

# St Paul's Catholic Primary and Nursery School



## Nursery Parents' Handbook 2014 - 2015

## **Our School Mission Statement**

**Our school is a place of learning,  
a place of love.**

**In our school community,  
may we walk in the steps of St Paul  
as we come together in work and play.**

**May we celebrate God's love for us  
by following Jesus Christ  
in the spirit of joy,  
peace and understanding.**

## Our Vision

To nurture all members of our school community, recognising that each individual is made in the image of Christ.

To give pupils a love of learning, an outstanding education and the confidence to take their place in a changing society.

Every child at St Paul's deserves good and outstanding teaching - day in, day out.



## **The Nursery**

Our Nursery is an integral part of our school. As an essential element of the Foundation Stage it is carefully planned and resourced to enable each child to learn through play and also to prepare them for reception into the main school.

It has an outdoor play area, which it shares with the Reception class and much of the children's learning takes place outside.

Parents are the first educators of their children and we can learn a great deal about your child from you. To help us to get to know your child the Nursery teacher and other Nursery staff will make a home visit, prior to your child starting at Nursery. This enables one member of staff to talk to you about your child and the other member of staff to play with your child and get to know them.

## **Learning in the Nursery**

The Nursery and Reception (Class S) together comprise the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) within the school. They have their own curriculum and assessment. In the Nursery, our philosophy is that children learn best by feeling secure, valued and confident and also through quality play. The learning experiences we provide are based on our assessment of each child's stage of development and the ways in which they learn (known as the characteristics of Effective Learning). These are then matched to the Developmental Stages and Early Learning Goals set out by the Government.

The EYFS sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes quality teaching and learning to ensure children's 'school readiness' and gives children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for future good progress through school and life.



Our Nursery provides:

- **Quality and consistency** so that every child makes good progress.
- **A secure foundation** through learning and development opportunities which are planned around the needs and interests of each individual child and are assessed and reviewed regularly.
- **Partnership working** between staff and parents/carers.
- **Equality of opportunity** and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

In the EYFS, there are seven areas of learning and development divided into three prime areas and four specific areas.

### **Prime Areas**

#### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

This area of learning is associated with the child's attitudes to learning, their skills and their understanding.

We provide opportunities for children to progress in this area by:

- helping them to form good relationships with their peers and adults,
- letting them work in groups and learn to take turns,
- explaining what is right and wrong,
- allowing them to choose and use independently the activities offered,
- helping them to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others,
- encouraging them to plan their activities and learning,
- encouraging them to take care of their environment and resources in the Nursery,
- encouraging them to become independent dressers,
- ensuring they regard learning as enjoyable.

#### **Communication and Language**

This area includes listening, understanding and speaking. The children are encouraged to:

- speak one to one in a group and to the whole class. To speak to each other and to ask questions about what they have heard,
- take part in role play on their own and working co-operatively with others,
- make up their own stories,
- listen to sounds in the environment, a range of stories, poems, rhymes and to each other and to ask questions about what they have heard,
- identify and copy some sounds in stories, in the environment, from musical instruments and in words,
- enjoy stories and recognise that pictures and words carry meaning,
- use storylines in their play.

#### **Physical Development**

This is provision which allows children to develop the way they use their bodies. This will allow them to:

- move confidently and safely,
- have an awareness of space and others around them,
- use a range of climbing, balancing and small equipment,
- handle tools, scissors and pencils with control,
- encourage an awareness of how to keep healthy in terms of hygiene, exercise and diet.



## Specific Areas

### Mathematics

Children explore number through rhymes, songs and games, play and practical activities. They are encouraged to:

- count by rote,
- count sets of objects,
- use words such as 'big', 'small', 'long', 'short' etc.,
- use mathematical language to compare two numbers of quantities, including 'more than', 'less than', etc.
- talk about shapes and begin to name some 2D ones,
- be aware of patterns and create their own,
- know the days of the week,
- be aware of money and its uses,
- use their knowledge to solve problems in practical situations.

## Literacy

Children explore sounds and letters and begin to read and write. They are encouraged to:

- enjoy and join in with rhyming activities and stories,
- give meaning to marks they draw and paint,
- begin to match the sounds in words with letter shapes,
- be able to recognise their own name and some familiar words,
- begin to attempt to write their own name and some other simple words and where appropriate use correct letter formation,
- enjoy a wide range of books.

## Knowledge and Understanding

This is the area in which the children find out about their environment, other people and features of the natural and man-made world. They develop a foundation for their later learning in science, design and technology, history, geography and ICT. We provide them with activities in which they want to:

- use their senses to explore the world around them,
- make observations and record them pictorially,
- ask questions,
- talk about where they live, their families and important family events,
- use a computer, interactive whiteboard and other technology such as cameras,
- find out about different cultures and celebrations.

## Expressive Arts and Design

Activities provided in this area include role play areas, art and music areas and puppets. They promote development of children's imagination and creativity and expressions through art, music, construction, dance and imaginative play.



## Religion

As a Catholic school we add this important area of learning. Through story and song the children will begin to meet the important people in their faith story. They will be encouraged to listen to prayers and to say their own simple prayer as part of developing an understanding and relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The children will be helped to follow a Christian way of life by the care they show for each other.



### **Nursery Routines**

Children come to the Nursery at 8:45am, through the wooden gates which are close to the pedestrian gate on Park Lane. They hang their coats up in the cloakroom area and then find their name cards to 'register' themselves.

For the first half term, parents are welcome to come into the Nursery and join their children in their own activities for 30 minutes. The children then come together in a small group with their key worker to carry out an activity based on one of the seven areas of learning and development.

The children eat a snack in small groups and we would be grateful for a voluntary donation of £1 a week to cover costs. All Nursery children are entitled to milk and a piece of fruit or vegetable. Later in the term, to encourage independence the children will have their snack when they feel the need. Once a week the whole Nursery sit down together and share food from other cultures or food they have grown or prepared themselves.

This is followed by a time when the children can choose from a range of activities set up both inside and outside to help them achieve the next stage of development.

Many activities take place outside and it is important that the children always have suitable clothing for outdoor play e.g. sun hat, jacket, coat.

All the children are expected to help clear up the activities. In the last fifteen minutes there is a short 'carpet' time for a prayer, a story or a song and to talk about what they have done that morning.

The children leave at 11:45am. During the home visit, you will be asked to name the adults who have your permission to fetch your child from Nursery. Your child will remain on the carpet until one of the named adults arrives to collect him/her. We ask that you wait at the door until your child is handed over to you. This

is to enable the staff to have a good sight of all the children and that they leave the Nursery with the correct adult.

It is important that your child has the opportunity to talk to you about what they have done at Nursery. To help you the weekly timetable of activities and the provision for learning inside and outside are displayed outside the nursery entrance.

### **Library Books**

Your child will be allowed to borrow a book from the Nursery Library and you will be advised of the day on which they will be changed. A school bag may be purchased from the school office, if you wish to do so.

### **Safety**

To ensure that no child is put at risk, we ask you not to park or drive into the school grounds. Cheshunt Golf Club car park may be used.

### **Health**

If your child has a medical condition or allergy, please see Mrs Mount the Office Manager. A Health Care Plan will need to be completed to ensure that we can care and manage your child's condition correctly.

**Medicine:** Parental consent is required for staff to administer antibiotics. The necessary form can be obtained from the school office and all medication must be clearly labelled. Lip salves and lubricant sweets are not allowed in school.

**Asthma:** If your child is diagnosed with asthma please notify the teacher. A pump must be kept in school and be clearly labelled with your child's name.

**Sickness:** In cases of food poisoning and gastro enteritis children must be clear of symptoms for 48 hours before returning to school.

**Head lice:** Parents will be notified if a case of head lice is found.

**Notification of absence:** Please phone the school the morning that your child is unwell. All absences must be followed up with a letter.

**Nut Allergies:** As some children in the school have severe allergies to nuts, we do not allow food products in the school which contain nuts or nut products such as nut oil.

**Long Term Medical Conditions:** If a child has a long term medical condition, support and help can be provided.

### **Finance**

Please ensure that all monies brought into school are put into a sealed envelope with your child's name on the outside. School trips can also be paid for online using our

## Photographs

We like to use photographs to label the children's pegs, to use in displays around the Nursery and in the children's Learning Journals. If you are willing for your child's photograph to be taken, please complete the Photograph Permission Form which is in the starter pack.

## Contacting Parents

Sometimes we need to pass on information to you e.g. if the school is closed. In these instances we are able to use a texting service that is available to schools. It is important that we have an up to date mobile number for this.

It is also important that we have a telephone (land, work or mobile) number to reach you during the school day, in case your child falls sick. It is also useful to have an emergency number of a relative or friend.

## Clothing



Children will need clothing suitable for the variety of activities that they will be taking part in – many of which include running, climbing, water, digging and other physical activities. These often take place outside, whatever the weather!

Children are not expected to wear a uniform to the Nursery but one is available. This consists of;

- A royal blue sweatshirt with school logo
- A gold polo shirt
- Royal blue joggers
- A pair of comfortable shoes

We ask that your child also brings a pair of wellington boots to school.

In Summer a t shirt and shorts are appropriate. Our Summer uniform consists of;

- Gold polo shirt
- Navy shorts

Summer dresses should not be worn as they are unsafe on the equipment.

We would ask that your child keeps a bag of spare clothes on their peg in case of accidents or exciting water play. All clothing and shoes should be labelled with your child's name.

Children are not allowed to wear jewellery in the Nursery for safety reasons, apart from small plain gold or silver stud earrings.

School uniform can be purchased online from Mapac (details in the starter pack) or Penny's in Cheshunt High Street.

## **Parents and Friends of the School**

### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body of the school consists of a team of parents and members of the community who work hard to direct the policy making decisions of the school.

### **The Governors' Fund**

We invite every parent to make a termly contribution to the Governors' Fund, These donations help to maintain the school building. All contributions may be made via the Gift Aid Scheme which enables the school to reclaim the Income Tax paid.

## **Parent Association**

The Parent Association exists to foster a close bond between parents and teachers to help the children attending the school and to support the school in any way possible.

Each year a committee is formed and a variety of functions, events and activities are organised for parents, staff and children. The Association donates money to the school which is used to enrich the educational provision for the children. In the academic year 2013/2014, the school was able to buy new reading books, a play trail for Years 1 and 2, extend the playtrail for Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, a shelter for Years 1 and 2 during Summer and new markings on the playground and ten ipads. Next year we are hoping to buy more ipads for the children, a play trail for Nursery and update the Nursery playground.

## **Learning is not just for school**

There are many ways in which you can help your child make progress.

- Read and sing rhymes and stories with your child as often as possible.
- Listen to stories together
- Children love repetition so do not be afraid to repeat books, rhymes and made up stories as often as you like.

- Encourage your child to look out for labels, shop names, road signs. Watch out for the names on delivery lorries on a car journey. All this helps them realise that words convey meaning.
- Play 'I Spy' with letter sounds rather than names.
- Help your child to be aware of all the colours around them.
- Set up a writing table – don't worry if they are not forming real letters/words. 'Mark Making' is an important first step towards writing. Let your child use a wide variety of pencils, felt pens, crayons and different types of paper.
- Write pretend shopping lists. Your child may not want to write and this is fine.
- Cooking is an excellent way to reinforce numbers – making small cake allows your child to see how a 'whole' (the mixture) can be divided into smaller amounts. The change from a sloppy mixture to a firm cake is science in action.
- Help your child to become familiar with different coins in your purse/wallet – talk about the different colours and shapes.
- Sort toys and everyday objects by size, shape, colour, weight so that your child begins to understand mathematical vocabulary.
- Allow your child to explore different textures – mud pies are fantastic!
- Construction toys and jigsaws will all help their hand and eye co-ordination.
- Imaginative play is very important for a child's development and a dressing up box is a quick and easy way to help your child.
- Last but by no means least, allow your child to play outside. Making dens, splashing in puddles, painting with water on the patio or path, are just a few ways your child can experience their outdoor world and enjoy fresh air and exercise.

## School dates

Each school year is divided into three terms. Each term has a mid term break of a week. During the year there are some days when the school is closed for teacher training.

### Term Dates 2014/2015

#### Autumn Term

1 <sup>st</sup> half of Autumn term	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> September – Friday 24 <sup>th</sup> October
Half term break	Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> October – Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> October
2 <sup>nd</sup> half of Autumn term	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November – Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December
Occasional day	Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> December
Christmas break	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December – Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January
<b>(Monday 1<sup>st</sup> and Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September – INSET days)</b>	

#### Spring Term

1 <sup>st</sup> half of Spring term	Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup> January – Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> February
Half term break	Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> February – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> February
2 <sup>nd</sup> half of Spring term	Monday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February – Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April
Easter break	Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April – Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> April

**(Monday 5<sup>th</sup> January – INSET day)**

**Summer Term**

1<sup>st</sup> half of Summer Term Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April – Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May  
**(Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May – INSET day)**

Half term break Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May – Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May

2nd half of Summer term Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July

**Bank Holiday Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May**

**(Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July – INSET day)**

A fortnightly newsletter will keep you informed of dates and events in school. These are on the school website

[www.stpauls373.herts.sch.uk](http://www.stpauls373.herts.sch.uk)

A paper copy can also be provided if required. A reminder is sent by text.

**Finally**

You and your child are starting on an exciting journey together. We are proud and honoured to be a part of that journey. We look forward to working with you to help your child grow into a confident young person.

