



# Parent Information Booklet for New Starters





## **Welcome to St. Michael's RC Primary School**

We understand how unusual this year's induction process is for you and your little ones. We hope this booklet will give some insight into what the first steps might look like for your child and give you some idea of key information you will need for September 2020.

A child's first weeks in school are an exciting and sometimes bewildering experience, this year more so than most. As the induction process has been shortened somewhat, September will see an extended transition period. Children will receive a more relaxed and staggered start to school. This is to ensure each child is comfortable, happy and has the best start to their school life with us, getting to know their new friends, new staff and the school gradually.

Most children adapt relatively quickly and happily to this new and interesting environment but some can be a little overwhelmed. We will strive to make your child's entry to the school as easy and joyful as possible.

We hope that parents feel comfortable and happy to approach staff with any questions and queries during this transition time. As part of our more relaxed beginning to the school year for children, we will be inviting parents in, to school come September, as we would have done during the pre-school visits in the summer. We hope that this booklet will help you become familiar with the school and the routine here at St Michael's.

## Meet our Foundation Team



Hello 😊 I am Miss Crawley and I will be your class teacher come September. I am really looking forward to meeting you all. I love reading stories, my favourite story to read is 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt!' I also love going camping, exploring outside and going on long walks, whatever the weather! – I can't wait to hear about what you enjoy doing. We are going to have so much fun and I am so excited to help you play, learn and grow during your first year at school.



Hi all, my name is Mrs Spence and I will be your class TA. I can't wait to meet you all on your first day of school. I love spending time with my 2 young boys, we love to read and watch Disney books and films. We also enjoy spending time as a family at our caravan in Whitley Bay. I am very excited to start your learning adventure with you all 😊

Both Teacher and Teaching Assistants will liaise with parents and carers to support their child's individual needs. The Class F team are keen to build positive relationships with children and their parents and welcome regular consultation to talk about their child's development and progress.



### Getting Ready for School

#### 1. School Uniform:

##### Boys

Grey trousers  
(not jersey)  
Grey V-neck jumper  
jumper  
Blue shirt  
Blue blouse  
Navy/ royal blue tie  
blue tie  
Navy/ grey socks  
grey tights

##### Girls

Grey skirt/ trousers  
Grey cardigan / V-neck  
Navy/ royal  
White socks/

#### 2. PE Uniform

- Round neck white T-shirt with school logo – available to order through school
- Plain navy shorts (optional ordering through school)
- Plain navy jogging bottoms and navy sweatshirt
- Velcro Trainers/Plimsolls (for outdoor use)

\*Book bags and PE bags, with the school logo on, and ties are available from the School Office.

3. Clothes - Please label all items of clothing and shoes with your child's name to avoid missing items and confusion. If your child can recognise his/her own coat, hat, gloves etc. and put them on themselves, we will be delighted!
4. Changing - In Class F our classroom extends to the outdoor environment and so children will be spending a lot of time exploring with water and mud outside. We have waterproof suits for the children to put on top of their uniform and we encourage them to get changed independently. It would be helpful for your child to practise getting dressed and undressed over the summer to prepare them for this. We would also recommend Velcro shoes as we will often be putting wellington boots on throughout the day and it helps children be more independent with this.
5. Toilets - We expect children to be able to use the toilet independently – staff will not be able to assist the children with cleaning after toileting. We are aware that some children have accidents and staff will help your child clean up as much as possible and will provide a change of clothes. Please return the borrowed items of clothing, washed if possible.
6. Names – We would be so impressed if your child could recognise their own first and last name to identify their pegs/trays and items of clothing. Please do not teach your child to write their name in capital letters.
7. Please ensure that the school has any information concerning speech, hearing and sight impairments and any other medical and dietary needs. This should be noted on the data collection sheet. It also helps to know if your child is left handed or has not yet decided which hand they write with.
8. We always encourage children with long hair to wear it fastened back for school – for their own safety and for working purposes. Jewellery and earrings are not to be worn in school.



## School Meals

- \* School lunchtime menus are agreed between the school and Taylor Shaw catering staff.
- \* School meals include a portion of vegetables, which they are always encouraged to try some of, even if it is a small portion.
- \* If you wish for your child to have a packed lunch, it should be a healthy meal and we encourage you to include some fruit or vegetable e.g. piece of fruit/fruit juice, dried fruit, cherry tomato, raw carrot, cucumber.
- \* Sweets, sugary drinks and chocolate should not be included in packed lunches.
- \* If practicable, uneaten food is returned in the lunch box so that parents know what has been eaten.
- \* All children in Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 are able to have free school lunches each day under the Government initiative.
- \* Parents will need to decide if they would like their child to be on packed lunch or school dinner.
- \* Children will stay on which ever is chosen for them until the next half term, when you will be able to change to packed lunch or school dinner if you wish.



## Snack

- \* Children are provided with a healthy snack in school each day. We have snack time on a morning and a morning break for children to eat their snacks. You are welcome to provide a snack for your child if you wish. Snack must be a piece of fruit, dried fruit or a cereal bar.
- \* Children will also have a circle time on an afternoon, where they will have a break with some milk and a snack.
- \* **We ask for a small donation of £0.50 - £1 each week for 'milk money.'**
- \* This is to ensure all children can receive milk throughout the year and we will provide a range of different afternoon snacks to try.
- \* We will also use these donations to buy resources for the children to explore and use in their play.

### Drinks Policy

- \* Children are encouraged to drink sufficient water at school particularly after PE, active play and in hot weather.
- \* Children **will be provided** with a school water bottle, which will be kept and washed in school.
- \* Water fountains are available across the school for children to refill their bottles.
- \* Bottles should only be filled with water not juice.



### Weather



- \* In Class F the classroom extends to the outdoor area and so we will be spending a lot of time outside.
- \* It would be helpful if you could bring in a pair of **wellington boots** for your child, which could be kept in school for the year.
- \* In cold weather, please ensure your child has a warm hat, gloves, scarf and a warm coat.



- \* In hot, sunny weather, please ensure your child has a sun hat and a labelled bottle of sun cream – children are not allowed to share sun cream.
- \* We do have sun cream in school and will allow children to use the school sun cream if they do not have any – **please let us know if you do not wish your child to use the school sun cream.**
- \* In sunny weather, if you have asked for your child not to use school sun cream and have not provided sun cream, your child will have to stay inside for their safety.



## Foundation Stage at St. Michael's



- \* This year sees a slightly different start to the year for children and information on the 'staggered starts' at St. Michael's will be provided in a separate letter to parents.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up**

- \* At St. Michael's we have a 'relaxed start' to the school day. The school day begins at 8:50, however, gates are open between 8:40 and 9:00.
- \* For Foundation Stage, the school day ends at 3:20 (the rest of the school ends the day at 3:25)
- \* The drop off and pick up point for Foundation Stage children is at the Foundation Garden.
- \* When dropping off your child, they may become upset, please do not worry. The Class F Team are used to this and are well trained in how to settle children during this transition.
- \* It is helpful for parents to leave their child with a member of staff quickly – the longer you stay the more difficult it is for the teacher to settle them and for your child to calm down.
- \* Please try not to get upset yourself; if children are finding this transition difficult, the Class F team are more than happy to update parents once they have left. Most of the time children settle very quickly once parents have dropped them off and are happy to play and explore the environment.
- \* Please encourage your child to put their belonging on their pegs independently.
- \* Do not be surprised if at first your child returns home very tired. Children will use a lot of energy at school and will react to their new environment in different ways.
- \* When you collect your child after school, please wait in the Foundation garden at 3:20pm where the class teacher will open the gate for parents to come to the Classroom door.
- \* Children will stay seated on the carpet until a member of the Class F team calls their name; this is to ensure all children are passed over to their parents safely.

### **Tea Club**

- \* Any child not collected on time will be taken to Tea Club which is available until 5:30pm Monday – Thursday and until 5:00pm on a Friday.

- \* Please book your child into Tea Club by 3pm of the day in question if possible.
- \* Can we please ask that parents leave the Foundation garden once you have collected your child so that staff can secure the area once the last child has been collected and to take any of those who need it to Tea Club.

### **Different Adult's Picking Up Children**

- \* If for any reason you need to alter your pick up arrangements, please inform the school, i.e. if another adult is picking up a child, staff will not allow them to go if they do not know whom they are/ have not been informed.

### **Aspects of the Day**

- \* Throughout the day children will be exploring the indoor and outdoor classroom, taking part in small group circle times and story times and learning through play with peers and adults.
- \* Children will also experience time in the school yard, we have a big and small yard in school. Foundation Stage children keep to the small yard, which is less crowded and less overwhelming.
- \* Staff will take children onto the play equipment and yard at quieter times throughout the day.
- \* At St. Michael's we have a unique lunch hall as we have to cross the road to get to there. Children will cross the road with their Year 5 buddy and plenty of class staff and lunch time staff to ensure their safety while crossing the road. Children also wear Hi-Vis jackets while crossing the road.
- \* Children will have 2 PE lessons each week with Miss Crawley/Mr Storey – On PE days we ask the children come to school in their PE kits. They can stay in their PE kits for the whole day.

### **Buddies**

- \* To support the transition into school, children will be partnered up with a Year 6 buddy, this buddy will support play at break times, read to the children and become a good friend throughout their start to school and support the transition to Year 1 when the time comes. We have seen

how well this buddy system has supported children's transition into school and helped them feel part of our St. Michael's school family.

### **Parental Involvement**

- \* After the first few weeks, we will invite parents to a drop in session where you will be given the chance to chat to the staff about how your child has settled into life at St. Michael's.
- \* Throughout the Autumn Term we will also hold 'Stay and Play' sessions for parents to come and play with the children in their new school environments.
- \* We will also invite parents into school to join Foundation Class for a parental engagement half day in the summer term.
- \* As a Catholic school, we will hold daily collective worships and pray together throughout the day.
- \* Twice throughout the school year we will invite parents to join us in collective worship for our class 'Stay and Pray' sessions.
- \* Classes also attend mass throughout the year in the school chapel, which parents are invited to and information on mass times and dates are given throughout the year, through the school newsletter.
- \* We have many opportunities throughout the year for parents to get involved and see what we are getting up to! There is a fortnightly school newsletter, termly class newsletter, the school website and the school Facebook page to keep an eye on to keep up to date on activities, events and dates.



### **The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum**

The Early Years curriculum is taken from the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage document, provided by the government. In this document it outlines the Early Learning Goals, which are statements of learning we expect children to reach by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage – the end of the Foundation Class year (July 2021).

The Early Learning Goals are divided into 7 areas of learning and development. These 7 areas shape the Early Years curriculum here at St. Michaels, details of our curriculum can be found on our website. Each of the 7 areas of learning are important and inter-connected.

There are 3 areas which are identified as being particularly crucial for igniting children’s curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, for building their capacity to learn, form relationships and thrive. These 3 areas are called the prime areas and the remaining 4 areas are referred to as the specific areas of learning.

### **The 7 areas of learning and development**

The prime areas of learning are:

- \* Personal, Social and Emotional Development – *Managing feelings and interacting with peers.*
- \* Communication and Language – *Using and understanding language.*
- \* Physical Development – *Showing control in large and small movements and knowing how to stay healthy.*

The specific areas of learning are:

- \* Literacy – *Reading and writing.*
- \* Mathematics – *Number and space, shape and measure.*
- \* Understanding of the World – *Knowing about plants, animals, people and technology in our world.*
- \* Expressive arts and design – *Using a range of creative materials in different ways and expressing themselves in a variety of ways.*

All 7 areas of learning are taught through a mixture of child-led and adult-led learning experiences. The classroom environment is set up to support child-led playful learning experiences, through carefully resourced provision. These resourced areas enhance the learning of all 7 early learning goals. Adult-led activities take place in the environment, small group learning and through 1:1 learning experiences.

### **Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning**

Alongside the Early Learning Goals are the Characteristics of Effective Learning which teachers will use to help assess and plan for children's learning. There are three characteristics of effective teaching and 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

### **Literacy in the Foundation Stage**

Literacy is broken up into reading and writing. Both reading and writing is taught through daily systematic synthetic phonics sessions which begin after

the baseline assessment period (around 2-3 weeks). At St. Michael's we use the 'Letters and Sounds,' scheme of work to deliver daily phonics sessions. Phonics teaches children to read and write through learning letter sounds in stages.

The stages of reading are as follows:

1. Communication and Language (Phase 1 Phonics)
2. Sound recognition (Phase 2/3 Phonics)
3. Reading VC/CVC words
4. Reading captions
5. Reading simple sentences + Tricky Words
6. Reading age appropriate phonics based books

The stages of writing are as follows:

1. Communication and Language
2. Physical Development - Gross and Fine motor skills – developing pencil grip and movement in the wrist and fingers.
3. Writing names – We write names on a daily basis
4. Forming new letter sounds
5. Writing CVC words
6. Writing captions
7. Writing simple sentences + tricky words.

### **Mathematics in the Foundation Stage**

Mathematics is taught using the Early Learning Goal as a basis and we loosely follow the White Rose scheme of work throughout the year.

The stages of learning in Mathematics are as follows:

1. Communication and language
2. Number sense – Understanding quantity
3. Number representation and recognition (Counting, matching numerals and amounts)

4. Shape and spatial awareness
5. Measurement – comparing and communicating about size
6. Patterns – recognising and creating
7. Addition and subtraction with quantities and objects
8. Problem solving – halving, doubling and sharing amounts

## RE

- \* In Class F we have 2 sessions of RE every week.
- \* We follow the 'Come and See' scheme of work – which covers 11 topics throughout the year including 2 other faiths.
- \* We have a Collective Worship every morning in school– this is where the children gather as a group (class, KS1 or whole school) to reflect and rejoice in prayer in preparation for the day ahead.

## P.E

- \* Children will have two P.E. sessions a week.
- \* In PE children develop many skills within the prime areas of learning. Children develop their gross motor, communication and collaboration skills.

When children are playing in the classroom environment, it is the role of the adult to mould those playful experiences into learning opportunities. Adults will observe and interact with children's play. Staff can then plan enhancements and activities to support and challenge children's learning and development. Children are assessed throughout the year and parents will be kept informed of their progress and development through midterm reports and parents evenings.

### **The Classroom Environment**

The classroom in the Foundation Stage has been considered to be the second teacher. It is an essential part of the curriculum, as it offers a wealth of



learning opportunities for children. It the main tool staff use to challenge children's learning and development. It is carefully planned for and adapted throughout the year.

The classroom environment consist of the indoor and outdoor areas, both of which are of equal importance. Children can explore, experiment and develop their own interests and skills through a mixture of child-led learning and planned adult-led learning.

Each area in the classroom is equipped with provision, which is enhanced throughout the year to ensure the promotion of a range of skills and learning opportunities, for children to meet all 7 Early Learning Goals.

Areas of the outdoor classroom:

- \* Sand Pit
- \* Mud Kitchen
- \* Water Area
- \* Garden Area
- \* Construction Area
- \* Investigation Area
- \* Den Building Area
- \* PE Equipment
- \* Role Play – wooden hut, bikes and car
- \* Reading shed
- \* Large writing equipment

Areas of the Indoor Classroom:

- \* Creative area – painting/junk modelling
- \* ICT area
- \* Reading area
- \* Writing area
- \* Malleable area
- \* Sand/water area
- \* Music area
- \* Jigsaw/game area

- \* Investigation area
- \* Block area/small construction area
- \* Home corner
- \* Small world area