

# **St. Helen's College**

# **Information for Parents**

**Autumn 2008 Edition**

# Welcome to St. Helen's College

## Contact Details

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General enquiries & messages	info@sthelenscollege.com
Welfare department	welfare@sthelenscollege.com
Finance enquires & messages	finance@sthelenscollege.com
Funtasia bookings & enquiries	info@sthelenscollege.com

We find it most helpful if routine messages and enquires are dealt with by email. All email messages will be acknowledged promptly.

## Lower School and Upper School

The Lower School is sited in Long Lane, just behind North Hillingdon Methodist Church. There are six classes at the Lower School; two Nursery, two Reception and two Year 1 classes. At the Upper School, in Parkway, there are ten classes, from Year 2 to Year 6, as well as specialist teaching rooms and administration facilities.

Mr. and Mrs. Crehan are joint head teachers, but Mrs. Crehan is responsible for the day-to-day running of the younger classes, and Mr. Crehan for the older classes.

## Arrival at School

Children should arrive at school between 8.00 and 8.30 a.m. Playground supervision is provided only from 8:00 a.m. and children must not arrive before this time. When the weather is bad children may wait in the hall, or go directly to their classroom when invited to do so by their teacher.

## Class Hours

Morning school starts at 8:30 a.m. All children have a mid-morning break of 20 minutes and a lunch break of between 75 and 90 minutes. There is a short afternoon break for the Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes.

## Home Time

Children finish school at 3.00 p.m. (Nursery), 3:10 p.m. (Reception), 3.20 p.m. (Years 1 & 2), 3.30 p.m. (Year 3), 3.40 p.m. (Year 4) and 3.50 p.m. (Years 5 & 6) unless they are involved in an after-school activity. It is very important that parents are punctual because children can become concerned if their parent is late. Do inform the school if collection arrangements are altered e.g. if somebody else is collecting your child.

A 'holding area' operates in both Lower and Upper Schools to help those parents who have children finishing school at different times. The younger child goes and waits at the holding area until the older child finishes; the parent then collects both.

Older children may also go to the holding area to wait for their parent if there is a younger sibling at the Lower School.

### **Funtasia**

After school - Children whose parents wish them to stay after school may be enrolled in Funtasia. Full details of the club will be found at the end of this booklet.

Holidays - The Funtasia holiday club runs throughout the half terms and long vacations between 8 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. Details and booking sheets are sent home half-termly.

### **Parents Arriving or Collecting in Cars**

Please read and follow the important parking regulations that you will find later in the booklet. It is vital that you do so if we are to minimise congestion and disruption, and keep the children safe.

We are actively developing our School Travel Plan and our key objectives are to

1. promote walking, cycling and public transport use.;
2. reduce the number of car journeys between home and school;
3. reduce traffic congestion in the local area.

We shall be launching a number of initiatives over the coming year, and hope that you and your children will be enthusiastic participants and supporters of them.

### **Contact with Staff**

All staff try to be as approachable as possible, and parents are encouraged to talk to them whenever necessary. No matter how small the problem, a brief chat with the teacher or Head on a minor matter can be held informally either in the morning or afternoon. If a longer discussion is needed, parents are asked to speak or write to the teacher or Head concerned to arrange an appointment.

### **Help in School**

Parents who would like to lend a hand in school are encouraged to speak to their child's teacher. It is not always appropriate for a parent to help in his/her own child's class, as the child may become unsettled, but opportunities can normally be found for interested parents to assist.

### **Class Sizes and Staffing**

Classes normally start with between twenty and twenty-four pupils at entry, although junior classes are smaller. Occasionally a class may have one or two more pupils, should extenuating circumstances arise.

Each class has a class teacher. In addition, the Nursery classes each have several full-time assistants, the Reception classes each have one full and one part-time assistant and the Year 1 and 2 classes each have part-time assistants. Specialist teachers take some classes in a number of subjects, including French, Spanish, music, ICT, science, drama and games.

## **Parents' Evenings**

These are held in the Autumn and Summer terms. They are times for a brief interview only and it is hoped that you will keep in touch with your child's progress throughout the year.

## **Reports**

In the Foundation Stage (Nursery, Reception) and Year 1, targets are agreed at the Parents' Evenings and are written up by the teachers. A full written report is sent home during the Summer term. For Years 2 to 5, reports are written and sent home twice each year, at the Spring half term and at the end of the Summer term. Year 6 reports are sent home in the Autumn and Summer terms.

## **Examination and Assessment**

All children are continually assessed as they progress through the school. In addition, children in Year 2 have examinations in the Summer term, and children in Years 3 to 6 have examinations twice each year. These examinations include the Key Stage 2 SAT tests in Year 6.

## **Absence for Holidays**

Plenty of notice is given for school holidays, and parents are requested not to take their children away from school for holidays in term time. In cases where parents do need to take their child away, the Head should always be consulted, and permission requested, well in advance.

Please inform the school promptly of the reason for any absence. Any child returning from illness or absence for any other reason must bring a note.

## **Illness and Medicines**

Following a period of illness, children should not return to school until they are fully fit. Children should not return to school within 24 hours of any bout of vomiting. Please telephone the school before 9 a.m. to let us know if your child is going to be absent.

Medicines must be clearly labelled with the child's name and dosage details, and must be given to the welfare assistants, Mrs. Beale (Lower School) or Mrs. Dunn or Ms Lang (Upper School). Medicines must not be left with class teachers. At the end of the day, please collect medicines from the Welfare Assistants or Funtasia staff.

## **Allergies and Asthma**

Please advise the school in writing, before your child joins, of any allergy or other complaint suffered, and of symptoms and treatment.

## **Homework**

Each class has a programme of homework. Parents are asked to help by providing a quiet and suitable working area, away from the television and younger siblings, and to check the homework when it has been completed. Homework periods are as follows:

Nursery	informal
Reception	10 minutes per evening
Year 1/2	15 minutes per evening
Year 3/4	30 minutes per evening, plus 20 minutes reading
Year 5	30 minutes per evening, plus 20 minutes reading
Year 6	40 minutes per evening, plus 20 minutes reading

### **Meals**

Hot lunches are available, and menus are sent to parents periodically. Alternatively, children may bring packed lunches to school. Parents are asked to ensure that a balanced and nutritious meal is provided. Sweets, chocolate and fizzy drinks are not allowed.

Milk is provided at morning break. If you prefer you may send a carton of juice and a plain biscuit or piece of fruit. Sweets, crisps and chocolate are not allowed at break time.

### **School Uniform**

The school uniform must be worn correctly at all times. Caps and hats must be worn at all times with the uniform, including when travelling to and from school. A uniform list is provided as part of this booklet. The full school uniform is available from Pullens School Outfitters, 50 High Street, Northwood, Middlesex, and can also be ordered by telephone on 01923 840050, as there is a weekly delivery service to the school.

### **Jewellery**

Children may not wear jewellery to school. If an item needs to be worn for religious reasons then an explanatory letter will be needed from you. Girls with pierced ears may wear plain studs; boys may not wear ear rings or studs.

### **Personal Property**

All personal property, including pens, uniform, games kits, musical instruments, lunch boxes and snacks, must be clearly labelled with your child's name.

### **Fees**

Advance notice of September fee levels is normally sent to parents each April, although such advance notice cannot be guaranteed.

Fees must be paid in full by the first day of the term. Standing Order payments may be set up, provided full payment is made by the first day of the relevant term. Details of the arrangements for Standing Order payment may be obtained from the school office.

Age 3+ and 4+ Nursery Grants are paid directly to the school by the relevant Borough. Details are regularly sent out to Nursery and Reception parents regarding eligibility to receive the grant.

## **Notice of Withdrawal**

If a child is to be withdrawn from the school, a full term's notice in writing is required, failing which a term's fees in lieu will be payable. This requirement, common to most independent schools, is not negotiable.

## **Parents' Association**

The Parents' Association provides a focus for parents' social activities and provides support with school events. Do get involved if you can - many worthwhile and enjoyable activities are organised for children and parents, and friendships are rapidly made.

## **Parents' Forum**

Once each term the Headmaster and Headmistress meet with representatives from each class to discuss policies and general school matters, and to keep channels of communication open. It is important to know what parents value, and to get feedback on ideas for development.

## **Major Functions**

There are a number of events each year to which parents are invited, the Carol Service, Christmas Concert, Speech Competition, Musicians' Concert, Open Day, Sports Day, Summer Concert, Compass production and Prizegiving being the main events. Do attend as many as you can - as well as taking a pride in your own child's contribution you will get a perspective on the range and quality of involvement of all parts of the school.

## **Outings**

Regular outings of educational interest are arranged for the children. Children in Years 4, 5 and 6 attend residential field trips once each year. Details are sent in advance to parents, and a charge is normally made to cover the transport and entry costs.

## **Changing Schools at 11+**

The Headmaster invites parents of children in Year 4 to meet with him as a group in June and individually the following May, so that he can explain the application procedures and advise parents on their selection of schools.

## **Music**

All children are encouraged to take part in musical activities as they progress through the school. Children sing most days and music is taught by fully qualified and expert staff. All children learn the recorder, and those who are keen may learn to play the piano, violin, 'cello, flute, fife, clarinet, classical guitar or trumpet, or can join one of the three choirs, or the orchestra, string, brass, woodwind or recorder group. An annual concert is held when the musicians perform for their parents.

### **Other Activities**

The range is too wide for details to be provided here, with a wide range of options each term. Full details are sent to parents shortly before each term begins.

### **Unresolved Problems**

The School has long prided itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils, and we are keen to sort out any problems quickly and informally. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School in accordance with the Complaints Procedure, a copy of which is available upon request.

**We hope that this booklet will answer most of your questions about routine school matters. If you have any other questions, do not hesitate to speak to your child's teacher or to one of us.**

**D.A. Crehan**  
Headmaster

**Mrs. G.R. Crehan**  
Headmistress

Appendices:

Equipment List  
Parking Notes  
Funtasia Notes  
Hot Meals Service  
Term Dates  
Uniform List  
Liftshare Scheme

Prospectus

## **Parking Regulations**

### **Lower School**

- **Do not park in the Methodist Church car park or forecourt.**
- **Do not park across the entrance to any neighbour's drive.**

Parking space is very limited and parents should be prepared to park a little distance away and walk to the school.

### **Upper School**

- **Do not park across the entrance to any neighbour's drive.**
- **Do not park in Parkway itself**, particularly the top half of the road (the car park end). Doing so creates difficulties for neighbours attempting to turn into their drives, and causes traffic jams as cars attempt to move either way along the narrow road.
- **Do not arrive early in order to gain a parking space.** Junior parents who arrive thirty minutes early in order to secure parking places prevent infant parents from parking, and greatly increase congestion.
- **Do not block the car park entrance or exit lane.** If the car park is full when you arrive, drive away and park elsewhere.

Our school is part of the community. Courtesy and neighbourliness are important. Your good example and consideration are vital if we are to continue to enjoy good relations with our neighbours, and if we are to avoid traffic congestion and accidents.

With thanks for your co-operation.

D.A. Crehan

**Please make sure that the person who collects your children reads this letter.**