

Sp mistake p 12 page 2 ↑

Rewrite Birthday Parties Page 14

Information for Parents, Part 2

INDEX

	<u>Page</u>
Name Cards	9
Traffic Arrangements	9
Traffic Map	10
School Rules	11
Language Development	12
Learning Differences	12
Special Programmes	13
Absence from School	13
Birthday Parties	14
Individual Problems	14

Please read through these notes, then file them in the cover with Part 1 which was handed to you at the initial interview.

In early September the Traffic Arrangements should be studied carefully by everyone who will be driving the child to or from school, and it would be helpful to read through the whole book, so that your child can enter school with full confidence.

NAME CARDS: Should be pinned to the child's shirt for the whole of the first week. The date written on each child's card is his starting date, as the entry is staggered to reduce confusion on the first day.

TRAFFIC ARRANGEMENTS

Entry on First Day: Please park your car beyond the pull-in and walk back with your child, take him into the classroom, help him to hang up his belongings & leave as soon as he is settled at an occupation. Please do not drive up to the upper parking area as this is a playground for the older children.

Subsequent Mornings: As soon as your child is ready to enter school alone, you may use the pull-in on whichever road you find convenient for approach on the same side of the road as the school, Watlington Road if you are going on towards Smith's Parish, or Christchurch Road if your journey is towards Hamilton. Please do not enter from the wrong end and pull across the road, or pause opposite the school and allow your child to cross, as this causes traffic congestion.

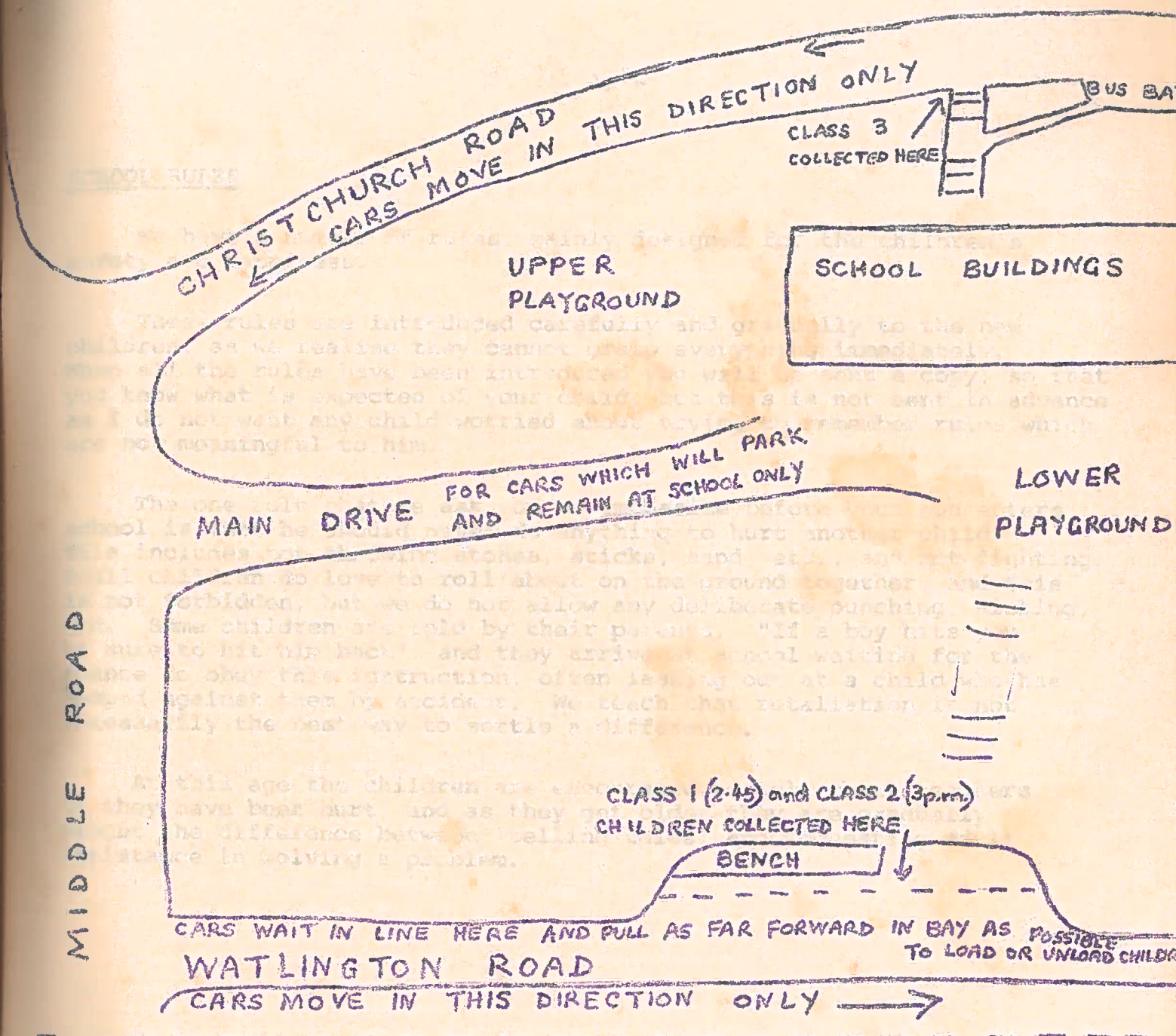
Time of Arrival: Children may be brought to school any time between 8.30 and 9 a.m. during the first week, but after this should be at school by 8.45 a.m.

At the Close of Afternoon School: The first year children come out at 2.45 p.m. and on fine days are brought down to Watlington Road. All cars should approach from the Middle Road end, the first arrivals pulling as far forward in the lay-by as possible, the others forming single file behind. Drivers should remain with their cars and collect children only from the pull-in, then continue along Watlington Road to Brighton Hill, not turning outside the school, nor farther up the road. Please make every effort to collect your child promptly from school, especially during the first few weeks, and if you are unavoidably detained, do call the school so that we can reassure him. If you have to change the arrangements for his journey home, please send a note to inform his teacher, and be sure that the driver understands these traffic safety arrangements.

Children travelling with an Older Child: Will be kept safely inside school until 3.00 p.m, then taken to the exit area of the eldest child in the group (Christchurch Road for Class 3, Watlington Road for Class 2) regardless of who is driving. Please send a note if your child is to wait for a car pool or to catch the bus.

Rainy Afternoons: The boys are kept inside their classrooms and drivers need to park as neatly as possible and then come up to the school to collect the children.

TRAFFIC MAP



OUR TRAFFIC RULES ARE FOR THE SAFETY OF YOUR CHILDREN. PLEASE CO-OPERATE AT ALL TIMES, EVEN IF IT DOES MEAN GOING SLIGHTLY OUT OF YOUR WAY.

SCHOOL RULES

We have a number of rules, mainly designed for the children's safety and happiness.

These rules are introduced carefully and gradually to the new children, as we realise they cannot grasp everything immediately. When all the rules have been introduced you will be sent a copy, so that you know what is expected of your child, but this is not sent in advance as I do not want any child worried about trying to remember rules which are not meaningful to him.

The one rule that we ask you to emphasize before your son enters school is that he should never do anything to hurt another child. This includes not throwing stones, sticks, sand, etc., and not fighting. Small children do love to roll about on the ground together, and this is not forbidden, but we do not allow any deliberate punching, kicking, etc. Some children are told by their parents, "If a boy hits you, be sure to hit him back", and they arrive at school waiting for the chance to obey this instruction, often lashing out at a child who has bumped against them by accident. We teach that retaliation is not necessarily the best way to settle a difference.

At this age the children are encouraged to tell their teachers if they have been hurt, and as they get older they are gradually taught the difference between 'telling tales' and requesting adult assistance in solving a problem.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

If a child's use and understanding of language is limited when he enters school, then all his progress is likely to be delayed. He needs to be able to listen to instruction, to remember and carry them out, and to understand the correct use of pronouns - when the teacher says "I" she means herself, and when she says "you" she means the child or children, but this is not always understood by a child whose parent still says "Mummy will help Tommy" instead of "I will help you". The parents can become so accustomed to a child's immature speech that they fail to notice when it is not progressing normally, and sometimes a child is encouraged to continue with baby-talk because it is so appealing. One suggestion is to make a tape-recording of the child's speech, so that this precious stage of childhood is preserved, then to start correcting the child gently, not nagging and forcing him to repeat words, but being sure to pronounce correctly any words he mispronounces. If he says "Me brunged you vis" the reply could be: "I'm so glad you brought me this." A helpful preparation for remembering instructions can be to give the child simple tasks to do, gradually increasing the length and complexity.

LEARNING DIFFERENCES

Every child entering is a different personality. They are different ages, and from different environments, so it is natural that their rate of learning and way of learning will be different. Much of our teaching is done in small groups, and there is no cause for concern if a child is not introduced to all the activities as soon as some of his friends. It is most important to allow each child to develop at his own rate during the first year, and no boy should be compared with his classmates, nor with his elder brother - it can be most damaging to be told "Your brother had finished Book 2 by the time he was your age."

Even more important is not to compare a boy with any little girl. Girls of five are usually far ahead of boys in language development, they are ready to learn to read earlier and have better fine hand control so they can write and draw more neatly. Within two or three years most boys catch up, and often overtake the girls, so long as they are not made to feel inferior during the early stages of learning.

HEARING

A surprising number of Bermuda children seem to suffer from nasal congestion which can result in slight temporary hearing loss, enough to make it difficult for the child to hear his teacher's voice in a room full of fidgety children. This can obviously make it very hard for him to learn, and it is advisable to bear this in mind when he has had a persistent cold, or if he suddenly appears inattentive or unco-operative at home.

SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

Every child is checked individually during October to assess his readiness for formal learning. Any weaknesses in visual or auditory perception, language development and hand control are noted, and all those who would appear to benefit from extra help (usually about 60%) are placed on our "Flying Start" and "Look Book" exercises. These are a series of graded activities designed to train the child to use his perceptual abilities, and to develop concentration and listening skills. The programme is directed by Mrs. Walker, our special resource teacher, with volunteer parents taking small groups. A request form for help with this and other activities will be sent out early in the term.

Reading by the sight method is gradually introduced during the first term, (as outlined on page 5 of Part 1) but this is not an appropriate method for quite a number of boys who seem to need a more logical approach. During the second term an "extra phonics" course is started for these children (usually about 25%) and in the third term those for whom it is indicated move on to the totally phonic approach to reading. Their progress will seem a little slower at first, but as their confidence develops when they realise that they can decode words for themselves, then they move ahead more rapidly and are nearly all able to read the regular books for their class by the third year.

Dyslexia is an unusual condition which makes reading by the sight method almost impossible. A positive diagnosis cannot be made before the age of 8, but we are aware of the symptoms and are particularly careful that these children do not experience failure. Our phonics programme is also suitable for teaching dyslexics, so any boy with such tendencies is placed on the programme and will learn to read with the group without any need for singling out at this stage.

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

The usual procedure is to send a note when the child returns explaining the reason for his absence. However, when an infectious disease is diagnosed, or even suspected, a phone call (at one of the appropriate times) is appreciated, so that parents of low immunity children can be alerted. This is especially important with German Measles, when pregnant mothers need to be warned.

If a child has an early morning appointment with the doctor or clinic, please send a note the day before so that the register can be kept open.

ABSENCE FOR REASONS OTHER THAN ILLNESS

Parents will be aware that absence from school can be nothing but prejudicial to their son's own best interests from an educational point of view. They may not, however, have considered the disruptive nature of absences on the general routine of the school in its many facets and on the discipline and morale of the student body as a whole.

The academic year is relatively short and we believe it is necessary to both protect it and make maximum use of it. For other than cases of illness, a boy may only be absent with the permission of the Headmaster who, with the full support of the Trustees, may refuse to readmit a student whose parents have not complied with this ruling.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

It is not part of the school's policy for teachers to distribute invitations to private birthday parties, but a list of telephone numbers or addresses of classmates will be supplied on request. If children are going to parties directly after school we prefer that they do not bring birthday gifts to school with them in the morning. We do not have facilities for storing them, and it is most distracting for the children to try to work all day when there is a pile of exciting looking parcels in the room.

INDIVIDUAL PROBLEMS

Inevitably with young children problems arise from time to time, most of which can be solved easily if we are informed at once. You can speak to your class teacher after school (preferably by appointment and having parked your car out of the main traffic stream) or on the telephone before 8.45 a.m., 10.45 - 11 a.m. or 12.30 - 1 p.m. Also see page 1 for Mrs. Hopkin's available times. Please come to us in the first instance if anything about school is worrying you or your child. Also we should be informed of any home problems. These will not be discussed with anyone else, but may enable us better to understand and help your son.

M. V. Hopkins