



Head Teacher's Welcome

It is with great pleasure that I say hello to you on behalf of the Directors, Governors, Staff and Pupils of our Academy. I thoroughly enjoy working at Flax Hill and sincerely hope that you and your child's association with us prove to be equally happy.

At Flax Hill Junior Academy every child is as important as the next. High self-esteem is encouraged, high expectations, standards and values are fostered and progress and achievement are positively monitored and celebrated. We believe that all children can achieve and that no child is left behind.

The last few years have been exceedingly successful for the School. Last year we topped the level 5 league tables for all Tamworth Schools and the surrounding districts. Additionally, Flax Hill Junior Academy was given the accolade of Primary School of the Year by the Department for Education for the West Midlands region, in respect of our progress with Pupil Premium Children.

Flax Hill Junior Academy has many qualities, the most important of these being a dedicated and caring team of staff who share a wealth of experience. In addition we have excellent facilities to support specialised education for children aged between 8 and 11 years old. These factors help us to provide the highest standards of education for your child. In partnership with parents, we strive to ensure continued academic success and develop personal qualities in pupils of which we can be proud. As our aim states...

Everyone is valued and shares responsibility for the challenging learning that takes place at Flax Hill Junior Academy.

Our focus is on developing and nurturing our children. We seek to provide every opportunity to apply Literacy and Numeracy skills across their learning. We want all children to achieve the highest possible standards and make maximum progress.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Lane'.

Richard Lane
Executive Headteacher

Chief Executive Office: Mr R J Lane BSc (Hons)

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WELCOME TO FLAX HILL JUNIOR ACADEMY

We are a busy, thriving school committed to providing our children with a broad range of opportunities to learn, develop and shine.

Our school's main aim is to create a happy, caring, secure environment in which our children can develop confidence, individuality and good learning habits. We help pupils develop lively, enquiring minds, we encourage them to speak thoughtfully and confidently and we teach them to work and play with care and consideration for others. Most of all, we want each child to feel they have helped to make our school a successful, happy place to be.

We pride ourselves on our children's attitudes and achievements and we know these are due to a very close partnership between our school and your family.

We hope your child will feel happy at Flax Hill Junior Academy and will achieve his or her best. Our promise to you is that we will do our best for your child.

This Trust school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people/vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

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SCHOOL AIM

Everyone is valued and shares responsibility for the challenging learning that takes place at Flax Hill.

As teachers we pledge to:

- Foster self-esteem in every child.
- Praise effort and strive for excellence.
- Make the curriculum an effective and rewarding experience for everyone.
- Strive for the highest possible standards through quality teaching.
- Create a climate of trust within the school community.

We teach our children to:

- Respect others – ‘do as you would be done by’.
- Take responsibility for their own actions.
- Follow a clearly defined code of behaviour.
- Try their very best at all times.

Our School: In the Classroom

CURRICULUM

We believe that every day should be used to the full and we want every child to be challenged and keen to learn. In our fast changing society, we recognise the need to teach the children how to learn. We want the children to strive for excellence in every aspect of our child-centered curriculum which is wide, balanced and cohesive, and provided according to agreed policies. We want the children to think for themselves, exercise their imaginations and have fun.

Our plans draw on the interests of the children and we base the learning on exciting multisensory experiences and, each term, this includes some special whole school themes. We teach all required areas of the National Curriculum. The main emphasis is on English, Maths, Science, I.T and R.E. The curriculum is further enhanced through Design and Technology, History, Geography, Music, French, P.E., Art, Personal, Moral, Social and Health and Spiritual and Cultural Education.

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ENGLISH

We place great emphasis on the teaching of English, as it forms an integral part of the curriculum. We aim to encourage children to use language to express themselves fluently, clearly and confidently both in written form and verbally. English is taught through literature (the use of books). We encourage a love of books and reading at Flax Hill Junior Academy.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics has a central place in the curriculum and our aim is to make it interesting so that children develop a positive attitude towards it. We teach them the skills to cope with everyday life including the ability to classify, read numbers, count and calculate, tell the time, weigh, measure, recognise pattern and symmetry.

SCIENCE

We aim to help them to begin to make sense of their world by gaining firsthand experience of discovery and investigation. We teach the children about themselves, other living things and their environment. We explore the world of materials and investigate the way changes affect these materials. The work is done in a practical way where the children are encouraged to observe, question and hypothesise.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The children in our school have access to excellent facilities for Information Technology. We have a large computer suite where a whole class can be taught on computers. There are also laptops and netbooks that pupils can use in the classroom. All computers are networked. We have Interactive Whiteboards in all the classrooms. The teaching of Information Technology is linked to all areas of the curriculum. They are encouraged to look at Information Technology in the outside world.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The children at Flax Hill Junior Academy begin to learn a language from Year 3 and build on their understanding during the four years at the school. As language teaching is a new subject in the curriculum, initially all the children will begin learning at the same level, with successive year groups then having a distinct focus for each year group taught, building on the previous learning. Lessons will include speaking, listening, reading and writing.

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HISTORY

The children are helped to develop an awareness of the past through stories about people and important events. We use pictures, artefacts and visits to highlight and compare the past. We give them the opportunity to develop a sense of chronology and an awareness of major times and events.

GEOGRAPHY

The children study the area immediately around the school and their homes and a contrasting locality further afield. They are taught to ask questions, and to examine photographs, pictures and maps. They learn to follow directions and to use maps and plans of different kinds, both real and imaginary, and to recognise simple features.

MUSIC

The children are helped to develop their enjoyment and understanding of music through singing, percussion instruments and listening to music from different eras and cultures. The children are encouraged to compose after exploring the elements of high/low, long/short, pulse rhythm, loud/quiet, fast/slow and pattern of sound.

ART

The children are encouraged to communicate their feelings and demonstrate skill and knowledge through a wide variety of media including painting, drawing, textiles and modelling and to make images using line, tone and pattern. They are introduced to the work of artists, craft workers and designers involving a variety of periods and cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education (P.E.) promotes physical activity, a healthy lifestyle, positive attitudes and an awareness of safety. The children are taught games both indoors and out using a variety of equipment and learning simple rules. They take part in gymnastic activities learning to jump, balance, swing and climb using the floor and apparatus. Dance teaches them co-ordination, balance and poise.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND WORSHIP

Religious Education (R.E.) lessons at Flax Hill are non-denominational and follow the County syllabus. As a parent you have the right to withdraw your child from R.E. lessons, however we advise that you speak to your child's class teacher or the Head Teacher about your concerns before you make your final decision. If you do decide to withdraw your child from R.E. lessons, we will set alternative work for them to do during this time.

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SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Flax Hill Junior Academy is committed to providing an environment in which all children are given the opportunity to achieve their full potential. It is our fundamental belief that all children have the same right of access to the curriculum, and that the school should aim to meet the educational, social and spiritual needs of all the children. We employ a SENCO (Special Educational Needs coordinator) who liaises with parents and staff in order to meet the needs of these children.

According to the revised Code of Practice 2014, a child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) if he or she:

- (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age (according to National Averages);
- (b) has a disability which either prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.

HEALTH AND SEX EDUCATION

Children are naturally curious about growing up; through Health and Sex Education lessons we provide a safe and responsible environment where they can learn about their changing bodies, personal hygiene and issues like drugs and smoking. As such, Health and Sex Education plays an important role in every child's personal and social development.

Aims of Health and Sex Education:

1. To foster an attitude of care and respect towards both themselves and all individuals and be sensitive to each other's needs.
2. To encourage children to recognise each person's responsibility within the home environment.
3. To provide information to all pupils appropriate to their age and ability to lead them towards an awareness and understanding of the physical and emotional challenges of growing up.
4. For children to appreciate the importance of taking care of themselves in terms of personal hygiene, health and fitness.
5. To provide children with information to prepare them for the significant stages in the human lifecycle, and the implications this has upon their changing personal relationships; i.e. child parent/partner/parent child/adult care for elderly parent or dependent adult. This will include aspects of bereavement and how this can affect you at any stage of the human lifecycle.

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6. To explain to children the implications to their health of the use of drugs and also to learn about the dangers of the misuses of drugs.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Learning doesn't just take place in the classroom. Beyond their academic lessons we're keen to help your child discover new talents and hobbies that can last a lifetime.

Whether your child is a budding musician, sports star or computer-whizz, we offer a range of clubs to help your child develop an existing talent or learn a new one.

SPORTS CLUBS

Our sports clubs offer children of all ability levels the chance to develop their skills, have fun and keep fit. Flax Hill has a long tradition of competing in inter-school sports competitions at local and county levels; your child may be selected to represent the school at these events.

- Football Club
- Cross Country
- Netball Club
- Athletics

MUSIC CLUBS

Orchestra

There aren't many primary schools which can boast their own orchestra but here at Flax Hill we're committed to giving our children as many opportunities as possible. Children who have music lessons in specific instruments such as violin, trumpet or clarinet are encouraged to join, but the orchestra is also open to any child who would like to try their hand at percussion – or perhaps conducting. The orchestra is a highlight of school productions and a wonderful opportunity for musically gifted children to experience playing as part of an ensemble.

Choir

Like the school orchestra, the choir plays an important role in school performances. We are often invited to sing at other schools or special events during the year. All children are welcome to join the school choir.

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Recorder Club

The recorder is a solid introduction to playing a musical instrument. Our recorder club welcomes children of all abilities from beginners to more experienced players. Children also have the opportunity to progress from playing the descant (basic) recorder to playing the treble or tenor recorder.

MUSIC LESSONS

In addition to our music clubs, children also have the opportunity to take music lessons in a number of different instruments including violin, cello, recorder or brass. There is no cost for these lessons at the present time.

THE SCHOOL DAY

A Typical School Day

8.00 am Breakfast Club opens

8.30 am School gate opens; children make their way to the Classroom

8.40 am Registration and start of lessons

11.00 am Break time

11.15 am Lessons

12.15 pm Lunch

1.15 pm Registration and start of lessons

3.15 pm School finishes

WRAPAROUND CARE

Breakfast Club

The school offers a breakfast club from 8.00 am where for a small fee the children can have a healthy and nutritious breakfast. More details of pricing are available from the school office.

After School Care

The school offers wrap around care from 3.15 p.m. until 5.15 p.m. for further details please contact the school office.

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SCHOOL DINNERS

The current cost of a school dinner is £2.10 per day. Dinner money and trips will soon be available to be paid via Parent Pay. The school is currently moving from cash payments to on-line payments.

ABSENCE

If your child isn't able to come to school (for example because of illness) it is important that you notify us as soon as possible on each day that your child is absent. You can do this by ringing the school office or leaving a message on the attendance line answer machine if you can't get through. The reason we ask you to do this is so that we know where your child is. If your child is absent and we haven't heard from you, we will try to contact you to make sure that he or she is safe.

To encourage excellent attendance we present a weekly trophy to the best class. certificates each term and at the end of each year.

PARENT LINKS

Just like you, we want your child to get the most out of their time at Flax Hill School. To achieve this we feel strongly about everyone working together in a real partnership – with your child at the centre. Strong links and solid communication between our school and you as a parent play an important part in this partnership, which is why we're committed to keeping you informed about your child's progress and what's going on in school.

We also know that parents can contribute to our school in many ways which make it even better. If you are interested in getting more involved with school, we are always pleased to hear from you.

HOMEWORK

Your child will be asked to do a small amount of homework each week. As well as reinforcing what they have learnt in class, homework helps your child to develop a sense of responsibility towards his or her own learning. Workshops will be held at the start of the Autumn term to explain our homework further.

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READING

Reading plays an important part in every child's learning. We ask you as a parent to support us by encouraging your child to read. We have a new graded home reading scheme whereby a book is sent home on a regular basis to share with parents. In addition the school has an excellent supply of reading books to share and the children are regularly encouraged to take class reading books home in addition to the reading scheme. These books are available from a wide range of genres and popular authors.

If you would like advice or support on helping your child with their reading or homework please see your child's class teacher.

CHILDREN'S TARGETS

The targets we set your child, on a half-termly basis, are usually chosen from end of the year target statements or from the statements from the year above.

We believe that by setting challenging targets we are following the school's aim. This does mean though that not all children will meet their target but will make good progress towards them. If you would like to discuss this further please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance who will be more than happy to elaborate further on these.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

We send out regular newsletters to parents. Additional newsletters can be sent out to parents who live away from their children (legal conditions permitting).

PARENTS' EVENINGS

During the school year there are three opportunities for you to meet with your child's teacher at Parents' Evenings:

- Early in the Autumn Term to ensure your child has settled in happily.
- In the Spring Term to share achievements and set targets for the coming months.
- In the Summer Term to discuss your child's school report and to meet his or her new class teacher for September.

If you need two separate Parents' Evening appointments please contact the school office and we will put this in place for you.

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We also have an open door policy which means you can meet with your child's teacher or the Head Teacher at any time if there is something you'd like to talk about. However, we do recommend that you make an appointment so that we have time to talk with you properly.

For security reasons we ask all parents visiting the school to report to the school office to sign in first. Please do not go directly to any of the classrooms.

SCHOOL REPORTS

We will send you a written school report about your child once a year. This will help you to keep a record of their achievement and to see how they are progressing in each of the subject areas.

If you need a second copy of your child's report please contact the school office and we will put this in place for you.

PARENT HELPERS

If you would like to take a more active role in school by helping in the classroom we would be very grateful. The more help we are given, the more the children can benefit. To find out more about becoming a parent helper please contact the Head Teacher.

PARENTS AND TEACHER ASSOCIATION

We have a very active Parents and Teacher Association which organises many social and fundraising events each year, including regular Christmas and Summer Fairs, children's discos and many other events. Last year the PTA's fundraising provided a gazebo, digital piano and lap tops.

We really do value the support given by these friends of the school. The Committee welcomes all offers of help, new members and fresh ideas at any time. Do please join us.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ADMISSION POLICY

If the total number of preferences for admission to a school exceeds the school's Published Admission Number of 75, the following order of priority is used to allocate the available places. In accordance with legislation, children with a statement of special educational needs, or Education, Health and Care Plan which names Flax Hill must be admitted. This will reduce the number of places available:

1) Children in Care and children who ceased to be in care because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

2) Children who satisfy both of the following tests:

Test 1: The child is distinguished from the great majority of other applicants either on their own medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances. Medical grounds must be supported by a medical report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application). This report must clearly justify, for health reasons only, why it is better for the child's health to attend the preferred school rather than any other school.

Exceptional circumstances must relate to the choice of school and the individual child, i.e. the circumstances of the child, not the economic or social circumstances of the parent/carer. They should be supported by a professional report (obtained by the applicant and provided at the point of application), e.g. social worker. This report must clearly justify why it is better for the child to attend the preferred school rather than any other school.

Test 2: The child would suffer hardship if they were unable to attend the preferred school.

Hardship means severe suffering of any kind, not merely difficulty or inconvenience, which is likely to be experienced as a result of the child attending a different school. Applicants must provide detailed information about both the type and severity of any likely hardship at the time of application.

3) Children who have an elder sibling in attendance at the preferred school and who will still be attending the school at the proposed admission date;

4) Children living within the catchment area of the preferred school

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5) Other children arranged in order of priority according to how near their home addresses are to the main gate of the school, determined by a straight-line measurement as calculated by the Local Authority's Geographical Information System.

SCHOOL DRESS

Many children like wearing the Flax Hill school colours as it makes them feel part of the school community. Our school colours are blue and grey and our children always look neat and tidy.

Trainers are not acceptable as footwear except for P.E. lessons. Due to health and safety reasons it is not recommended that jewellery is worn to school. Earrings are not to be worn on PE days. If this is not possible then a plaster should be provided to cover the earring.

Flax Hill School uniform:

- Long-sleeved blue sweatshirts with the school logo
- White or blue polo shirt
- Trousers or skirt in blue, black or grey
- Both girls and boys can wear trousers, however we ask that children don't wear jeans or tracksuits/jogging bottoms
- Suitable footwear – flat shoes, no open-toed or open-backed shoes.

Basic P.E. kit:

- Indoor - Plimsolls, shorts and blue or white plain t-shirt
- Swimming kit in a bag (Year 4 children)
- Outdoor trainers
- Tracksuit bottoms, sweatshirt for colder days.

Buying school uniform and P.E. kit

Clothing with the Flax Hill Junior Academy logo on can be bought on-line from Tesco via the link on the school website, S.K. School Uniforms, Riverside, Tamworth and Clothing 4 Schools, Lower Gungate, Tamworth. All other items should be available from a wide range of high street stores.

We strongly recommend that you label all items of your child's clothing with their name.

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RULES AND DISCIPLINE

Unacceptable behaviour is very rare at Flax Hill School. The aim of the school is that children should develop self-discipline and understand the need for self-control and respect for others. The school rules are few but definite:

1. Always 'do as you would be done by' by treating everyone as you want to be treated yourself.
2. Listen carefully to what is asked and always do your best.
3. Try to think for yourself and make sensible decisions.
4. Set yourself challenging targets and try hard to achieve them.
5. Take care of school buildings and property.

The children are regularly reminded of these simple rules. Children who break the rules may have to miss a playtime session.

If a child misbehaves persistently his or her parents will be invited to the school to discuss the problem and try to find a solution. In very rare cases repeated bad behaviour or a single very serious incident may lead to a child receiving a fixed term or permanent exclusion. At Flax Hill we work very hard with our children to prevent situations like this occurring.

PAYING FOR SCHOOL TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

We feel that educational visits are a very important part of learning. To help us pay for these visits, we ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost. Unfortunately, if the costs of a trip cannot be met, it has to be cancelled. We are very pleased to say that so far this has never happened at Flax Hill.

Please contact the Head Teacher if there is any problem about paying for visits. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

THE GOVERNING BODY

Behind the scenes, there is a hardworking team of Governors committed to making Flax Hill Junior Academy as good as is possible. Many of them are parents who are often available at the beginning and end of the day. If you have any concerns, you are very welcome to make an appointment to meet with a Governor at any time.

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Flax Hill Junior Academy is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people, their families and staff. This means that everything we do is designed to promote the safety and well-being of the children we work with, as well as that of children and young people in general. We believe that safeguarding and good practice are best promoted by staff who, after thorough selection processes, are valued, trained, encouraged and appropriately managed and supported in the work they do.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

We hope you are happy with the time your child spends at Flax Hill Junior Academy. However, if you do ever have a problem which needs resolving there are a number of things in which you can do:

- Firstly, you should contact your child's class teacher to discuss the problem and see if a solution can be found.
- Secondly, if you feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with your child's class teacher, or if your concern is of a sufficiently serious nature you can make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss the matter further.
- Should a parent have a complaint about the Headteacher, or by the way in which they have handled a complaint against a member of staff they can make a written formal complaint to the Chair of Governors via the school office.

A full copy of Compliments and Complaints Policy can be obtained through the school office.

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