

St. Paul's C.E (VC) Primary School



Welcome Booklet for Parents

Class 1

Class 1, the first of four classes at St. Paul's School, is a mixed age class of Reception and Year 1 children. All four classes consist of children from two year groups due to the fact that we are a very small school. Depending on numbers and individual needs your child will stay in Class 1 for either one or two years. Those children who spend only one year in Class 1 will spend two years in Class 2 and vice versa.

We find that mixed age classes offer many advantages to children; they generally settle in quickly because their older classmates act as role models; the older children enjoy having a sense of responsibility for the younger ones; there is more flexibility in grouping children according to their own needs rather than their age; and a 'family feeling' is created as over their time in school children get to work and play with their peers not only in their own year group, but in those above and below.

The class teacher is Miss Laing and her full-time teaching assistant is Mrs Webb. Both are very experienced practitioners. For one afternoon per fortnight the class is taught by the headteacher, Mr Bickley.

Daily Routines

The school day officially begins at 8.55a.m. At 8.50a.m the member of staff on duty will be out on the playground and will blow the whistle at 8.55a.m. At this point children are expected to stand still and wait to be asked to line up with their class. All teachers then collect their classes from the playground and take them into school. If it is raining when you arrive at school in the morning, please take your child into the school hall, where the children will line up at 8.55am.

Miss Laing will be on the playground in plenty of time on the first morning in order to help the children to line up. In the very early days of term your child may want you to stand with him/her in the line, but as soon as he/she feels happy to line up without you, we ask you to move away from the line to a spot from where you can wave them into school as we walk in. We encourage the children to come into school on their own and usually they are happy to say goodbye to the adults at this point, but if your child struggles to leave you we have a number of strategies to support you both. If your child is upset about leaving you please try not to worry too much

about it, as on the vast majority of occasions, children are fine within a couple of minutes of their parent/carer leaving. To put your mind at rest, if your child is upset when you leave, please feel free to telephone the school office at a later point in the morning to find out if your child has settled.

It is most helpful to both staff and children if you can be punctual in the mornings, as this enables us all to settle into school routines and go about our 'jobs' in an unhurried way, enabling children to settle in very quickly. If you are late for some reason and arrive after the classes have gone into school, please go to the office so that the register can be amended and a school lunch booked if necessary.

The school day ends at 3.30p.m. Please also try to be punctual when collecting children from school, as they often become anxious if they are waiting after everybody else has gone home. If for any reason you are held up, we would appreciate a phone call so that we can reassure your child.

Children will be dismissed at 3.30p.m from the door which links Class 1 to the playground. We ask parents of children in Class 1 to wait at the back of the small play area with the brightly coloured fencing. It is helpful if you stand in the same place each day so that Miss Laing can locate you quickly and send the right child to the right parent. The children are dismissed one at a time and **NO CHILD IS ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE CLASSROOM UNTIL MISS LAING HAS SEEN THE AUTHORISED ADULT WHO IS COLLECTING THEM.** If somebody different is going to collect your child from school for any reason, please let us know earlier in the day, as Miss Laing will not let them go with people you have not authorised.

P.E

Children in Class 1 take part in two P.E lessons each week, one taught by Miss Laing and one by a specialist P.E teacher, Mr Preston. Children will need a P.E bag containing black pumps, a white t-shirt and red or black shorts. Please label all items of clothing as P.E kit and uniform tends to get muddled up all over the classroom on P.E days! We encourage children to be as independent as possible in dressing and undressing for P.E. It is helpful on P.E days if the children are wearing clothes that increase, rather than hinder their sense of independence, such as polo shirts rather than buttoned shirts. Children should leave their P.E bag in school

over the week, as there may sometimes be changes to the P.E timetable. Should you wish to wash the P.E kit, please take it home on a Friday and return on Monday. It is also helpful to provide a spare pair of pants and socks in the P.E bag, just in case of little accidents. We do have some spares in school, but not a huge quantity.

Drinks and Snacks

St.Paul's school is very proud to have 'Healthy School' status. This means that we do all we can to promote health and well-being. All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are offered a piece of fruit at morning break each day, free of charge.

Should you wish to provide your own snack it must be fruit only - no nuts please, as we have a couple of children in school with severe nut allergies.

Children are offered a carton of milk at morning break which is free for four year olds. There is a small charge for milk once your child turns 5. Milk money should be paid weekly on a Monday morning.

At St. Paul's we encourage the children to drink plenty of water (or 'brain juice' as we call it in Class 1). As we only have one drinking fountain in the school, we ask children to bring a bottle of water to school each morning which they can drink from throughout the day. If your child brings a packed lunch they may bring juice to drink with their lunch, but they will need to bring an additional bottle of water for drinking during lesson times.

What to do if your child is ill

If your child is too ill to attend school, please notify the office by 9.00a.m.

Generally, a child with a slight cough or cold will probably be well enough to come to school, but you know your own child best and if they appear to be under the weather it is usually better for them to stay at home, especially during their early days at school.

If your child has a rash, please seek medical advice as to whether or not it is contagious.

With regards to stomach bugs, the ruling is that a child must stay away from school for 48 hours after the LAST bout of vomiting or diarrhea to avoid spreading the bug to other children.

If your child has a high temperature, please keep them at home until it has returned to normal.

What happens if your child becomes ill at school

If your child develops an illness or sustains an injury at school, we will contact you immediately to ask you to come and collect them. If you are unable to collect them in person, one of your authorised contacts can do so, as long as you inform us who it will be. For this reason it is imperative that we have up to date contact details for you and your chosen contacts so that we can always get hold of somebody in an emergency. If your child sustains a minor injury whilst at school, they will bring home a letter to inform you.

What happens if your child needs medicine during the school day

If your child has been prescribed medicine and is well enough to return to school before finishing the course, we ask, if possible that the doses be worked out around the school day. For example, any medicine to be taken 3 times a day should be taken before school, straight after school and before bed. If, however, it is essential that your child receives medicine during the school day, a member of staff can administer the medicine, but only if you have been to the office and signed the relevant consent form.

Celebration Assembly

Each Friday at 3pm we invite parents to join us in the hall for our Celebration Assembly. During this assembly we award Star Pupil certificates and celebrate birthdays. We also congratulate children on their achievements out of school, so if your child has been awarded a swimming certificate, football trophy, ballet award etc, please bring it into school so that your child can be congratulated on his/her achievement.

Curriculum

Children in Reception work within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). At the end of their first year in school, children reach the end of this important stage of learning and will begin, in Year 1, to work within Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.

The EYFS curriculum enables your child to learn through a range of activities, many of which are play based. In some activities children will be working in a group led by the teacher or teaching assistant, whilst other activities will be self- initiated by the children themselves, selecting from a range of carefully chosen, stimulating resources.

The EYFS curriculum consists of seven areas of learning and development which are inter-connected. These seven areas include three *prime areas* and four *specific areas*. All seven are equally important and are accessed by the children many times over any given week. These seven areas of learning and development are:

The *prime areas* (particularly crucial for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, and for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive)

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development

The *specific areas* (through which the three prime areas above are strengthened and applied)

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

More about the seven areas of learning

Communication and language development involves giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.

Physical development involves providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children are also helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.

Personal, social and emotional development involves helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.

Literacy development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.

Mathematics involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.

Understanding the world involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

Expressive arts and design involves enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning

Each child is unique and develops and learns in different ways. When planning and guiding children's learning, we give careful consideration to the different ways that children learn and aim to foster the following characteristics of effective early learning:

Playing and Exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';

Active Learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements

Creating and Thinking Critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Assessment in the EYFS

Staff assess each child's progress over the year using the EYFS Profile. This assessment builds up over the year to provide a picture of their achievements during their first year at school. The assessment process for the EYFS profile is very informal and based on the teacher's everyday observations of the children at work and play. The children themselves are unaware that they are being assessed. We will share your child's profile with you at parents' evenings throughout the year. Parents' evening is a two way process, as not only do we inform you of your child's progress, but your own contributions about your child's achievements at home help us to build up the most accurate picture of your child.

Reading Books

We are sure that you have already helped your child to develop an interest in and love of books and that of course continues at school. By the end of the first week in school, your child will bring home a book bag which will contain the following:

- A book from our main reading scheme 'Oxford Reading Tree'
- A reading diary which we encourage parents to fill in after reading with their child at home
- An information sheet entitled 'Children and Parents Reading Together'

When ready your child will also bring home a 'phonics' reading book. The words in these books are all phonically decodable, meaning that each word can be read by blending the sounds, or 'sounding out', allowing your child to practise his/her developing phonics skills.

Please ensure that your child brings his/her book bag to school every day.

Parental support at home with reading is immensely important and has a huge impact on children's progress. Please see the separate detailed information sheet, 'Children and Parents Reading Together' for more information on how you can help and support your child in the vital early stages of learning to read.

Finally, we would like the experience of starting school to be as stress free as possible for both children and parents. If you have any questions whatsoever about your child starting school, please feel free to ask Miss Laing or any other staff member and we will do our very best to help.

