



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Reception Information Pack

Dear parents / carers

We hope you and your family are well.

We are delighted that your child will be joining our Reception classes for the academic year 2020-21 and we would like to welcome you to our community at St Mary's.

St Mary's Key Information

Key members of staff from September

Miss Phipps & Mr Sims (Co- Headteachers)
Mrs Hansen (Assistant Head)
Mrs Lopez (SENCO)
Mrs J Jefferys & Mrs S Jeffrey (Admin)
Mrs Kingdon (Premises Officer)
Mrs Green (Foundation Stage Leader)

Class A: Teacher: Miss Dennis

Class B: Teacher: Mrs Green

Reception Teaching Assistants: Mrs Perrin, Miss Long, Mrs Johnson, Miss Doherty

Key dates for Reception:

June / July 2020: Zoom Call Information Briefing.

Individual Invitations to be sent out. This is a session for parents to attend without their children. It will be a chance to hear from the headteachers and your child's teacher.

Session 1: Tuesday 30th June 10am Class A 15 parents

Session 2: Tuesday 30th June 2pm Class A 15 parents

Session 3: Thursday 2nd July 10am Class B 15 parents

Session 4: Thursday 2nd July 2pm Class B 15 parents

3rd - 4th September 2020: Stay and Play

This will be a session where children can meet their teacher and see their new classroom. In the current climate, unfortunately we do not plan to have parents attend this session. Should guidance be updated, we will amend the arrangements.

Children should be dropped off at the start time and picked up promptly at the end.

Session 1: Thursday 3rd September 10-11am

Session 2: Thursday 3rd September 1-2pm

Session 3: Friday 4th September 10-11am

Session 4: Friday 4th September 1-2pm

You will be notified which session your child should attend.

7th - 9th September 2020: Phased entry

To support children's transition, it is invaluable to stagger children's attendance over a few weeks to familiarise themselves with the environment and establish new routines.

Phased entry (Monday 7th - Wednesday 9th). The office will contact you for your child's specific start date.

- Children should be collected at 12 noon for the first week (7th - 11th September)
- From Monday 14th September, children will stay for lunch but parents should collect them at 1pm.
- From Monday 21st September, children will be full time and should be collected at the end of the normal school day; 3.15pm.

You will be notified of your child's start date shortly.

Training Days for teachers (school closed)

All schools must organise 5 days of training for their staff.

The following days have been organised already.

- Wednesday 2nd September 2020: INSET Day - Children do not attend school.
- Friday 23rd October: INSET Day
- Three further dates need to be set aside. Parents will be given advance notice of these dates.

The School Day

First Day

The children should be taken to their class. There is a separate entrance for YR children (near the YR outdoor play equipment). At the end of each day, you will be asked to wait in this area and collect your child. The teachers will be in this area every morning from 8.45am welcoming the children and at the end of each day (3.15pm) so you can easily pass on messages.

Monday 7th September: 10 children to start in both Class A and Class B.

Tuesday 8th September: Another 10 children will join them in both classes.

Wednesday 9th: All YR children to be in school.

Please refer to your letter (in this pack) of the exact date your child should start school.

Food:

Fresh fruit is provided free of charge to Infant children daily. Please ensure you inform the office of any allergies.

School dinners - a visual weekly menu is displayed for children in the entrance of the dining hall. Parents should also receive a copy of the half term menu. The YR teachers help the children each day until they are settled and teaching assistants will also be present to support them in the dining hall. Water is provided for children to drink. If your child is not eating well, you will be notified as it may be more appropriate to send in a packed lunch.

Packed lunch: children may prefer to have a packed lunch. Anything left uneaten is sent home so parents are aware of the food eaten. Please ensure any lunch box is clearly labelled with your child's name. The following items are not permitted: chocolate, sweets, fizzy drinks, nuts and glass containers.

Lunch for YR children: 12.00 noon – 1.15pm. Free school dinners are provided for ALL Infant children.

YR children will **not** be staying for lunch until Monday 14th September.

Always notify the office if your child wishes to change from a school dinner to a packed lunch. Children are only allowed to change their lunch preference on a Monday. This allows the kitchen staff to know how many children they are catering for each week.

Hometime

To collect children, please wait in the YR area by the play equipment.

When the teachers see you, the children will be dismissed. Please be patient as it may take time. The safety of each child is essential.

If you ask another parent to collect your child, please notify the office in writing. Please do not allow your children to play on the equipment while waiting.

Communication

Messages

Parents are asked to advise the school of any special needs, medical conditions or food allergies. Please provide at least two emergency contact numbers and keep the office updated of any changes. This includes mobile numbers and email addresses. If any of these change them please update them in the office too. We cannot stress the importance of this as we must ensure your child is safe and you can be contacted at all times. This important form that has all of these details should be brought in on your child's first day of school. This confidential form will be given to you on your child's first day at school. Please fill it in a return immediately.

Website

The school website is updated every week so always try to take a look. Key dates and pieces of information can be seen which should help parents. If you would like to see a particular policy or find out about the learning for your child in each subject, just take a look.

<https://www.stmaryrc.org.uk>

Newsletters

A weekly newsletter is emailed to parents every Friday through Wisepay. Please look out for this as it contains key dates etc. Paper copies are available from the office and there is always a copy displayed on the parents' board by the main gate.

Every half term, the RE newsletter is emailed to parents. This is very informative and highlights key topics for each year group and lets parents know how to support the learning at home.

Parents' Meetings

There are parents' meetings in the Autumn and Spring terms. Parents will have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at these meetings. After receiving the end of year reports, there will also be an opportunity to discuss progress in July. However, parents can always make appointments at other times but please contact the main office so a mutually convenient time can be set aside. Always keep the teachers informed of any medical condition. Parents will have an opportunity to speak to teachers briefly before and after school hours but please be aware that mornings may be difficult because they still have to supervise the children from 8.45am so cannot afford to give you quality time. Making appointments is a far better option. Quality time can then be set aside and everyone feels better about this. The Autumn Parents' Evening is held in October. This is a perfect opportunity to see how well your child has settled in and clarify anything with the teacher. In the Spring term (March), books are shared with parents. All parents evening appointments are to be made via Wisepay.

Entering the school building

For safety reasons, parents are asked to use the Main Entrance clearly marked if any assistance is needed. A member of the office staff will help you. Never wander around the site or enter the building at any other point. You may wish to make appointments to see the teacher, collect children outside the normal school hours etc. If you do, always go to the main office. The office staff will help you so just ask for assistance.

Absence

Attendance and punctuality are extremely important to your child's education and are monitored closely by the headteachers with support from our Greenwich Attendance Officer.

If your child cannot attend school, always notify the school on the first day of absence and then continue to keep the office staff informed on a daily basis. Arriving on time is crucial for a good start to each day. Aim to arrive by 8.50am at the latest. When children arrive late, they not only disrupt the learning of others but miss out on vital teacher input at the beginning of the school day.

Parents will be notified if absence is high and a printed attendance sheet sent home highlighting the dates missed. Good attendance is essential if children are to make the best possible progress. Should punctuality or absence become a concern, the headteachers will invite parents in to discuss how this can be improved.

Wisepay

Wisepay is the cashless system that is used at St Mary's. Each child in the school has an account so once your child starts school, they will be given a letter with their login details. Please set the account so you can order uniform and pay for it online. It will also enable you to access correspondence from the school.

Getting Prepared For Starting School

Uniform

Suitable shoes – Velcro not laces or buckles. This makes it far easier for your children. Please ensure the shoes are dark blue or black. Please remember to label these.

Coats and jackets should be plain dark blue (no stripes or logos). Black coats are not permitted.

Always ensure the hairstyle is sensible . If your child arrives with an extreme / fashion hairstyle, you will be asked to address this immediately.

Please note:

- Long hair should be tied back with navy blue or white bands; bows should be small.
- No shaved pieces, steps or fashion hair cuts.
- Beaded hair braids are not allowed.

No jewellery – if you wish to have your child's ears pierced, please wait until the start of the summer holiday. Children will not be allowed to wear earrings at school.

No watches are allowed.

The office staff sell various items of uniform; please refer to the full list enclosed in this pack.

PE uniform

Please purchase a St Mary's plain dark blue string bag so it can be left at school (label the bag). The PE kit can be stored in this. Children will take it home every half term so the kit can be washed. A plain, dark blue tracksuit for outdoor PE sessions is necessary. It is easier for your child if the tracksuit jumper has a zip. Please include white socks for the girls. In the winter months it can be very cold for young children. This full PE kit will be required from when your child starts school.

Labels

It is important to label **every item** of clothing including the P.E. kit and shoes. There is a Lost Property box by the First Aid Room. If you label everything, it is far easier to find something. Even gloves should be labelled!

Breakfast/After School Club

We have an Outside Provider who uses our dining hall to offer care before and after school. All Kids Can starts from 7.30am each day and care will also be provided after school until 6pm. Details available from the office.

School Fund

Parents are asked to make a voluntary contribution of £10 per family to cover merit prizes, visiting theatre companies and themed weeks. This enriches the curriculum and all pupils benefit.

The School SENCO (Special Needs)

The SENCO is Mrs Lopez. She will be on site from Monday – Friday each week. If you wish to make appointments to see her, please do so via the main office. Appointments are only necessary if your child has any special needs.

Learning At Home

Reading

Teachers send reading books and reading record books home within the first few weeks.

Read every night with your child and record each entry in the reading record book. It really makes a difference. Set aside approximately 10-15 minutes per evening. Please do not race through the reading scheme. It is far better to take your time, question the children about the content and be satisfied they really understand what they have read. There will be a Reading workshop for parents in the Autumn term, highlighting how you can offer support at home. Please look out for this meeting (date will be in the newsletter). The teachers also send home key words and parents are asked to go over them on a daily basis. They are words that are not phonetically plausible so your help is needed. Children will just need to learn them as not all can be sounded out. If you support your child every day, great progress should be seen.

Book bags are on sale from the main office.

Sounds

Children will have a daily phonics lesson and parents should receive a copy of all the sounds the children need to know. A workshop for parents will be offered in the Autumn term, highlighting how you can support the programme at home. Please look out for this date.

If you cannot attend, ask a friend to collect any sheets handed out. Notes will be uploaded onto the school website but I would strongly urge someone in the family to attend.

Home – School Book

Your child will receive a home-school book. This is for you to record the achievements your child makes at home. For example, it could be a certificate from a club or a picture of a new place they have visited. This will enable us to make good school links. Try and update this book every half term. You will receive more information about this at the reception welcome meeting.

Independence

Encourage children to attempt to do up ties/laces/buttons (ties will not be worn until after half term but the children should be able to dress themselves). Before September, the children should confidently be able to put on their coats and school clothes. Please work on this during the summer months.

When children start school, they may need parents to escort them into the classroom but please try to encourage their independence by not escorting them into the classrooms after the first day. Wait outside the blue Infant gate and just give them a wave.

Community

The Parents' Association

The PA is a great support to the school. Money is raised to help ALL the children. Social events are held throughout the year. Look out for key dates and events in the newsletter. If you would like to attend the evening meetings, please feel very welcome to come along. You can make great friendships in this way which may last for many years.

Please contact them if you help in any way.

stmaryspaeltham@gmail.com

The Parish

There are strong links with Christchurch. Fr John regularly works with the children and teachers. School & Class Masses are organised throughout the year. The RE team liaises with Fr John and arranges a full programme for the year.

Before Starting School

Starting school is a huge milestone in your child's life and there are lots of ways that you can help them get ready for the changes and start this new stage fully prepared for learning.

When your child starts school they will need to make more independent decisions and you can help them over the summer months to prepare for this. Don't do everything for your child even if it takes longer to start with. They will start to get better so praise their efforts and let them learn from their mistakes.

Here is a brief checklist of things your child should learn about before they start school.

- Using the toilet by themselves, using toilet paper, flushing the toilet and washing their hands properly
- Dressing themselves, putting on their own coats and buttoning/zipping up the coat and putting shoes on the correct feet
- Looking at the lunch menu to see the choices. Parents are asked to do this on a daily basis once the children start eating school dinners. It helps them to make sensible choices
- Using a knife and fork correctly. This always proves difficult for the Midday Supervisors so please do your best before September to get children used to holding their knife and fork correctly. They also need to get used to cutting up their own food
- Playing with other children and taking turns
- Talking and listening
- Being able to ask for things, using sentences not just odd words
- Being able to reply when someone asks a question
- Understanding rules and sticking to them
- Knowing their colours, numbers and shapes
- Recognising their name on a label
- Getting plenty of sleep with a regular bedtime

It only remains for us to welcome you again and stress how important it is to maintain good links. If Home/School/Parish work together, your child will certainly benefit. For those parents who are just starting off with their first child entering school, please do not hesitate to make contact if anything worries you. It is so important that you understand what is happening and feel comfortable enough to ask questions. Even if this is your second, third or fourth child starting at St Mary's, you too must feel welcome.

Every good wish and may your children enjoy many happy years at St Mary's.

Mr J Sims and Miss C Phipps
Headteachers