

TO ALL PRE-SCHOOL PARENTS

Dear parents,

Welcome to St Alban's. I am sure that your time spent with us will be enjoyable for both you and your child. The aim of this booklet is to explain how we provide for your child's first year at school, and give information that helps you settle your child into their new routines.

At St. Alban's, we are fortunate to have a range of adults in the classroom. Alongside myself as the class teacher, there will be a General Teaching Assistant, Mrs Ruvolo and one other specialist teacher for one afternoon in the week, Miss Schofield. In addition, we work alongside Cambridge Regional College and Homerton University in training people to work with young children.

For the first week of their school life, children are invited to attend part time every morning. This enables them to gradually become used to myself, Mrs Ruvolo and to their new classroom and its routines. During the second week your child can stay all day if you feel they are able to, if not they can continue to attend part time. After the two weeks, we encourage children to attend full time. This is, of course, negotiable as all children are different and may require longer to adjust.

- Read often in front of and to your child. Encourage him or her to see it as a useful and enjoyable occupation.
- Let your child see that reading and writing has a purpose, by letting him or her help with shopping lists, letters, cards etc.
- Play matching games, memory games and complete jigsaw puzzles with your child.
- Ask your child to retell stories in the correct sequence.

'Thinking Skills' to encourage independence: Helping a child to think about what they might need for various tasks will encourage them to be self-reliant and independent; also encourage this independence by teaching them to change their clothes and shoes and showing them how to cut their food with a knife and fork. Encourage your child to ask questions and be inquisitive about the world around them.

Manipulative Skills: Give your child the opportunity to use scissors for cutting out pictures, shapes and different types of material. Experiment with different ways of mark-making, for example drawing, painting, pens, chalk etc.





Welcome to Reception!

We hope that you have found this information helpful and we look forward to you and your child joining St. Alban's Catholic Primary School. We are confident that your child will find our school to be a happy, comfortable, and stimulating environment, within which they will continue to develop at all levels and stages of their time with us.



Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This is a crucial part of Years curriculum as it is a prerequisite for success in areas of learning. We provide an environment that will enable your child to develop a positive sense of themselves and of others. We build on children's confidence, independence and individuality through praise and encouragement; we encourage children to value themselves and each other.



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Communication, Language and Literacy

This area of learning includes developing children's basic reading and writing skills through knowledge of sounds (phonemes) and using these emerging skills when beginning to read a range of texts. Children will practise forming their letters correctly and will begin to write without support. An important part of communication is the development of Speaking and Listening skills: we develop these in a variety of ways, daily, and through role play and performances to parents and other children in the school.

Mathematical Development

This includes developing children's awareness of number, through sorting, sharing, counting, measuring, using coins and writing numbers. They will be encouraged to solve counting and sharing problems in a practical way and will learn about 2D and 3D shapes. They will enjoy working with others in practical activities and will have fun recording their work.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

Children will find out about the world we live in, their environment as it is now and how it used to be, and technology. They will be experiencing the beginning of subjects such as Science,

Geography, knowledge achieved experience materials The child

how they are a part of a community and what that means.



History and ICT. This and understanding is through the practical of looking at resource and by experimenting. begins to understand

Physical Development

Children will develop their physical skills in a variety of ways:

- in the classroom through use of tools such as scissors, paintbrushes, glue sticks, pencils etc.
- through using construction equipment in different environments such as classroom and Outdoor Area.
- in the hall through using apparatus for balancing and climbing, or smaller equipment for throwing and catching
- responding to music through movement
- in the KS1 playground, using our outdoor toys and equipment.



The Early Years Curriculum

Children entering school have very diverse needs. The children in the Foundation Stage follow a learning programme, based on 'Curriculum Guidelines for the Foundation Stage', that is designed to take into account their individuality and to develop them according to their own needs and skills. This 'Early Years' curriculum lays the solid foundations young children need in order to make a smooth transition from pre-school to Key Stage 1, and for future progression through school.

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics
- Knowledge and Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development
- Religious Education

This booklet will help you and your child make a positive and happy start to school. It outlines how we work and it informs you about some practical arrangements.

Within the Foundation Stage we provide a broad, relevant, challenging and, above all, practical curriculum with opportunities for your child to reach his/her full potential.

First and foremost, we aim to ensure your child feels secure, happy and valued in their new environment by providing a supportive and stimulating introduction to all aspects of school life. Working closely with you, as parents and carers, your child can move forward with confidence and independence.

In Reception at St. Alban's our initial focus is on the personal and social development of your child. It is for this reason that your child will be in school for half days for the first half term. Although many of your children may be used to full days at nurseries or pre-schools, we still feel that the half days are important in order for us to get to know your child as an individual and for them to get used to school routines in a small group.

Creative Development

Children learn to express themselves through creative work such as art, music, dance, design, stories and role-play. They learn to develop their own ideas and to respond to the ideas of others. They also develop the essential skills of working collaboratively with other children and adults.



In Foundation Stage our 'work' is well-structured play, through which we encourage children to achieve their learning goals, and beyond.

Rewards and Rules

We encourage all children to think for themselves and to take responsibility for their own actions. We do this through motivating

and praising and helping them to think about being a part of a community. It is important for children to understand boundaries and basic rules to enable them to be safe and happy. We develop our own class rules from the children's ideas, in addition to the basic school rules. Children involved in this task of developing rules then feel ownership and hence are more aware of them. We use stickers to reward achievement and effort, whether it is through being polite and considerate, helping another child or through trying hard with work. We expect that children will be able to explain to their parents/carers why they been awarded a sticker, and to take responsibility for this aspect of cause and effect.

Sharing Activities at Home

Below are a range of activities, incorporating different areas of the curriculum that you may like to do with your child at home.

Numbers: Games using the environment (for example counting as you go up steps) will give your child confidence. Counting the plates on the table and matching them to the people that need plates and counting that there are enough cups for everyone. Singing number and counting songs. Talk about different in terms of size, weight, shape or colour.

Literacy: Games like I-spy using the sounds of the letters. Fine motor skill activities, such as threading beads or playing with playdough, will help your child to have control of a pencil, or use scissors correctly. Looking at letter shapes in the environment, for example road signs, posters, shop names, etc. To get ready for reading, try the following activities:

Your child needs to listen so that he/she can receive information and carry out instructions. They need to be given new words in order for their vocabulary to grow and to enable them to develop intellectually.

I hope your child will be very happy during their time at this school.

Yours sincerely,

Ms Emma Eden
Reception Class teacher
St Alban's Catholic Primary School



"St Alban's School exists to provide high quality education within a living Catholic Community which values each individual and enables every child to reach his or her full potential."



Welcome to
St. Alban's Catholic Primary School