

**St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School
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PARENTS' HANDBOOK



Spring 2020

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INTRODUCTION

We welcome you to St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School and we look forward to you working with us in partnership to provide the very best for your child, supporting their academic, spiritual and emotional development.

This handbook contains day to day information necessary for the smooth running of our school. We hope that you will find it useful. If you have any queries or cannot find the information you need, please contact the school office.

Much useful information is contained on the school website which is updated regularly: www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk Following the school on Twitter (@svdp-school), will also give you a great insight into current activities at school. This is also published on the front page of the school website.

1 School Hours

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Main School | Morning | 8.50am - 12 noon |
| | Morning break | 10.35am - 10.50am |
| | Afternoon | 1.00pm - 3.15pm |
| Nursery | Morning: | 8.45am-11.45am |
| | Afternoon: | 12.30 - 3.30pm |

Children should arrive at school for 8.50am when they are admitted to the classrooms. Please do not bring your children before this time unless you are able to supervise them.

Late children should be brought directly to the School Office where they will be registered and taken to their classroom by a member of staff. Children arriving after 9am are marked as late. Classroom external doors are locked as soon as possible after 8.50am for security reasons.

2 Collecting Children

Nursery and all Infant children must always be dropped off and collected by an adult. If a different person from the one the child is expecting will be collecting your child please let the class teacher or school office staff know in advance. Throughout the school, children will only be released to named authorised adults who have your consent to pick up. A form is available to nominate those whom you authorise to collect your children. If a child in year 5 or 6 walks home this must also be notified in writing.

3 Organisation of classes

There are two classes for each year group from Reception to Year 6. You will be notified of your child's class prior to admission.

4 Safeguarding Children

The school works in partnership with parents to support children in every way possible. Government guidance "Safeguarding Children in Education" highlights the school's role in protecting children from a range of potential dangers and places a clear responsibility on schools to ensure that they work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

"All parents need to understand that schools have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are their pupils/students, that this responsibility necessitates a Child Protection Policy and procedures and that a school or institution may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare."
(DCSF-2010)

As a result, if concerns are raised within the school or a child, parent or staff member reports a situation involving a possible allegation, we refer the case to Hertfordshire County Council. Mr White is the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mrs Sherry is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Designated Senior Persons for safeguarding also include Mrs Curry, Mrs Hargrave and Mrs Blythe. Mrs Geraldine Cartwright is the nominated governor for child protection issues. They can all be contacted on 01438 729555.

Our school's Child Protection Policy and other related policies are all available on the school website. The Designated Safeguarding lead will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns parents/carers may have about child protection policies and practice. We always welcome feedback on safeguarding matters.

5 Behaviour

Children are taught to respect each other, their teachers and all who are associated with the school. We encourage them to be well mannered and courteous, to take pride in their work, their appearance and the appearance of the school.

Any behaviour which causes hurt or offence to others is not acceptable. If a child is persistently troublesome or is involved in a serious breach of conduct, parents are consulted so that home and school can work together in solving the problem and planning the measures to be taken.

Any form of bullying is unacceptable within the school. Children are encouraged to report any problems to teachers, and parents who have concerns in this area should let the school know immediately. Our school policy is available on the website. If you have an issue with another pupil which concerns your child, please do not approach the child or his/her parents directly, but please do inform the school so that the matter can be addressed.

6 Special Needs

We make provision for children with a wide variety of individual needs in our school. Please contact Mrs Curry if you think your child may fall into this category.

7 Parents' Consultations

Consultation evenings are held twice a year when parents are invited to come into school to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. In addition, an Open Evening is held during the Summer Term when children's work will be on show and the class teachers present the curriculum and activities that the children will be undertaking during the year.

If you wish to discuss your child's progress or any other concerns with the teacher or Mr White (Headteacher) or Mrs Sherry (Deputy Headteacher) at any other time, please make an appointment through the School Office. Please remember that teachers are very busy greeting pupils at 8.50am and therefore it is easier to speak to them at the end of the school day.

8 Reports

Annual school reports are sent out towards the end of the Summer Term. They include an assessment of the progress, behaviour, overall development of your child and their attendance record.

Pupils in Year 6 undertake National Curriculum Assessment Tests (SATs) and parents are notified of the results. Pupils in Year 2 are also involved in statutory assessments and parents are notified of the results. Year 1 undertake a phonics test and parents are notified of the results. A statutory assessment also occurs at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (i.e. at the end of Reception) and this is reported to parents. All these take place in the summer term.

9 Homework

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils take home reading books and reading activities to share with their families. A notebook is also sent home for parents and teachers to make comments about books enjoyed and progress made. We also like children to follow up topic work by visiting libraries, museums etc. When appropriate, unfinished work may be sent home for completion.

In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 we encourage pupils to continue to read at home every evening. Books may be borrowed from the school or class library. Research into different topics and journal preparation will be required.

Mathematics homework and word level work will also be set each week in all year groups.

We ask that parents oversee this work and ensure that books are returned promptly.

10 Attendance

Regular attendance at school is very important and absence is closely monitored by us and the Attendance Improvement Officer from Hertfordshire County Council. Late attendance is also monitored.

If your child is not going to be at school, please telephone us as early as possible to tell us the situation. Our answerphone is on 24 hours a day, so you do not have to wait until school time to call us. It is important that you let us know before our deadline of 9.30am and please make sure that you leave your child's name, class and reason for absence. If we have not been notified of an absence, you will be called during that morning to clarify the reasons.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, if we are unable to contact you, we will work our way through any other contact numbers we have for you. Please keep all changes to numbers up to date as if we are unable to contact you in such circumstances, we are required by HCC safeguarding procedures to make a home visit or ask the police to do so.

We ask that you do not take children out of school for family holidays. Current legislation does not allow these to be authorised. We find that long breaks from school are detrimental to children's education and that they find it difficult to regain lost ground. If you need to remove your child from school for any reason an Authorised Absence Form, available from the school office, must be completed and returned to the school prior to the proposed absence. Mr White will then consider whether regulations allow the absence to be authorised or not. Failure to do this will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised and may be referred to the Attendance Improvement Officer.

11 Medicine/Sickness

Procedures for managing prescription medicines which need to be taken during the school day:

Medicines should only be taken to school when essential; that is where it would be detrimental to a child's health if the medicine were not administered during the school day. The school accept medicines that have been prescribed by a doctor or dentist or a pharmacist prescriber (**only** if the medicine needs to be taken more than 3 times a day).

Medicines should always be provided in the original container as dispensed and the child's name on the prescription label, including the prescriber's instructions for administration. Arrangements must be made in advance and a consent form signed by the parent.

Medicines that need to be taken three times a day can be taken in the morning, after school hours and at bedtime and therefore do not need to be administered whilst the pupil is at school.

If your child has been sick, had an upset stomach, or diarrhoea, they must not come into school until 24 hours after the last episode.

Inhalers and Epipens:

Epipens:

Epipens are kept in the dining hall on the left of the hatch area in the cupboard marked with an Epipen sign. Inside the cupboard are all the Epipens, each one in a container with the pupil's name and picture on the front. Details of the child and next of kin are inside. This tub is replicated in each child's classroom. It is the responsibility of the parents to update these Epipens when necessary. Training is given to staff by the school nurse at regular intervals. As with Asthma medication one of these tubs will be taken on any trips involving those particular pupils. A picture of any child needing an Epipen will be kept in their class register; this will inform any member of staff/supply teacher that a pupil in their class may need Epipen treatment.

Asthma:

Treatments will be kept in the classroom in a place where the child may access them if necessary but must not be available to other children. It is the responsibility of the parents to update these inhalers when necessary. These inhalers will be taken on trips, ideally carried by the child.

12 Care Plans

It is important that the school is made aware of any medical conditions that will impact upon your child's time at school. Where the condition is serious, you will be asked to complete a Care-Plan proforma for your child before he/she starts school. This will need to be updated each year, or sooner should the condition change. A meeting with our Inclusion Lead, Mrs Sherry, may also be arranged at this time to ensure that all needs are met.

13 Trips

Most classes will have a trip during the year which will be linked to the curriculum. We ask parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of these visits. No child will be excluded from any trip if parents are unable to pay. However, the visit will be cancelled for all the children if we receive insufficient funds to cover our expenses.

Cheques to pay for school trips should be made payable to 'St Vincent de Paul School'. You can also pay via electronic transfer using Wisepay, the link is on our website.

These guidelines also apply to swimming and sailing lessons. If any charge causes difficulty please contact Mr White. This will be treated in the strictest confidence.

14 Uniform

Our school colours are emerald green and navy. School uniform is available direct from Trutex Mail Order. Orders can be made by post, telephone or via their web site. Trutex catalogues are available from the school office. The only piece of Trutex uniform which is compulsory is the emerald green jumper or cardigan.

www.trutexdirect.com The school code is: LEA00439PA

The uniform is as follows.

| Winter | Summer |
|--|--|
| Boys Navy tailored trousers, long or short. Emerald sweatshirt with logo. White shirt or polo shirt. Girls Navy skirt, pinafore dress or tailored trousers. Emerald sweatshirt or cardigan with logo. White blouse or polo shirt. | Boys As Winter. Girls As Winter and/or Summer dress in emerald green/light green check or stripe. |

Pupils also require a change of shoes for indoor use (ideally plimsolls). All school footwear must be black.

15 P.E. Kit

Boys and Girls - Infant and Junior

Plain white T shirt

Plain Navy sports shorts (no logos)

Drawstring bag

Plimsolls for indoor games

Juniors only

Black Trainers for outdoor games

Navy Tracksuit for cold weather (no logos)

16 Jewellery

No jewellery or watches may be worn in school, this includes no earrings.

If you wish your child to have their ears pierced this should take place at the beginning of the summer holidays to ensure the ears are healed before returning in September.

17 Hairstyles

Hair should be kept tidy and presentable. High fashion styles, including colours, coloured extensions, shaved steps or shaved patterns are not permitted.

18 Personal Property

Children are responsible for looking after their own property in school. Expensive toys and valuable items should not be brought to school.

Children should not bring mobile phones into school unless it is needed for independent travel. The school operates a Mobile Phone Policy which is available on the school website.

Occasionally books or items of special interest may be brought to school if requested by the class teacher. St Vincent de Paul Catholic School accepts no liability for personal property brought into school.

19 School Meals

Well balanced meals with a choice for both first and second courses are prepared on the school premises.

All Key Stage 1 pupils (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2) are entitled to a free school meal.

Dinner money (for Junior pupils only) should be paid in advance on Monday morning, given to the teacher by the child. Cash or cheque payments should be in an envelope clearly marked with your child's name and class. Cheques for dinner money should be made payable to Herts Catering Ltd. You can also pay via electronic transfer using Wisepay, the link is on our website. If you wish, you may pay in advance for a period longer than a week e.g. half-termly. If you wish to change the meal pattern a week's notice must be given. Children who bring a packed lunch will eat with the children who have a school meal. The lunch should be packed in a suitable container with your child's name and class on the bottom. Drinks should not be in cans or glass bottles. Carbonated drinks are not allowed.

Encouraging healthy life-styles, packed lunches should not contain chocolate bars or sweets.

Many children have allergies and, as such, children are not permitted to share items from their lunch.

We ask parents not to include nuts or products containing nuts in their child's packed lunch as we have a number of children with potentially life threatening nut allergies.

20 Milk and Fruit

Children in Nursery and those children in Reception who are still 4 for that whole term receive a free carton of milk at break time. Children who dislike milk will be offered water. No other drinks or snacks are allowed unless there is a medical reason. If this is the case please contact Mr White.

Infant children may have milk which must be paid for in advance. Free milk is also supplied to those Infant children who are eligible and registered for free school meals. Contact the school office for more details.

Children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 also receive a free piece of fruit or vegetable every day. Children in other year groups may bring in a piece of fruit or vegetable for a morning snack if they wish.

All children are encouraged to drink plenty of water during the day, therefore, please supply your child with a water bottle with a sports top. This must ONLY contain water, NO juices.

21 Assembly Times

Parents are warmly invited to attend Friday afternoon assemblies. These take place at 2.30pm and are prepared by each class on a rota basis. The schedule for these assemblies is available in the school Diary Dates leaflet.

22 Payments to School

Children must not bring loose money to school. Money for meals, school trips, school fund etc. must be in an envelope bearing the child's name and class with the purpose of the payment clearly marked. The envelope should be handed in by the pupil to the class teacher first thing.

Cheques

Dinner money cheques should be made payable to Herts Catering Ltd.

All other cheques should be made payable to St Vincent de Paul School.

Wisepay

Parents may pay for trips, milk, dinner money, music lessons and school fund using an online system called Wisepay. Parents will be given a password when their child starts school and the link to Wisepay is through our website:

www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk

23 Parking and Road Safety

In the interest of safety please observe the following points:

- * Please do not park inside the school grounds unless you have a parking permit.
- * Please do not park in the Church car park next door, unless you have been advised by the school that it is permitted (arrangements are currently under review).
- * Please use either the Fairlands Valley car park or the car park in Colestrete when delivering or collecting children.
- * At all times drive slowly and carefully near the school.
- * Supervise your children and do not allow them onto the school drive or to play near parked cars.
- * Be considerate to our neighbours when you are parking.
- * Always abide by the highway code

24 Parent and Staff Association (PSA)

All parents are automatically PSA members and are warmly invited to attend PSA meetings on a regular or occasional basis. The PSA makes a major contribution to the life of the school by running social events, fund raising and helping to foster a spirit of community. Dates and times of meetings and events are publicised well in advance. Please consider how you could support this great work by our parents and staff volunteers.

25 School Grounds expectations

Visitors must not smoke on the school grounds (this includes e-cigarettes).

Dogs are expected to be tied up outside the school premises or, if feasible, they must be carried the entire time they are on school grounds.

We ask children and adults not to ride bikes or scooters whilst on the premises. We have many toddlers and elderly relatives who are regularly on the school grounds and children on bikes or scooters will raise the risk of an accident.

26 Volunteers

We warmly welcome parents who wish to help in school. This need not be in your own child's class. Tasks involved might be helping with displays, computer work, art and craft etc. We also need parents to help in the school library. If you would like to assist please contact Mrs Sherry.

27 Music Lessons

Peripatetic music teachers visit the school for brass and violin lessons with Junior pupils. A charge is made for these sessions. Please contact the school office if you would like your child to participate. School of Rock also offer lessons.

28 Extra-Curricular Activities

A number of extra curricular activities are available for the children. If any of these activities are held after school, children must be collected promptly from the school.

29 Cool After School Club

The club (which is independently run) starts at 3.15pm and finishes at 5.45pm. Children are collected from school by two supervisors and are taken to our Infant Hall where the activities take place. Please call into the school office for more information.

30 Breakfast Club

The Breakfast Club runs from 7.45am every school day and the last breakfast is served at 8.20am. The children stay at Breakfast Club until it is time to go into class for registration at 8.50am.

If you wish your child to attend the Breakfast Club, they must fill in the application form and take this along to the first session you wish to use. Initial registration costs £4.50 and includes a voucher for one session. Application forms are available from the school office.

Each session of the Breakfast Club costs £3.00 and must be paid for on the day by cash or voucher.

Entrance to the Breakfast Club is through the main door to the Infant Building.

31 Governors

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Mr John Sloan | Chair – Foundation Governor |
| Mr Jon White | Headteacher |
| Mrs Bernadette Bullock | Vice-Chair - Foundation Governor, Parent |
| Mrs Rosemary Sherry | Deputy Headteacher – Associate Governor |
| Mrs Michelle Ambrose | Elected Staff Governor |
| Mrs Geraldine Cartwright | Foundation Governor |
| Mrs Mary Hewitson | Foundation Governor |
| Mr Robert Neave | Foundation Governor |
| Mrs T Taylor Brookes | Foundation Governor |
| Mr Paul Volske | Foundation Governor |
| Mr James Keogh | Local Authority Governor |
| Mrs E Marshall | Parent Governor |
| Mrs Siobhan Morgan | Parent Governor |
| Ms Rakhee Shah | Co-opted Governor |
| Mrs Melanie Farr | Clerk to the Governors |

32 Parish Links

The parish priests work with the teachers to maintain contact between school and parish. Liturgies and Masses are arranged on a regular basis which parents and parishioners are invited to attend. Children visit St Josephs each week on a rota to attend Mass.

33 School Building Fund

As a Voluntary Aided Catholic School, we are required to pay our buildings insurance and 10% of all major repairs to the school buildings if we are successful in bidding for funds. The Diocese of Westminster has set up a fund to which all VA schools contribute. These schools can then access this Fund when they need help to finance larger projects. We ask that each family contributes £33.00 per year to our School Fund from which we pay our insurance costs and make our contribution to the Diocesan Building Fund. Information is sent out to parents in the Autumn Term.

If you are an income tax payer, we would like you to consider the Gift Aid Scheme which allows us to reclaim the income tax which you have already paid on this money.

34 Complaints

If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's school life, please first draw the matter to the attention of the class teacher. If necessary the matter will be referred to Mr White, our Headteacher. If the situation still is not resolved a formal complaints procedure is followed (Policy is on the website).

Please remember that no concern is ever too big or too small for us to deal with. Small concerns easily become bigger problems if not addressed. We are always happy to speak to you.

We hope that you have found the information in this booklet useful. If there is something that you feel would have been useful to know, please do inform us so that we can update our information for parents.

Your constructive feedback is always appreciated.