



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mill Street, Brierley Hill, West Midlands, DY5 2TH

Telephone: 01384 985005

Website: www.st-mary-bh.dudley.sch.uk



Principal: Mrs I. Borriello

Archdiocese of Birmingham

Welcome to Reception



Dear Parent/Carer,

Welcome to St Mary's Catholic Primary School!

This is a short welcome booklet for parents and carers to provide information ready for your children to start school in September 2024.

At St Mary's we firmly believe in the partnership between home and school. It is by working together that we are able to provide the best possible education for the children in our care. We also work closely with the other schools in our MAC. We are part of the Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company, which comprises of nine primary schools and one secondary school.

It is hoped that the information contained in this booklet will help you feel more confident about helping your child prepare to start school. However, if you have any further queries, no matter how trivial you think they are, please contact us.

Thank you for choosing St. Mary's Catholic Primary School and we look forward to meeting you and your child soon.

Mrs Poynter
EYFS & KS1 Lead

"Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus"

Contents

1. The Early Years Foundation Stage.....	pages 3-4
- Religious Education.....	page 4
2. Learning at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School.....	page 5
3. Transition into Reception.....	page 6
4. Induction Schedule.....	page 7
5. The School Day.....	page 8
6. Important Information	
- Communication.....	page 9
- Homework.....	page 9
- Attendance and Punctuality.....	page 9
- School Uniform.....	page 10
- Jewellery, Accessories and Personal Belongings.....	page 10
- Health and Medication.....	page 11
- Lunch and Snack.....	page 11
- Breakfast Club and After School Club.....	page 12
- How You Can Help Us!.....	page 12
- Things to Bring to School.....	page 12
7. How to Help your Child at Home.....	pages 13-15

The Early Years Foundation Stage

If your child has attended a nursery or pre-school, you will already know some information about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).

The EYFS is the stage of education for children from **birth** to the **end of the reception year**.

During the EYFS we seek to provide...

- 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 practitioners and with parents and/or carers.
- Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, ensuring that every child is included and supported.

The curriculum is organised into 7 areas of learning:

1. Personal, social and emotional development –

learning to develop self-regulation (understand feelings, regulate behaviour, control impulses, work towards goals, give attention, follow instructions), to manage self (show independence, resilience and perseverance, understand/follow rules, and manage hygiene and personal needs), to build relationships (play cooperatively, take turns, form positive attachments, and show sensitivity).

2. Communication and language –

developing the skills to listen and respond, to question, comment and discuss, to hold conversation exchanges, to offer explanations, and to express ideas and feelings.

3. Physical development –

developing fine and gross motor skills, e.g. – negotiating space and obstacles, demonstrate strength, balance and coordination, move energetically, hold a pencil effectively, use a range of small tools, draw carefully and accurately.

4. Literacy –

developing skills in word reading (using phonics), writing (forming letters accurately and using phonics), and composition (retelling stories and narratives, anticipate key events, using new vocabulary).

5. Mathematics –

understanding number and the composition of numbers, subitising and recall number bonds, counting and recognising the pattern of the counting system, comparing quantities, and exploring and representing patterns.

6. Understanding the world –

“Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus”

developing and understanding of past and present (including in people's lives, similarities and differences, and through stories), looking at similarities and differences between different people, cultures and communities (including religious and cultural communities), and exploring the natural world (including plants, animals, environments, seasons and states of matter).

7. Expressive arts and design –

creating with materials (experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function), sharing and describing creations, using props and materials in role-play, being imaginative and expressive, and performing songs, rhymes, poems and stories.

Activities in reception are carefully planned and organised in order to provide a range of learning experiences. Individual "Learning Journeys" are kept by staff to record the activities your child participates in and undertakes, as well as their progress in specific skills. Planning for each week is carried out using a topic-based approach, following the children's interests and responding to specific events. Throughout the EYFS, children will be working towards the Early Learning Goals. These describe the level of attainment expected at the end of your child's Reception year in school. At the end of the year they will be judged against the Early Learning Goals as being emergent or expected.

We also pay close attention to children's characteristics of effective learning. These describe the ways in which different children learn. There are 3 main characteristics which we encourage and help develop while children are in school:

1. Playing and Exploring (engagement): -

Find out and explore, play with what they know, be willing to 'have a go'.

2. Active Learning (motivation): -

Be involved and concentrate, keep trying, enjoy achieving what they set out to.

3. Creating and Thinking Critically (thinking): -

Have their own ideas, make links, choose ways to do things.

Religious Education

RE is not something we simply teach discreetly. The Catholic Life of our school permeates all aspects of our school life and will be found throughout all lessons and interactions. To help with this, the Archdiocese of Birmingham has produced the Catholic Schools' Pupil Profile, which focuses on what it is like to be a Catholic in the 21st Century. We also use the Diocese's own curriculum strategy in Reception, called 'Learning and Growing as People of God'. This explores the Catholic faith with a strong emphasis on pupils engaging with and responding to questions of life in the light of religious teaching. Whilst we do focus our teaching around Catholicism, we also encourage pupils to share their own religious beliefs.

"Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus"

Learning at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

At St. Mary's, our children are at the heart of all we do. Our aim is to provide the very best education for our children in a Christ-centred setting, where all members of our school community are enabled to fulfil their potential and are valued in a secure and safe environment.

There is one Reception Class in our school which has a teacher and teaching assistant. We welcome up to 30 children in our class.

The school website www.st-mary-bh.dudley.sch.uk is kept up to date with the latest news and events and has lots more information about our school. We will be creating a new section called 'Reception 2024' where all information about starting school in September 2024 will be uploaded. Please keep an eye out for updates on this section of the website.

Staff you may meet as your child starts school include...

EYFS/KS1 Lead: Mrs Poynter

Principal: Mrs Borriello (currently on maternity leave)

Interim Principal: Mr Carry

Vice Principal: Mr Lodge

SENDCo: Ms Mosley

Front Office: Mrs Bate



"Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus"

Transition into Reception

We will endeavour to ensure a smooth and effective transition for your child. Please keep an eye on the 'Reception 2024' section of the school website, which we will be updating regularly.

Our school website is:

www.st-mary-bh.dudley.sch.uk

This term, we will be holding induction meetings for the parents/carers of our new intake. These meetings will be on **Monday 17th June 2024 at 5pm and Wednesday 19th June 2024 at 2pm**. You will only need to attend one of these meetings.

During June 2024, we are hoping to be able to visit pre-school and nursery settings, to meet and find out more about the children joining our school. If this is not possible, we will arrange a telephone call with children's key workers. We have also asked you to fill out an online questionnaire, so that we can begin to get to know your child.

In July 2024, we will hold some whole school transition days. We will be inviting new reception children to spend an afternoon at school on these days. Your child will be invited to attend a session on either **Wednesday 3rd or Thursday 4th July 2024**. There will be a further transition afternoon for all children on **Monday 15th July 2024**. More information will be sent out about this in due course. We will also be carrying out home visits. These are a very valuable part of the transition process as they enable us to get to know your child in an environment that is safe and comfortable for them. It also allows you to ask any questions that you may have.



"Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus"

Induction Schedule

Home visits will take place between Monday 8th July and Thursday 18th July 2024.

Children will have a phased induction to school in September 2024.

Monday 2 nd September 2024 - Tuesday 3 rd September 2024 -	INSET Day (School open to staff only) INSET Day (School open to staff only)
Wednesday 4 th September 2024 -	Children born between 1st June and 31st August in school from 8.45am – 12.45pm (to include lunchtime).
Thursday 5 th September 2024 -	Children born between 1st January and 31st May in school from 8.45am – 12.45pm (to include lunchtime). Children born between 1st June and 31st August in school full time (8.45am-3.20pm)
Friday 6 th September 2024 -	Children born between 1st September and 31st December in school from 8.45am – 12.45pm (to include lunchtime). Children born between 1st January and 31st August in school full time (8.45am – 3.20pm).
Monday 9 th September 2024 -	All children in full time (8.45am – 3.20pm) from today.

We will contact you to give you your home visit appointment date and time.

If you have any concerns about your child settling into the Reception environment, please contact Mrs Poynter.



"Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus"

The School Day

Arriving at School

The school gates open at 8.40am every morning. Parents/carers will walk with their child down the drive and through the blue gate onto the playground. You will then be guided by a member of staff to walk across the playground to the blue gates at the entrance to our Early Years Area. A member of staff will be waiting here to collect your child and take them into the classroom. It would be helpful if you could prepare your child for this. After the first half term, you will leave your child at the entrance to the main playground and they will walk across the playground and into school independently.

Daily Routine

8.40 - 8.50am:	Arrive at school and enter the classroom
8.50 - 9.00am:	Registration
9.00 – 9.20am:	Assembly or Collective Worship
9.20 - 10.45am:	Adult-Led Lessons/Groups (Maths Focus) Child-Initiated Activities/Continuous Provision Snack and Free-Flow Play
10.45 - 11.45am:	Phonics, Reading, English and Related Activities
11.45 – 12.00pm:	Story/Song Time
12.00 – 1.00pm:	Lunch Time and Outdoor Play
1.00 – 3.20pm:	Adult-Led Lessons/Groups (Topic/R.E./P.E./Art) Child-Initiated Activities and Free-Flow Play

Collection from School

Children must be collected from school on time at the end of the day. The school day ends at 3.20pm. Please wait for your child at the top of the main playground. Children will line up at the classroom door, walk through the blue gates with their class, and when we see each child's parent/carer, the child will be released to their care. Please note that children in Reception and KS1 may only be collected by a known person over 18 years old. If your child is to be collected by someone other than yourself, please inform the school before the end of the day. Once you have collected your child from school, please leave the school grounds promptly and do not allow children to run or play on the field/playground/car park.

“Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus”

Important Information

Communication

We use the Arbor and Tapestry apps as an easy and effective way to communicate with parents. These are completely free of charge for parents and can be installed on your mobile phone or tablet. Through Arbor, we can send you emails and messages. We use Tapestry as a way of recording child observations and communicating with parents. We also use the School Life app to book parents' evening appointments.

We use the Parent Pay system for parents to make payments to the school for lunches, drinks, snacks, school trips, contributions etc. You can order your child's school meals through the School Food United app.

If you have any problems accessing these platforms, please contact Mrs Bate in the school office.

Each child will be given a 'home link book' or 'reading diary'. This will be used to allow you to provide us with information or ask any questions, as well as to record any reading your child does at home. We will also be available before and after school if there are any important messages to be passed on.

If you have any questions or need to let the school know any information about your child, you can contact the school office in person, via email or by telephone. Please phone 01384 985005 or email enquiry_stmarys@emmausmac.com. You can also email the reception class teacher directly, via the reception class email address – year0_stmarys@emmausmac.com.

Homework

We will be sending home physical reading books and also eBooks for your child to explore. These will be matched to their ability level in phonics and we ask that children read at home every day. This does not always have to involve reading the book we send home, but could also include story books from home, magazines, labels around the house and sharing a bedtime story. Children will be given a Numbots log-in for them to practice their maths skills, and also a Purple Mash log-in.

Reception children will occasionally receive other homework tasks relating to the English, maths or topic-based lessons we have been engaging with at school. The homework activities are intended to be fun and engaging, and we would encourage you to support your child to complete them.

Attendance and Punctuality

It is important that children attend school regularly and are punctual. Irregular attendance often means that children do not completely settle into school, and this

can affect their learning. Please always call school to explain your child's absence. Holidays in term time must also be avoided. It is important that children arrive at school promptly so that they feel prepared and ready to learn. A register is taken every morning and afternoon in the first ten minutes of the session, and any child arriving after this time is marked as late.

School Uniform

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School, all children wear a school uniform which consists of a pale blue polo shirt and a navy blue jumper, cardigan or sweatshirt. These can be purchased with the school badge on.

School trousers, skirts and pinafore dresses should be grey. Black shoes with low heels should be worn. In the Summer, a blue/white gingham school dress may be worn. Grey shorts are also permitted. Uniform can be bought from the School Shop in Stourbridge – www.yourschooluniform.com – or from www.myclothing.com. Links to these websites can be found in the uniform section on our school website.

Children will also require specific clothes and shoes to be worn during Physical Education lessons and activities. **Children come to school wearing their PE kit on their PE days.** Your child will need blue or black shorts, a white t-shirt, black slip-on pumps, trainers (for outdoor PE) and blue or black jogging trousers (for colder weather). It would be very helpful if spare underwear was also kept in school bags.

For outdoor play, children will need wellington boots, waterproof trousers and a waterproof coat which can stay in school.

Please ensure that all items of uniform/clothing are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Jewellery, Accessories and Personal Belongings

Children are not permitted to wear jewellery/accessories to school. If children have pierced ears, earrings must be small, close fitting studs. Other types of earrings are potentially dangerous and are considered unsuitable for school. Children must not wear any jewellery on PE days, or must be able to take their earrings out independently. If they cannot do this, they will be unable to take part.

Children with long hair must keep it tied back in school. Hair bands and other hair accessories should be blue or another dark colour to match the school uniform. Pupils should not have extreme hairstyles or dyed hair and any patterns cut into hair should be kept to a minimum and should not contain words.

Children should not bring any personal belonging (such as toys, books etc) into school. If children are asked to bring items into school for topic lessons, these should be clearly named.

Your child will store their belongings on a peg in an area of the classroom. This will include their coat, book bag, lunch and drink.

Health and Medication

Staff need to be aware of your child's medical background, in particular any allergies (e.g. bee stings, dairy food), any dietary restrictions (e.g. vegetarian or Halal) and any medical conditions that are important for us to know (e.g. asthma or eczema).

Children can suddenly become ill and therefore it is important that we know we can contact you or another adult relative/friend at all times. Please ensure that the school is kept up to date with your contact details. If your child is unable to attend school due to illness, please telephone the school office to let us know on the first day of absence.

If your child is taking medication, there are health and safety guidelines we must follow. A Medication Administration Form must be completed to allow us to administer any type of medication, including asthma pumps and EpiPens. Asthma pumps must be in school at all times, even if they are only needed occasionally.

Children who have Chicken Pox can return to school only once the scabs are dry and all of them are crusted over. Children who are vomiting or have diarrhoea should not attend school for 48 hours after the last episode.

When the weather is hot, please apply high-factor, long-lasting sun cream to your child before they come into school. Named sun hats are also encouraged.

We have a school nurse who visits the school regularly throughout the year. If you have any concerns, worries or questions about your child's health, you can speak to the school nurse on these occasions.

Lunch and Snack

A culture of healthy eating is vital to the health and wellbeing of all children. At St. Mary's we support this by offering as snacks, a selection of fruit and vegetables, water and milk. These items are available each day free of charge. You can also buy toast, crumpets, pancakes or yoghurt through Parent Pay.

We are a 'Nut Free' school, so please bear this in mind if you send any food into school. Thank you.

All Reception children are provided with Free School Meals. These can be ordered on the School Food United app. However, if you would prefer to send in a packed lunch for your child, you may do this providing that healthy eating is promoted, with no fizzy drinks, sweets or chocolate bars.

If you wish to bring in a birthday cake for your child, it would be helpful if you could bring individual small cakes or a pre-cut larger cake. Cakes will be shared at lunch

time or sent home with children. You may also bring in individual packets of sweets, which can be sent home with children at the end of the day.

Breakfast Club and After School Club

The school offers high quality breakfast and after school care facilities at competitive childcare rates. This is provided by Pure Sport and can be booked through them. For more information, please contact the school office.

How You Can Help Us!

We ask for a voluntary contribution of 50p per week towards items such as cooking ingredients, gardening resources, arts and crafts materials etc.

Throughout the year, as we develop our environment and/or use up resources, we may ask for your help in acquiring materials and equipment. We would really appreciate any resources that you are able to donate.

Things To Bring To School

- Wear your named school uniform (or PE kit on PE days).
- Wellies and waterproofs.
- Packed lunch (if you do not wish to take up the option of a free school meal).
- Water bottle.
- Book bag.
- A coat in winter or sun hat in summer.
- All items must be named.



“Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus”

How To Help Your Child At Home

There are many ways in which you can help your child at home, both before they start school and once they are attending full time education. Please see the next couple of pages for some ideas. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.



Becoming Independent

- Encourage your child to complete a jigsaw or game without much help.
- Ask your child to tidy up after him/herself.
- Allow extra time for him/her to dress his/herself. Buttons and zips often need extra practice. Show your child how to turn their clothes the right way round.
- Allow your child to do as much for themselves as they possibly can.
- Show your child how to use a knife and fork correctly.
- It is important that your child can flush the toilet and remember to wash their hands.



Communication and Language

- Talk with your child as much as possible. This doesn't have to be at any special time—any time will do, e.g. shopping; walking; in the car etc.
- Talk with your child about what you are doing and why.
- Share stories with your child and talk about what is happening.
- Allow your child time to think about his/her reply.
- Don't worry if your child doesn't talk about their school day. Some children say very little about what they have been doing at school whilst others will recount it minute by minute.



Physical Development

- Allow your child to run, climb and crawl, and discuss speed (slow/fast) and other concepts (up/down, over/under).
- Provide opportunities for developing gross motor control skills, such as throwing and catching.
- Provide opportunities for the development of fine motor control skills such as using a pencil.
- Playing out of doors with balls and ropes.
- Visiting a play park together.
- Swimming at the local pool.
- Using small tools, e.g. scissors, pegs, whisks, Tweezers.
- Going for a bike ride.



Social Skills

- As your child gets to know other children in their class, encourage friendships by meeting outside of school.
- Coping in a large group with less adult attention than they might be used to is not always easy for some children. Be positive and encourage your child to try to do things by him/herself.
- Discuss and reinforce with your child the school and class expectations, e.g. sitting and listening carefully, being kind to others, and taking turns and sharing.
- Help your child to understand that when they are at school, he/she will need to do things the teacher wants them to do, just as you would expect them to do at home. However, there will also be times when he/she can choose!



Reading

- Making it a special, quiet time when you share your child's book.
- Being relaxed. Sit close to your child and try not to rush.
- Praising your child's efforts.
- When your child does not want to read, perhaps because they are too tired, take the opportunity to read to them.
- Making up a story from the pictures.
- Following repeated phrases.
- Using letter sounds to help sound out unknown words.
- Helping your child to point to each word as they read.
- Playing games such as 'I Spy' using letter sounds instead of letter names
- Practising each new letter sound at home as they are taught at school.
- Look for print all around you. Encourage your child to notice the direction in which print goes.
- Don't compare your child with anyone else, but rather encourage his /her individual progress.



Writing

- Enable your child to draw and write by having paper, pencils and crayons freely available.
- Praise your child's attempts at writing, even if it just looks like scribble or marks on a page—both are important stages of learning to write.
- If your child wants to copy their name or asks you to write something down for them, please try to use lower case letters. There is a correct way to form letters which is very important to a child as they get older and start to join groups of letters together. We will introduce this once your child starts school.
- Share writing together: shopping lists, invitations, birthday cards are just a few examples. This helps children to see that print has meaning and that it moves from left to right.



Mathematics

- Look out for numerals in the environment, e.g. on houses and on buses.
- Help your child get better at counting objects by saying the numbers and pointing to the object at the same time.
- Talk about how many more items are needed. If you want to buy six apples and you already have four in a bag, how many more do you need?
- Can your child help you sort things? When doing the washing can he/she find all the socks?
- When discussing objects, can your child talk about which is Taller/shorter, bigger/small, heavier/ lighter.
- At the shops, help your child to become familiar with money. When paying with 'real money' let your child pay the assistant so that he/she becomes familiar with the coins we use.



Understanding the World

- Encouraging them to comment and ask questions about things they notice around them, e.g. the leaves falling off the trees in Autumn.
- Talking to them about special days for your family, e.g. birthdays, festivals, celebrations.
- Teaching your child how to operate simple, everyday equipment, e.g. CD players, cameras.

Creative Development

- Encouraging them to express their ideas through painting and drawing.
- Moulding and shaping with clay and dough.
- Dressing up, becoming another person in another world.
- Using small toys to create imaginary places where adventures begin.
- Singing and dancing to music.
- Acting out stories.



ST MARY'S
CATHOLIC PRIMARY
SCHOOL

Our Mission

“At St. Mary's, we are called together to Love, Learn and Care like Jesus - for ourselves and each other - always trusting in Him”.



“Learn from Jesus, love like Jesus and trust in Jesus”