



Chickerell Primary Academy

Every Child Matters, So Every Day Counts



Welcome to Chickerell Primary Academy



Foreword: Mrs Jody Harris, Headteacher, says:

A big hello and welcome to our wonderful Chickerell Primary Academy.

Proud

I am extremely proud to be the Headteacher at Chickerell. It really is a very special place to teach. This prospectus has been designed to give you a flavour of some of the fantastic things that we do here.

An inclusive curriculum

We are extremely proud to provide a varied, interesting, and inclusive curriculum that allows all children to achieve their potential. With our very extensive extracurricular programme, we have regular chances for them to do creative arts, singing, sport, drama and explore the local environment.

Dedicated staff

The teachers and assistants work incredibly hard to make sure each child progresses in the key skills of reading, writing and numeracy. Our carefully planned and structured pastoral care system, where every child's voice can be heard and everyone is loved, valued and respected for who they are.

The sky's the limit

We want all children to feel that 'the sky's the limit' and that they can achieve anything they want to with our support. We want them to be ambitious, positive and determined to make the best of themselves - and it is absolutely our moral obligation to help them to do this through challenging them in their learning and modelling these attitudes for them.

Parent partnership

Another very important part of our school is you, the parent! As you will see, by reading the many parent and pupil stories within this prospectus, you and your child are very important to us. We champion the link between school and parent and work very hard to involve you in every step of your child's time here...and increase your child's enjoyment of learning.

Get in touch

If you wish to hear more about what we can offer your child, please get in touch with us for more information or an appointment to meet me. We welcome visits and love to show our school 'in action'. Telephone on 01305 783876 or email office@chickerell.dorset.sch.uk.



Rory has become more confident and is making good progress in the caring environment of Chickerell Primary Academy

Kim and Lawrence live in Chickerell with their children, Alfi, aged 14, Rory, aged nine, and Bluebell, aged four.



Enjoying school

Kim and Lawrence are thrilled with the progress Rory has made since joining Chickerell Primary at the end of Year Three. Kim says: "Rory has become a lot more confident and has come on in leaps and bounds academically. He loves the school so much that even when he is unwell, he still wants to go."

Good move

Rory moved from another primary school when the family relocated to Chickerell. Kim says: "We were anxious about moving Rory to a new school because he has autism, but he settled in better than we expected. His previous school had been okay, but we soon realised that it was nowhere near as good as Chickerell."

Helpful staff

Kim and Lawrence can't praise the staff at Chickerell Primary enough. Lawrence says: "The fantastic SENCO team genuinely care about Rory and go out of their way to help him participate in all the activities. We wanted him to start breakfast club, but he was anxious about going, so the staff created a smaller breakfast club in another room and worked to gradually introduce him to the main breakfast club through another entrance. Now, he walks through the main door into breakfast club and the staff check to make sure he has settled okay."

Dedicated care

Kim and Lawrence like the way the staff explain to Rory what is going to happen and stick to what they have told him. Lawrence says: "They consider him every step of the way, even when it is a non-uniform day or a school trip, and tell us in advance, giving us time to prepare him. When they took the children to an outdoor adventure camp, Rory was adamant he wasn't going. But the staff took the time to take him there beforehand to prepare him. It was a 40-minute trip, but they were dedicated enough to do it so he didn't miss the trip."

Communicating well

Kim says: "Rory used to be very withdrawn and wouldn't communicate how he was feeling, but now he will tell the staff if he's worried about something. There are two particular teachers he knows he can go to if he is anxious. They will also go to him during the day and ask him if he has any worries. They can tell by his reaction if he doesn't want to do something and at break, if he doesn't want to go into the playground, they will let him stay in the classroom and play."

Gentle encouragement

Rory is now going to an after-school club to do tag rugby. Kim says: "The staff talked to him and got him interested and now he's started going. Everything is done at his pace. When they started taking his class swimming, he didn't want to go, but they took him to see the pool and the owner had a chat with him and now he is going swimming with the others."

Confidence boosted

Lawrence says: "The staff don't just support Rory, they support our whole family. They prepare Rory for coming home with calming activities and have changed his pick-up time so we can also collect Bluebell from Chickadees. Every three months, we have a Zoom meeting with his teachers and SENCO to discuss his progress and we are delighted he is doing well in Maths and his reading is coming on well." Kim says: "We have never seen Rory happy like this before. At his old school he would go in with his head down and come out with his head down. It is amazing to see him so confident. Moving him to Chickerell Primary was the best decision we have ever made."

Children say

Rory says: "I like seeing all the new friends I've made at Chickerell Primary."

School day: settling in

School hours

Our school hours are from 8.40am to 3.10pm.

Breakfast club and after-school provision

We have a Breakfast Club that runs from 7.45am – 8.30am. Our After-School Club runs from 3.05pm – 5.30pm Monday-Thursday and from 3.05pm to 5.00pm on a Friday.

Uniform

The Governors and staff believe that school uniform increases the children’s pride and ownership of their school, and we insist on children at Chickerell wearing a school uniform. School uniform is kept as simple and practical as possible and the colours are maroon jumpers and cardigans, grey pinafore dresses, skirts or trousers and white shirt with school tie. The school emblem is embroidered onto our uniform, which is now available to purchase from Dorset Embroidery and Printwear, 4 Mckay Close, Lynch Lane, Weymouth, Dorset, DT4 9DN.

School meals and snacks

Lunch

Hot meals are available for all children at a cost of £2.60 per day. They are very popular with our children and the menu provides up to three options to choose from each day.

Packed lunches

Children may also bring a healthy packed lunch into school instead of choosing a hot meal, and this should be in a study labelled lunchbox and stored in their locker until lunchtime.

Free School Meals

All children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 are entitled to a free school meal each day. Older children may also be eligible for free school meals if the family is in receipt of certain benefits; please call Dorset Direct on 01305 221000 to register.

Snacks and drinks

Every 4–6 year-old will receive a free piece of fruit under the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme. Other children are encouraged to bring their own fruit as a snack. All children will be provided with a water bottle on their first day of school.

We also have a milk scheme that is available to all our pupils.



Sonny is now thriving and is enjoying learning again thanks to help from staff at Chickerell Primary Academy

Michelle and Mark both live in Chickerell and share caring for their children, Anaya, aged 13, and Sonny, aged eight.



Achieving academically

Michelle and Mark are delighted that Sonny is now happy at school and doing well academically with the assistance and care he has received from the dedicated staff at Chickerell Primary. Michelle says: “Sonny is like a different child at school since he has been helped with his anxiety and he is now much more engaged with learning.”

Good start

Sonny’s sister Anaya had attended Chickerell Primary and was happy there, and when Sonny started in Reception, he enjoyed it and thought all the teachers were lovely, Michelle says. “He stayed with the same teachers in Year One and we were very happy with his transition. He started off in Year Two doing well, but then began having trouble going into school in the mornings.”

Transition worries

During the first lockdown, Sonny had attended the key worker group at the school but afterwards when everyone went back, he started to struggle. “He had the same teacher and TA right from Reception to Year Two, but then had a new teacher and TA in Year Three and he found the transition difficult. He became worried and anxious about going to school,” Michelle says.

Support offered

“Mark and I had separated by then and Sonny was spending part of his time with me and part of his time with his dad. We both used to take him to school and he would get upset when we left him and did not want to go in. He couldn’t learn while he was in such an anxious state. Thankfully, the teachers at the gate who welcome the children in the mornings asked if we would like support from the family and nurture support worker. We were grateful for whatever the school could offer and found her very kind and helpful. She drew up an Individual Learning Plan to help Sonny and would walk in with us. They would take him to the classroom and keep checking on him during the school day,” Michelle says.

Confidence boosted

Sonny had attended a keyboard club but when he stopped wanting to do it, they would go to it with him, Michelle says. “He would worry about little things, such as having the right equipment for his lessons, but they were good at providing Sonny with individual support during the day. They included him in a Forest School group, which he loved, and he started playing football again, which gave him a confidence boost.”

Back to his old self

Michelle says that Sonny goes into school happily now and has told the staff politely that he doesn’t need them to walk in with him any more. “The staff have all said it is nice to see his old personality again. We are both delighted with the way the school handled things. We still have calls and meetings to discuss how he is doing and he will have to make the transition into Year Four and have a new teacher, but we think he will be fine as long as he has a friend nearby.”

Great plan

Both Michelle and Mark think Sonny’s ILP was a good help. “It identified small steps to be taken one at a time and the staff adapted to how Sonny was and did everything on his terms. Sonny was the first at the school to have such a plan and I would definitely recommend it to other parents. It made us more confident about leaving him as we knew we could trust the staff to take good care of him,” Michelle says.

Children say

Sonny says: “I like playing football at break and lunch and I like doing Maths with Miss Simmonds.”

Creative curriculum: foundations for success

Stimulating natural curiosity

At Chickerell we aim to provide the children with a curriculum which is broad, well-balanced and above all stimulates the children's natural curiosity to learn. In addition to acquiring skills and knowledge, we want to help the children to grow in confidence and maturity so that they can enter secondary school 'secondary ready', with the ability to pursue wholeheartedly, academic, social, sporting and cultural activities.

All areas of learning

To make our education relevant to the world the children live in today and their wider experiences, we also incorporate the following key aspects of Global Citizenship learning:

- Social Justice and Equity; Diversity and Identity, Globalisation and Interdependence, Peace and Conflict, Environment.



Themes weeks

Additional theme weeks and special whole school event days for the whole school provide further in-depth coverage of PSHE and Rights Respecting Curriculum, e.g., Anti-Bullying Week, Fairtrade Fortnight, and Outdoor Learning Day.

Enriched curriculum: trips and visits

To further enrich our curriculum, all children are offered a range of visits, both locally and further afield. These include:

- Farmer Palmers.
- Charmouth Fossil Hunting.
- Nothe Fort.
- Portland and Maiden Castle fort.

Older children have the opportunity to go on residential trips during the school year. We feel these experiences can help to develop qualities of self-reliance and tolerance of others. Children learn independence and develop confidence. Examples include:

- Barton Hall
- Carey Camp
- Leeson House

Additionally, we arrange visits to the school by theatre groups and those with professional expertise such as singers, artists and musicians.



Joshua has benefited from dedicated staff support in the friendly atmosphere of Chickerell Primary Academy

Alana lives in Chickerell with her son, Joshua, who is seven.



Crucial help

Alana is very grateful for all the additional support and care Joshua has received from staff at Chickerell Primary since he started in Reception. She says: "I realise now how much I owe the school as their support has been crucial to me getting the right help for Joshua. I am thankful they were so good at pointing things out to me, which I might not have picked up on myself, because Joshua is my only child and I didn't have anyone else to compare him with."

Enjoying school

Joshua loves going to Chickerell Primary and although he struggles academically there are lot of activities he enjoys, such as going to Forest Club and learning outside. When Alana and Joshua first moved to Chickerell they had heard good reports about the school. She says: "Friends had told me it was a good school and I liked it because it is smaller than many other schools and has a nice community feel. Joshua made a good start in Reception. He loved his teachers and TAs and enjoyed all the play activities and making new friends."

Good decision

Towards the end of Joshua's first year at Chickerell Primary the staff noticed various issues with him. Alana says: "He had dexterity problems and was having difficulty gripping a pencil. Also, he wasn't making the progress they would have expected. The staff had a meeting with me and suggested keeping him in Reception for another year to allow him to make more progress and although it meant he couldn't go up with his peers, it was the right thing to do."

Individual programme

At first it was thought Joshua had GDD and the staff spent additional time with him to try to help him. Alana says: "They supported me in getting an Educational Psychologist assessment and a paediatric appointment and he has now been diagnosed with GDD and ADHD and has an EHCP in place. Joshua has received additional one-to-one support and individual learning programmes.

Because of his ADHD, which means he has a short attention span, at the end of 15 minutes work in the classroom the teachers give him a physical job to help him refocus on learning. He is also allowed to wear ear defenders in the lunch hall and a chewy necklace throughout the day to help him stay focused."

Progress plan

Alana says that when Joshua moved up into Year One, the staff prepared him in advance and put extra support in place for him. "He struggled a bit to begin with but then got used to the new routine. It became evident that he couldn't keep up with his peers academically and we are now waiting for a definitive diagnosis to see if he has autism. He has a child progress plan in place so the teachers can assess him and put in additional support where needed."

Brilliant staff

Alana is full of admiration for the staff at Chickerell Primary. "They are all brilliant and keep me informed about everything. I can contact them by email and they regularly ask if I need anything and will ring me up to reassure me that Joshua is fine. They keep a check on his EHCP to make sure he is getting everything he needs. Joshua has been accepted into a specialist school, however they are at capacity and the staff at Chickerell are supporting me to go back to panel to try and request a place for him again. I think it would be the best place for him, although we both love Chickerell Primary so much. I tell everyone what a wonderful school Chickerell Primary is. Because it is small, it feels more personal than other schools and I really love the way the teachers stand at the gate every morning greeting the parents and children."

Children say

Joshua says: "I love Chickerell because it's awesome! My teachers help me a lot and they are really nice."

Inclusion: a curriculum for all

Special educational needs

We want every child to feel they fit in at Chickerell and our aim is to make each classroom as inclusive as possible for every child, regardless of their needs.

Flexible approach

We believe there are considerable benefits for all pupils in catering for special educational needs in the mainstream class. Some pupils may, however, at times require more specialised teaching, which can be better provided within 1:1 or small group provision away from the main classroom. Our Inclusion Leader, Mrs Griffiths, works tirelessly to assist the teachers and support staff in providing help for the children who need that slightly different, more bespoke approach for them to be able to access the curriculum.

Support

Class teachers provide the support required, largely by the provision of differentiated material teaching and learning. Teaching assistants provide support for children in the classroom and also in small group tuition, under the guidance of the class teacher.

Gifted and talented children

We recognise that all children are individuals with their own specific needs, gifts and talents. Children who are identified as being exceptionally able or talented, are monitored and provided with stimulating and enriching lessons appropriate to their needs.



Kaleb has been helped to overcome his anxiety and fulfil his potential by the kind staff at Chickerell Primary Academy

Emma and Adam live in Westham with their children, Nyla, aged eight, and Kaleb, aged six.



Good support

Kaleb is now happy at school and achieving well academically, thanks to the supportive staff at Chickerell Primary who have helped him become less anxious. His Mum, Emma, says: “Kaleb was always capable of doing well, but was held back by not wanting to go into the school in the mornings and not wanting to try in lessons.”

Safe at school

Emma and Adam are pleased the teachers have built a bond with Kaleb and that he is safe with them when he is at school. Emma says: “There was a period when taking him to school was horrific. We tried different routines, with Mummy taking him, or Daddy taking him, but nothing seemed to make him less anxious. Some days he would go in all right, but the next day it would take an hour and a half before he would enter the building.”

Innovative ideas

Emma and Adam were always confident that Kaleb had a good support team round him. “They tried everything they could think of to help him. They would use different doors and have a task ready for him to do once he was inside, or they would try reward schemes. They made sure everything was on his terms and it was all down to Kaleb to choose to go in or not. They would also check up on me afterwards to see how I was, because I would be very upset at times,” Emma says.

Disruptive time

When Emma and Adam were looking for a school for Nyla, they put down Chickerell Primary as a second choice after visiting a few in the area. “We were offered Chickerell and Nyla settled in fine as soon as she began to feel confident there. She now does well at everything and has a nice group of friends. When Kaleb was due to start, we looked at other schools again, but decided Chickerell would be the best for him, as by then he knew the school well.

However, Covid changed everything. He didn’t finish preschool and probably spent half of his first primary school year at home. The school were very helpful with home schooling and provided information, email assistance and video conferencing. However, Kaleb struggled to start Year One because he had spent so long with me,” Emma says.

Calm start

“We now drop him off early to go to breakfast club, where he has his juice and a pastry and plays with the other children in a relaxed atmosphere, which calms him ready for school. He is doing well academically and is ahead in Phonics and Maths. He can work out the answer to a Maths question in his head without even understanding how he got there. He enjoys history and science and finds lots of the facts interesting. He has also made some nice, new friends,” Emma says.

Brilliant staff

“The staff have done everything they could to help both him and me. They would ring me during the day to tell me he was fine so I wouldn’t worry about him. They really do go the extra mile for every child. Although Kaleb got a lot of attention because of his anxiety they made sure they gave Nyla attention as well, in a very positive way. I would tell other parents considering the school that the staff are the strength of Chickerell Primary and they give emotional support to each individual child. They have always treated both of my children with the greatest care and respect.”

Children say

Nyla says: “The teachers make it fun to learn and I have a great group of friends.”

Kaleb says: “I really like the fun outdoor activities and I really like my teachers.”

Clubs, sport and music

Wide range of clubs

We highly value offering our children the chance to participate in extracurricular activities as experience tells us that these are the things that pupils enjoy and remember most. Clubs are run for all ages, and we try to cater for most interests. They take place every week outside of the first and last weeks of each half term. Clubs include:

- Art.
- Writing.
- Sewing.
- Colouring.
- Veggie Cookery.
- Table Tennis.

Sport

We have a dedication to sports such as football, rugby, netball, and gym. We also participate with local schools in offering a wider range of sporting opportunities, including cross country, rounders and cricket.

Sports teaching

Sports teaching is provided mainly by our two sports assistants and all children receive at least 1 session a week with them. Our Key Stage 2 children have an intensive half a term's swimming provision at our local pool every year.

Music

One-to-one peripatetic music tuition is available for samba, keyboard, piano and the guitar. The whole class music provision is accessed through the Dorset Music Services.



Admissions... and getting involved

Admission Chickerell Primary School

We are very proud of our wonderful school and all that it has to offer. We strongly recommended that you contact us directly to arrange a visit as we would love to show you around.

Applications

At Chickerell we follow Dorset Council's School Admissions Policy. Chickerell admits children to the Foundation Stage at the beginning of the Autumn Term once they reach the age of 4. This is known as "4 plus" entry.

Prospective parents are invited to make an appointment with the Headteacher when considering applying for a place here at Chickerell. After this initial visit, parents need to apply to the Local Authority (LA) for a place at the school, whether or not they live in the catchment area. Once a place has been allocated through the LA, the school will make arrangements for some introductory visits for the child, during the summer term preceding their entry.

Contact Dorset Council's School Admission Team

- Visit: www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/education-and-training/schools-and-learning/schools-and-learning
- Ring us on: 01305 221060
- Email us: admissions@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
- Write to us: School Admissions Team, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Getting involved

Voluntary helpers

We are always delighted to welcome parent volunteers into school to help with reading, but a full DBS is required for this. If you would like to become a volunteer, please ask at the school office.

PTA

This is a thriving group, which raises funds for the school and holds social events for the children and adults. Everyone is welcome to join this group and the variety of their events appeals to all tastes. Generous PTA contributions make the environment for the children much more stimulating and enliven their education. The Staff and Governors are grateful for their enthusiasm and continued interest.

Governors

Governors play a vital role in school life. They are there to support the staff to provide the very best possible education for all children. As an academy, they also directly hold the Headteacher to account for providing best value for money, ensuring that the school's budget is spent fairly, equitably and in line with school improvement priorities. Although it is a voluntary job, it carries great responsibility, and we are very lucky here at the academy to have a strong, supportive, and knowledgeable team. New trustees/governors are appointed by the trustees and are invited to submit a letter of suitability for the role to the Headteacher and Chair. They also sit in on a meeting as silent observers prior to formally joining, to ascertain whether the role suits them.



Mason is now happy at school and making progress thanks to the ingenious staff at Chickerell Primary Academy

Abbi lives in Chickerell with her son, Mason, who is eight.



Clever ideas

Abbi is delighted with the way staff at Chickerell Primary have come up with strategies to help Mason overcome his anxiety about going to school. She says: "Mason is like a different child now and will go into school happily. I have been amazed by the many things the school put in place to help him. Some of the ideas they tried with him, I would never have thought of."

Small school

Mason has been diagnosed with autism and ADHD. Abbi wanted him to attend Chickerell Primary because it's much smaller than where he had attended preschool and she thought it would suit him better. She says: "My nephew attended Chickerell and I used to take him to school sometimes, so I formed a good impression of the school. When it was Mason's time to start, I put Chickerell as my first choice but he didn't get in. Instead, he was offered a place at a much larger school. Then we moved to live in Chickerell and literally, at the last minute, he was offered a place."

Good start

Abbi said Mason's preschool sent a report to Chickerell Primary saying they didn't think he would be able to cope with doing full days there, but, in fact, he did well when he first started. "He began having difficulties when he returned to school after the first lockdown, saying he didn't want to leave me in the mornings. He would cry and I would get upset as well. He would hold on to fences on the way and it was difficult to walk with him. I didn't want to leave him when he was so upset but, I knew if I took him home, it would make the situation worse," she says.

Gentle care

A lot of things were put in place by the staff at Chickerell Primary to help Mason. Abbi says: "He attended a nurture breakfast club, where the parent could go as well, and he was assigned a TA, who would meet him at the front gate of the school and go in with him. He would start the day in a small room and do some drawing or reading, to help ease him into the school day."

One-to-one support

Abbi was helped by a particular member of staff who became her first port of call. "She was very kind and did things with him, such as Lego Club, a kind of therapy, which he loved. He has also done 'learn to move' and was taken out of the classroom to do exercises. There was also a time when he would do only half a day and I would pick him up at lunchtime. He now has one-to-one support every morning, but in the afternoon goes into the main classroom."

Practical help

Abbi says they gave Mason an 'exit card' and if he suddenly feels overwhelmed and can't cope, he can give the card to the TA who will take him out. She says: "If it wasn't for the school, he wouldn't have an EHCP, because we were turned down the first time we applied. However, the school reapplied and were successful the second time."

Academic progress

Mason is now doing really well and making progress. "His Maths has improved and his reading and writing are coming on amazingly. The school have worked with me to get him to attend school and I know the staff care about him. He is now no longer so anxious and came out recently and said, 'I've had a great day'. I can't believe how well he is doing and I know it is down to the things the school thought of to help him," Abbi says.



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