the children's skills and knowledge, and give them strategies for learning including problem solving, hypothesising and logical thinking. We value the skills that the children bring into school and always welcome information and objects of interest from them.

Core Subjects: Maths, English/Literacy, and Science

Maths

Mathematics at Thakeham First School prepares our pupils for real life situations. Mathematical skills and concepts are, at all key stages, related to a variety of practical situations.



All classes follow the National Numeracy Framework. This involves an hour of numeracy work every day. This framework also allows us to incorporate maths into a variety of subjects across the curriculum, broadening the experiences of our pupils. Where appropriate, the latest interactive technology is used to further the pupil's learning and enjoyment.

Continual monitoring and assessment of numeracy work enables us to obtain a clear understanding of individual needs. This process allows us to maintain high standards throughout the school.

The role of the parent is critical in helping to consolidate work studied in school. Regular consolidation of times tables and mental arithmetic by parents help the children develop skills which can be used in all areas of mathematics. The Storrington Area Rural Schools (STARS) have developed a booklet concerning Mathematics, showing the progression of skills in calculation, which all new parents will receive.

English/Literacy

English is a core foundation subject of the National Curriculum and English language skills are the key to learning in all subject areas.

Reading

We provide the children with enjoyable reading experiences and produce confident readers who can use books effectively, for pleasure and for information. Reading schemes are used to give structured progress, particularly in the early stages.

Our Home Reading scheme encourages parents to support children in acquiring the "reading habit" at home and we have many parent helpers who read with the children in school.

Listening and Speaking

These skills are vital in all learning and social situations. We encourage the children to listen carefully to others and to speak clearly and confidently in discussions. Role-playing in appropriate sessions and class presentations of work help to provide enjoyable opportunities to extend oral skills.

Writing

Children plan and produce personal diaries, imaginative stories, poems, letters, lists and reports. Grammar, spelling, punctuation and dictionary skills are taught to enable communication to be effective.

Opportunities are given for sharing and reading good writing to other children, or by having it displayed.

Comprehension is also a key feature and time is given to ensuring that pupils comprehend all that they have read. Neat presentation and handwriting skills are encouraged and practised throughout the school.

We use examples of good literature as the starting point for children's own imaginative writing and we place great value on story telling throughout the school. All classes spend at least an hour on literacy work every day, with their reading and writing skills further developed through their work in other subjects.

Science

Through Science, the children are taught to understand the world in which we live. We teach Science through practical investigations to encourage scientific thinking, accurate observation while allowing experimentation and evaluative thought. We try, where possible, to use familiar things as starting points, so as to build on the children's own knowledge, skills and scientific vocabulary.



We make good use of our local environment and organise trips which take us further afield.

There is excellent liaison with Rydon, the Intermediate School and the 'STARS' group of schools (Ashington, Storrington, Washington and West Chiltington) and this enhances the science work in many ways.

Foundation Subjects

ICT

Our ICT suite has seven networked computers, a top-of-the-range colour printer and digital cameras are available for our children. We also have Interactive whiteboards in all our classrooms with broadband.

Our website has our newsletter and other information posted on it as well as children's work.

Every classroom has technology which teachers use at their own discretion to enhance learning. Each classroom has additional computers for individual and group work.

Design Technology

In technology, the children use a variety of media, tools and techniques. They examine and apply the principles of the design process through investigation and problem solving tasks. They also explore the role of technology in our environment. At all times children are taught the crucial importance of safety.

Religious Education

In Religious Education, we help the children in their development as individuals and members of society. Christianity is the main religion studied but wider religious practices and beliefs are investigated in order for the children to learn from and respond to other religions. In this way, we give the children the opportunity to reflect on themselves and have respect for others.

Collective worship is the focal point for all our assemblies and children are given the time to join together and share their own experiences and feelings. It is also an important time to develop the ethos of the school community.

All children are expected to participate in Religious Education and collective worship unless a formal request to the Headteacher has been made for a child to be withdrawn.

History



Children in Willow Class learn about The Romans and Robin Hood!



The overall aim of teaching History at Thakeham First School is to introduce an appreciation of the past whilst developing the historical knowledge of the children.

This is achieved by looking at different aspects and periods of the past. At Key Stage 1 (5 to 7 years old), the children are introduced to the concept of the past by studying things with which they are familiar e.g. themselves, their families, toys, the school and its locality, houses and homes.

At Key Stage 2 (8 to 10 years old), the children study different periods of British and European History.

Geography

Geography is concerned with the study of places and the human and physical processes which shape them. We endeavour to relate geographical studies as closely as possible to first-hand experience by the use of fieldwork both within the locality and further afield. The children are encouraged to make comparisons with other areas in Great Britain, Europe and the rest of the world so they can begin to understand their place in the wider world.

Music

Children are encouraged to explore and expand their musical ability during their time at Thakeham First. From Early Years to Year 5 they have access to a variety of percussion instruments to develop their sense of rhythm and experiment with different sounds.

Pupils are also given the opportunity to use different computer programmes to compose pieces of music, allowing them to fully express their creativity without the limitations of performance skills. The school offers a wide range of music tuition including violin, trumpet and recorders. The pupils are given a chance to celebrate their hard work and perform in front of an audience in a number of end of term concerts.



French

French is taught from Year 2 onwards. Through this teaching we aim to foster a sense of enjoyment and confidence in speaking, reading and writing a modern foreign language. The focus is on oral and auditory learning. Throughout key stage 2 these skills are further built on with the introduction of reading and writing tasks.

In addition to approved schemes, individual teachers enhance the provision with the inclusion of many ICT-based activities.

Art

At Thakeham First School we encourage creativity and imagination in Art through both practical and theoretical lessons.

Practically, pupils are offered a range of media to work in and are taught to develop their observational skills. They are encouraged to experiment with different materials to explore the effects they can create.

The pupils study a range of artists and artefacts, to observe and discuss different methods and techniques for designing a piece of artwork. The pupils are given the opportunity to work with local artists through workshops at school and we celebrate our children's work on displays around the school.

Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship



Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) is interwoven with a range of subjects and activities. Themes include safety, healthy eating, drug awareness, our community, the environment and citizenship.

PSHE involves the development of healthy attitudes of bodily welfare and care, safe living and personal relationships.



Sport Relief Mile 2012

Oak class held their own 'Royal Wedding' in 2011



Personal Development

We work to ensure that all pupils develop important personal qualities including honesty, independence, perseverance, politeness and confidence. Children learn about how our society operates and the importance of being a good citizen.

Social Development

Children are encouraged to develop a respect for those around them. They learn the importance of having a positive attitude towards all people irrespective of differences in their way of life.

Health

The children throughout the school are taught how to eat healthily, and the importance of physical activity in keeping fit. Through the SEAL materials (Social and Emotional aspects of Learning), they also learn strategies to develop mental and emotional strength.

At Thakeham First we take great pride in, and care of our local environment. Our children are given the opportunity to carry out voluntary litter picks and they maintain our school garden. We also promote and participate in the annual "Walk To School Week" scheme, as our bid to cut down on pollution. Additionally, we operate a "Walking Bus" to school once a week.

We are also working towards Eco school status and this involves us, as a school, recycling wherever possible and developing the outside environment so that it plays a greater role in the curriculum.

Physical Education

The purpose of Physical Education is to enable all pupils to work towards becoming active both within and outside the School. We provide a wide variety of activities which enable children to develop their skills in this area, as well as increasing confidence, self esteem, and fostering a real enjoyment for physical exercise that can be continued later on in life.

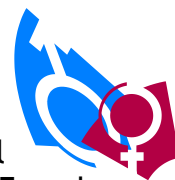


The School provides extra-curricular sports activities including boys' and girls' football and dance. Thakeham First School encourages links with other schools and Clubs in the area and inter-school matches are sometimes organised.

Physical Education is a compulsory subject. When a medical condition exists which would prevent a pupil taking part, whether for a short or long period, a medical certificate should be produced. Pupils who wish to be excused, but who do not have a medical certificate, must bring a note from parents explaining the problem. Headaches, colds, minor aches and pains are not considered reasons for exemptions - exercise may even be beneficial!



Sex and Relationships Education



Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is part of our National Curriculum Science programme. Other aspects are covered in PSHE and Religious Education (RE) lessons. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from part or all of an SRE lesson which is not part of the Science National Curriculum. Parents will be informed in advance of any SRE to be taught.

Special Educational Needs

All children, including the more able and those with learning difficulties, are catered for and supported within the class setting. Work is set to challenge children appropriately with tasks chosen to deepen and broaden knowledge and understanding.

If further help is required, children may work with a learning support assistant or specialist learning support teachers who work with the class teacher to help the individual child to achieve their target.

A range of outside agencies, such as the Special Education Needs Service and Educational Psychology Service, are available to offer guidance and support if it is felt to be necessary for the child.

Extra Curricular Activities

A wide range of after-school activities are available throughout the year. Details concerning these are advertised in the school newsletter.

Homework Policy

Homework

- is closely integrated with and reinforces class work and has clear curricular objectives
- exploits materials and resources in the environment and the community outside the school
- encourages independence, research, creativity and initiative
- promotes co-operation and involvement of parents and other adults.

The purpose of homework is to support and enrich children's learning, develop independence and encourage personal organisation. It is important your children are encouraged in their homework. We believe it is important you discuss work with your child and support them in their learning. Work at home may broaden children's outlook, extend experience and interest, provide encouragement, reinforcement and foster independence.

We believe homework

- allows practice and consolidation of skills and knowledge learned in the classroom.
- provides opportunities for individual work
- develops good habits and self-discipline
- trains children in planning and organising their time
- encourages ownership and responsibility for learning
- provides information for parents with regard to progress and content
- provides opportunities for parental and other adults' cooperation and support
- creates channels for home/school liaison.

Teachers will:

- plan extension/reinforcement work and include this in their planning
- match tasks to children's ability
- give guidance to parents
- indicate time allocation and due date.

All children can benefit from the help parents give at home. Our homework policy and guidelines aim to provide guidance on what is appropriate and desirable for our children. It must be remembered that children work hard at school and need rest and relaxation at the end of the day.

Through our homework policy we aim to:

- ensure a consistent approach to homework throughout school
- promote parental understanding and home support for children's learning
- encourage children to develop independent study strategies
- raise individual achievement
- extend and reinforce learning through consolidation and revision
- make better use of the learning resources families and homes can offer

Parents are encouraged to share the learning experience from the early years at school. This may be by playing games with their children, eg jigsaws, chess, scrabble, monopoly, ludo, snakes and ladders etc.

Pastoral

Communication between school and parents

Do not hesitate to contact us if there is any matter on which you would welcome assistance or if you are concerned in any way. The normal strategy would be to contact your child's class teacher in the first instance. The Headteacher, however is always delighted to meet parents and a telephone call to arrange an appointment organises this quickly and efficiently. Your first point of contact will generally be the school office.

There are regular open evenings where parents can discuss their child's progress. Thakeham First School has a weekly newsletter which goes out to parents on Fridays, keeping you in touch with all that is happening in the school.

We are also delighted when parents volunteer their time to assist within the school in any capacity.

Medical and Dental Health

Routine medical and dental health checks are made at the start of the primary years. Parents may be contacted if further action is advised.

Administering Medicine

We are not permitted to administer unprescribed medicines to any children. In school, all prescribed medicine must be in its original container as dispensed by the pharmacist and must include the dosage and child's name.

Following guidance from West Sussex County Council, we do encourage parents to ask their doctor, where clinically appropriate, to prescribe medicines in dose frequencies which enable them to be taken outside school hours e.g. medicines that need to be taken three times a day could be taken in the morning, after school and at bedtime.

If your child needs medication at any time, please complete a form which may be obtained from the School Office, allowing us to give the necessary dosage. Please always ensure that up-to-date contact telephone numbers are given to the Secretary, so that in an emergency, you are accessible for your child.

Emergency Contacts

Very occasionally we need to contact you during the day, so please make sure we have an up-to-date telephone number and the number of a relative or friend who can take responsibility if we cannot find you.

Dropping Children Off

When dropping your children off at school, or collecting them at any time, parents are requested to park in the church car park and walk up the back lane and use this entrance.

Safety

To continue the theme of safety, we would like to assure all parents that regular fire drills are carried out in school and all fire equipment is regularly tested. The children are increasingly included in assessing risks and learn to adapt their behaviour to minimise problems.

Discipline

We are very proud of our children and we encourage them to maintain a high standard of courtesy and good manners. Formal rules are kept to a minimum and pertain generally to the safety of all at the school.

We do believe that we share the responsibility for the care and discipline of all the children with you. Therefore we ask that your child comes to school punctually and is always encouraged to be smart in appearance, courteous, reliable, friendly and caring towards others.

We promote an atmosphere of friendliness and respect for each other and take action to prevent bullying in any form.

Absences and the Role of the Educational Welfare Officer

We ask parents to work with the school to make sure that children attend school regularly, as doing so is necessary to ensure that each child achieves to their full potential.

It is the responsibility of all parents and guardians to ensure that their children attend school.

If your child is absent from school, it is essential that you contact the school office, preferably before 8.45am and no later than 9.15am, so that the absence can be noted in the register. You can do this by telephoning or through an email link on the school website. From a safety aspect, if we have not heard from you we will endeavour to ring home to establish the reason for absence. If you have to collect your child during the course of the school day, for example, to attend the dentist, a note should be written in their home/school book and you should notify the office. Children must be collected by a known adult.

This is all part of the partnership between home and school, which delivers care for all our children. It is important to note that if an absence is not accounted for by a parent, it has to be treated as an unauthorised absence and recorded as such. This means they are automatically referred to the Education Welfare Officer. Thakeham, in line with other STARS schools, discourages term time holidays and they are only authorised in exceptional circumstances, based on previous attendance figures.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Our policy reflects the 5 Key Issues identified in the Government publication 'Every Child Matters' which are that every child:-

- Must be and stay safe
- Must be healthy
- Must be able to enjoy and achieve
- Must be able to achieve economic well-being
- Must make a positive contribution

The health and safety of all our children is of paramount importance. We provide a secure environment in which they can flourish. In order to do this a wide range of measures are in place.

Child Protection Policy

Our policy applies to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children (CRB checks are always carried out).
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

The Headteacher is the designated member of staff for Child Protection.

The School Council

In order to allow the children a voice, each class elects council representatives to bring their ideas to regular meetings with the Headteacher. The council members are elected by the children.

The Friends of Thakeham First School

We know that your child will enjoy a good start to schooling here.

Being a small, family based school, the staff, governors and FOT (Friends of Thakeham School) work with each other for the benefit of the children.

While the staff and governors are responsible for the day-to-day and long term management and administration of the school, the FOT provides a means for parents to discuss any issues, to meet socially and (as ever) fund raise! All three functions are of equal importance.

Meetings of the FOT are held termly or half-termly, depending on the number of issues for discussion. You are welcome to attend, even if at this point you have no particular point you wish to raise. The agenda is published beforehand, but if you have any additional points to raise you may do so at the meeting. After the meeting, full minutes are filed in a blue loose-leaf folder on a shelf in the library; these may be read at any time within school hours.

Many of the events organised by the FOT aim to raise funds for the school; being a small school there is always a need for more cash to buy equipment for the library, playground and classrooms.

Each term, good-as-new uniforms are for sale at low cost. In the summer, we have a walk and barbecue and Village Day, and at Christmas, a Fayre. In the spring term events vary - according to weather and ideas!

In summer, the school's efforts are directed to the Village Day which is normally held on the third Saturday in June. The school shares in the profits from this and also plays a large part in it. All the children (and many of the parents!) look forward to Village Day. Interspersed with these are a variety of events, and if you have any ideas for new things to try out, or want to offer help in any way (specific or general) then please do not wait to be asked - any volunteered help is accepted with enthusiasm! Simply make yourself known to the committee or any member of staff - the rest will follow.



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'smiling, shining, soaring superstars'