

ST MICHAEL'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL



**HANDBOOK FOR NURSERY PARENTS
2011/2012**

The nursery staff at St Michael's School would like to offer a warm welcome to you and your child. We look forward to working with you in true partnership.

To start the nursery session each day we would like to welcome you and your child to join us with a selection of activities that are set out to help settle your child into the nursery environment. It also gives us an opportunity to get to know you and your child.

SESSIONS

CHILDREN MAY ENTER THE NURSERY IN THE TERM FOLLOWING THEIR THIRD BIRTHDAY. BEFORE JOINING THE NURSERY, CHILDREN MUST BE INDEPENDENT ABOUT THEIR TOILET NEEDS.

The nursery day is divided into two sessions.

Mornings: 8.30 am - 12.30 noon

There is an optional supervised lunch period until 1.30 pm.

Afternoons: 1.15 pm - 3.15 pm (Lent and Trinity Terms)

All sessions are arranged following consultation with the Nursery Teacher, Mary Adelman. Sessions can increase to a maximum of two full days and three mornings (in the term before entry to Pre-Prep A) from January.

To ensure the efficient running of the nursery day please adhere to nursery hours.

The term dates and holidays can be found on the school fixtures card.

GUIDANCE FOR NURSERY LUNCHES

We expect the children to eat everything in their lunch box so please ensure that you only put in what you feel your child can manage.

We would ask that no nuts, chocolate or yogurt tubes are included.

Suggestions for lunch boxes:

Any small sandwiches (bite sized)

Vegetable sticks

Small tomatoes

Small sausages

Cheese cubes

Small box of pasta

Fruit

Small yogurts

Cereal bars or small cakes

Any non fizzy drinks

Thank you.

CLOTHING

We would like your child to enjoy all the sessions on offer in the nursery. Children need to feel comfortable and have freedom of movement. They need to develop growing independence in dressing themselves. They also need to feel proud and confident with a positive self-image as a special individual. Comfortable T-shirts, sweatshirts and tracksuits are great for children to play in, to participate in messy activities and can be washed easily! Aprons will be provided by the nursery.

Sensible shoes for playing on bikes and climbing are important. Trainers are ideal. A labelled bag with a complete change of named clothes is required.

On swimming day your child should bring a labelled bag with swimming costume, hat, towel and goggles (optional). For ease of changing it would be helpful if your child could wear a tracksuit and Velcro shoes on this day. Please mark all clothing clearly with your child's name. Thank you.

STAFF

Nursery Teacher	Mary Adelman, Cert Ed
Nursery Officers	Jan Machin, City and Guilds Working with Children Fenella Le Signe, NNEB Mrs Hilary Lundy, SEN (Afternoons January to July)

plus additional support as necessary.

Pupil Welfare

It is important that we have your telephone number or a number at which you can be reached in an emergency. Please remember to notify school of any change of address.

Please let us know if your child has any medical problems and how we can best help to support them. If your child is ill at nursery, we will do our best to care for them but the right place for your child is at home and we will therefore contact you and ask you to come and collect him / her.

Cuts and grazes will normally be dealt with by Nursery staff.

Other Staff

Music Teacher Nikki Baudains

The children enjoy a short weekly music session which is held on a Thursday.

Swimming Teacher Fenella Le Signe / Bianca Aukland

School Matron Lynne Cook

Matron will be called in for advice or to give a second opinion on a sick child, especially in a case when it is not possible to contact a parent immediately.

The school works closely with a speech and language therapist who visits the school on a regular basis. Where a need is identified, private therapy sessions can take place within the nursery sessions; alternatively children can be referred to the Health Services through your GP.

ILLNESS

ANY MEDICAL PREPARATIONS TO BE HANDED DIRECTLY TO A MEMBER OF STAFF.

To guard against cross infection please do not bring your child to the nursery if he/she has one of the following:-

A very heavy cold.

Diarrhoea or vomiting - allow 48 hours isolation after the last bout.

Conjunctivitis, impetigo, head lice.

Measles, mumps, chicken pox, etc.

Please notify the nursery of any infectious diseases affecting your child to enable us to warn other parents.



NURSERY ORGANISATION

For many children joining a nursery class will be their first step outside of home, families and friends. A great deal of learning has already taken place and we hope that the partnership between home and nursery will continue to support your child's progress. A child's early experiences at nursery are fundamental to their future attitudes towards school and their own learning. At all times we value children as individuals and aim to foster self-confidence and a sense of well being as children meet new situations and experiences.

On a daily basis your child will be involved in making decisions about different activities that they would like to take part in. Gradually, he/she will also be a member of a smaller group involved in a focused activity led by a member of staff. The activities will be designed to nurture and encourage valuable skills and learning.

We believe that every child is important and will make a contribution to the nursery. Collaboration and co-operation with others will be fostered without the child's individuality being lost. Children have different skills and experiences that they learn at home and in the community before starting nursery. We value what each child brings to nursery and aim to build on their experiences with these principles in mind.

PRINCIPLES FOR THE EARLY YEARS

1. Children develop emotionally, intellectually, morally, physically, spiritually and socially, and at differing rates. All aspects of development are equally important and are interwoven.
2. Children should be offered a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum in which individual needs can be identified and promoted.
3. Early childhood is the foundation on which children build the rest of their lives; it is not just a preparation for the next stage - it is vitally important in itself.
4. Young children learn from everything that happens to them and do not separate their learning into subjects.
5. Children learn most effectively when they are actively involved and interested.
6. Playing and talking are the main ways through which young children learn about themselves and the world around them. "Play is young children's work."
7. Children need time and space to produce work of quality and depth.

8. Children who are encouraged to think for themselves gain confidence and will learn to act independently.

The relationships which children establish with adults and other children are of central importance in their development.



TEACHING AND LEARNING

St Michael's nursery strongly promotes equality of opportunity so that all children have full access to every area of a broad and balanced curriculum. The nursery and reception classes form the foundation years and work closely together to provide progression and continuity for the children. This close liaison ensures a smooth transition from nursery to reception.

THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The foundation stage is a stage of learning in which a range of skills are developed within the nursery and reception class. During this stage your child's learning is divided into 6 different areas.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION

Within the nursery we aim to provide a stimulating environment that will involve your child in a range of interactive activities, help your child to feel secure and happy and develop a positive self-image. We will focus our programme in developing important life skills that give your child a solid basis from which to learn and made progress.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The development and use of communication and language is at the heart of young children's learning. Their communication skills develop as they express their needs and feelings, interact with others and establish their own identities and personalities. The ability to communicate gives children the capacity to participate more fully as confident, sociable individuals, building relationships with other children and adults.

Within the nursery we aim to create a stimulating environment that reflects language in different contexts such as signs, labels, lists, notices and promotes enjoyment in a range of stories and non-fiction books. Children will be given opportunities to link language with physical movement in action songs and rhymes, role play and practical activities that foster discussion and experimentation.

In these early stages children will be encouraged to experiment with writing by making their own marks in sand, by painting and on paper using different pens and pencils. Mark making is a very important part of the writing process and will later lead onto letter formation activities, writing their own names and the formation of simple sentences.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematical development is based on your child becoming confident and competent in learning and using key skills. These include counting, sorting, matching, exploring patterns, numbers, shapes and measures. The development of language is crucial and we involve the children in a range of practical activities including stories, songs, games and imaginative play so that children can experiment with numbers in different contexts.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

In this area of learning your child is developing the knowledge, skills and understanding that helps them to make sense of the world around them. They acquire a range of skills, knowledge and attitudes related to understanding the world in many different ways. Play opportunities will encourage children to be curious, enthusiastic and to investigate and question their activities. Children will be given positive encouragement and support to try out their ideas and learn from them. They will be involved in a range of activities including looking at different living things, materials, buildings, celebrations and how things work.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Music

Music forms an enjoyable and active part of daily life in the nursery. Your child will experience a range of musical activities with an emphasis on enjoyment and participation in many different types of music making.

Art and Design

We aim to help your child develop an understanding and enjoyment of art and design through a variety of practical activities which involve both two dimensional (drawing, painting, etc) and three dimensional work (collage, modelling, clay etc). Children are encouraged to experiment with different techniques and a variety of materials such as pencils, charcoal, paint, clay, paper and textiles. These help them to develop their skills in observation and imagination.

The children's work is celebrated in displays around the nursery providing a stimulating working environment.

Physical Development

Physical development in the foundation stage is about improving skills of coordination, control, manipulation and movement. We aim to develop the children's confidence in what they can do and this enables them to feel the positive benefits of being healthy and active. The children use the school's dance studio twice a week. Effective physical development helps the children develop a positive sense of well-being.

ICT

We have a computer area in the nursery. The children will be introduced to the keyboard and be given some simple key skills.

ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING

As each child learns at their own individual pace, observing children is at the heart of our nursery practice. These observations that assess children's abilities in certain skills inform our planning about the future needs of individual children.

Parent evenings are held in Lent term to coincide with Pre-Prep and Junior Parent Evenings. Each child will receive a written report at the end of their nursery stage.

FACILITIES

The nursery is part of a newly opened foundation years unit based in a property adjacent to the main school.



Creative Area

One area is designated for creative and investigative play where the children discover art and can freely explore different materials and mediums. Creative activities in the nursery are a large part of the curriculum. The other room is divided into activity areas.

There is a language room where, through use of a variety of activities children will begin to understand that language involves reading, writing and speaking. There is a book corner where the children can have a quiet moment.



Quiet Area



The nursery equipment has been chosen to provide children with the practical experiences necessary for them to gain an understanding of mathematical concepts. In science and technology the child's curiosity and understanding will be developed by the opportunity to handle and explore various materials to learn their properties.



Musical activities



ACTIVITY FACILITIES

The outdoor area consists of a large paved patio for riding equipment and outside play activities. There is an enclosed garden with a quiet area for reading/storytelling, and fixed climbing apparatus. In the outdoor learning environment there are opportunities for writing, drawing, painting as well as physical, social and imaginative development. Scientific exploration is encouraged through the growing of fruit and vegetables. The children have a wormery and a compost bin to show the children the importance of reusing and recycling. Bugs and insects are observed and investigated.



Use is made of the school's Dance Studio where the children have gym and movement sessions each week as well as a weekly swimming session in the indoor swimming pool.



WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE NURSERY DAY?

Children use the inside and outside environment seamlessly throughout the nursery session. Drinking water is always available.

8.30 am Children arrive and are individually greeted. Parents engage with their child until it is appropriate for them to leave. Children choose freely from all the activities available in the nursery.

9.00 am Check in and registration. Circle time - language activities including 'Treasure box' time.

9.15 am Children move into groups. Small group activities, reviewing, celebrating achievements.

9.45 am Continuation of play activities under staff supervision - 2 staff inside and 1 outside.

10.00 am From this time a snack is on offer. Children register in the snack area and learn to pour their own drink and prepare their own snack, supervised by a member of staff.

11.45 am Everyone tidies up the inside and outside areas of the nursery. Emphasis is put on organising and tidying own equipment. The completion of the task is celebrated.

12 noon Calendar - Daily counting/number rhymes.

12.15 pm Story and poetry time. Children then check out ready to go home or get ready for lunch.

12.30 pm Lunch for those children staying. Staff discuss planning implications and children in readiness for the next day.

Wednesdays -Swimming. Every child swims in a small group of 6 or 7 children.

Mondays and Fridays - Use of the dance studio for activities (small or large apparatus, games) music and movement.

Music Session with a specialist music teacher - singing, composition and percussion.

BEHAVIOUR

We actively praise and encourage positive behaviour in the nursery and we are clear and consistent in our expectations. Children will learn good behaviour through correct role models. Should a pattern of anti-social behaviour occur, parents will be included in supporting a programme of change.



St Michael's nursery class operates an 'Open Door' policy in which parents are welcome to join us for the beginning of any session. We would like parents and carers to feel that they can speak to the staff on a daily basis passing on important information as well as sharing news and celebrations in their children's lives. Any further discussions can be arranged with the Nursery Teacher.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

St Michael's is a Christian school. It is our philosophy that within the nursery curriculum we provide and encourage children of all races and cultures with the opportunity to understand and respect each other's backgrounds. In this way we can ensure the children will develop a sense of equality for the future.



Budding builders in the construction area



The children created their own canvases for the Art Exhibition

POLICY FOR ADMISSION INTO MAIN SCHOOL

Children attending the nursery join the main school in the September after their fourth birthday.

We require one term's notice, in writing, of withdrawal from the Nursery.

Please contact St Michael's School Office with any queries.
Telephone (01534) 856904.

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

OFFICE / HEADMASTER'S TELEPHONE: (01534) 856904

OFFICE / HEADMASTER'S FACSIMILE: (01534) 856620

TELEPHONE DIARY: (01534) 852649

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