

# Laxton Junior School's Frequently Asked Questions



*Choosing your child's school is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. Here are some questions, which we are frequently asked and which you may wish to ask when you visit other schools.*

## **Is the academic curriculum broad and well balanced?**

The school curriculum is based upon National Curriculum Guidelines, which allows us to keep abreast of modern educational trends, while still benefiting from a more formal and traditional approach. Children throughout Laxton Junior School experience a wide variety of appropriate timetabled lessons. The school aims to provide every child with the best 'academic passport' they can possibly achieve.

## **What is the provision for Games and P.E. at school?**

The Physical Education programme provides the children with a wide and varied experience. The children enjoy dance, gymnastics and the playing of games. Traditional competitive sport is introduced at Under 8 level with House Matches and a comprehensive fixture list provides excellent sport for the school's teams.

## **How does the school's pastoral system work? How are pupils' problems & problem pupils approached?**

Your child's well-being is of paramount importance to the staff at Laxton Junior School. In addition to Form Teachers, a traditional 'House' system operates at the school. Children are assigned a house in Year 1, which meets regularly and provides an extra arm of the pastoral system in school. Support for both children and parents can be found at all levels, throughout the school.

## **What does the school offer in terms of extra-curricular activities and is there a charge for them?**

A huge range of activities is offered outside normal school hours. Many are seasonal, but for more detailed information look at the notice boards in the Junior Entrance Hall outside the Staff Common Room. These activities do not generally incur additional costs, unless they are provided by staff who are not employees of the school e.g. Karate.

## **How does the school communicate with parents?**

A comprehensive personal report on your child's progress is sent home at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> term, with a short report at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Parents benefit from two parent conferences per year with their child's form teacher but are encouraged to discuss their child's progress at any appropriate time throughout the year. In addition, parents receive a fortnightly newsletter and frequent communications regarding the organisation of specific events. An active P.F.A. adds to overall communication at the school. Our website is kept up to date with all our coming events and sports fixtures.

## **What is the pupil to teacher ratio?**

Form sizes are a maximum of 20 pupils (2 Form Intake). The current pupil to teacher ratio is 12 to 1. Years 5 and 6 operate 3 mathematics sets in each year, which increases the amount of individual attention each child receives even further. Five full-time classroom assistants support the teaching staff in the infant department.

## **What are the staff's qualifications?**

The staff enjoys a wealth of experience and expertise. All are qualified teachers with a wide variety of backgrounds. The school is also recognised by the Independent Schools Council's teacher induction panel as going 'well beyond statutory requirements' in supporting its new teachers.

## **How does the school measure its academic success?**

Children's academic performance is continually monitored. In addition, the government's standardised tests provide a benchmark for parents at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Each October, the children are formally assessed in order to track their individual progress through school and to examine the effectiveness of the teaching and learning, which takes place here. Subject assessments also take place at the end of each term.

## **What positive steps are taken by the school to encourage good manners, behaviour and sportsmanship?**

The children are actively encouraged by staff to respect themselves, others and their property. The school's code of conduct promotes self-discipline and staff ensure that the children are nurtured, praised and rewarded for good behaviour.

## **What is the system at lunchtime?**

All children are provided with a cooked lunch. The meal is supervised by staff and consists of high quality, locally sourced produce where possible.

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## **How is music taught and enjoyed at the school?**

Music making and appreciation is very important at Laxton Junior School. In addition to a nationally renowned strings programme in the infant department, the school offers individual tuition in singing and all of the usual (and some unusual) instruments. Singing is a particular strength with a chamber choir, full choir and training choir in operation. The Laxton Junior Symphony Orchestra enjoyed its first public performance this year too!

## **What is the school's attitude to religion?**

The school has a Christian foundation and ethos but all faiths are welcome. Frequent visitors add to the variety of our assemblies and the school enjoys a warm relationship with its local parish church.

## **Does the school make provision for children with particular academic strengths or weaknesses?**

Laxton Junior School has a highly qualified expert in special educational needs on its full-time staff. She works closely with the teachers to identify specific needs and support individual children. All of the children are encouraged and supported in order to maximise their potential.

## **What sort of academic/pastoral advice is available to parents?**

Members of staff are friendly and approachable. A great deal of time is given over to supporting parents who experience problems outside of school. The head offers rolling conferences where it is considered that particularly close monitoring is appropriate. Communication is a strength.

## **What do the children experience in terms of cultural or other types of visits?**

Numerous educational and cultural trips and visits occur throughout the year. Form 6 children are offered an optional annual residential trip in the holidays. Skiing and outdoor pursuits are the popular options.

## **To which organisation does the school belong? How has it been accredited?**

The Head is a member of the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS) which represents approximately 550 independent preparatory schools in the UK and overseas. Founded in 1892, it is the largest Heads' association within the Independent Schools Council (ISC). The school has been accredited by I.A.P.S. and recently underwent a favourable inspection by H.M.C.

## **Is Laxton Junior School the feeder school for Laxton and Oundle School?**

No. Laxton Junior is part of Oundle School, but is not a feeder school (i.e. where progression into senior school is often considered as almost a formality). Parents who wish their children to gain entry to Laxton (at 11+) have to register their interest independently and candidates have to sit a competitive examination and attend an informal interview.

## **Where do children go to school when they leave Laxton Junior School?**

A large proportion of children move on to Laxton at the end of Form 6. Other schools include Downe House (Oxfordshire), Kimbolton, Oakham, Oundle (Boarding) and Stamford.

## **Is staff turnover high?**

Staff turnover at Laxton Junior School is normal. This year we have two new teachers.

## **What is the relationship between Laxton Junior, Laxton and Oundle School?**

Oundle School pupils share all facilities and lessons with Laxton pupils. The main difference between the two groups is that Oundle School pupils are boarders whilst Laxton pupils are day pupils. Laxton Junior School is also a day school, which caters for children in the Reception to Year 6 age range.

## **How does the school help parents to choose the right senior school for their child?**

Laxton Junior School is mainly non-selective and strives to help pupils reach their full potential via a broad and extensive curriculum. Parents who wish their children to be considered for entry into any particular school are advised on the appropriateness of their choice at an early stage. This enables parents to make realistic and informed decisions about their children's future.