

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School

Bedwell Crescent
Stevenage
Herts SG1 1NJ
Tel: 01438 729555
Email: admin@stvincent.herts.sch.uk
Website: www.stvincent.herts.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr P. Keane
Chair of Governors: Mr J. Sloan

SCHOOL PROSPECTUS



Our Mission Statement

*“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn
love and grow together”*

September 2016

Dear Parents

We believe that a modern Catholic primary school must be a partnership if it is to work effectively. It is up to us all, church, school and home, to ensure that we help our children to learn from their living and to create a secure and loving environment that places Christianity at the heart of their lives. Children do not simply attend St. Vincent de Paul School: they and their families become part of the school, and the school becomes a significant part of their lives.

It is our conviction that a successful education is a joint exercise and we therefore seek the involvement of parents at all times.

We have prepared this prospectus to show you something of the feeling and aspirations of St. Vincent de Paul School. It cannot, of course, answer every question you may have. I hope that you will come and see the school for yourselves.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Yours sincerely

Mr P. Keane
Headteacher

Mr. J. Sloan
Chair of Governors

Our Mission Statement

“We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn love and grow together”

We aim

- To create a living Christian Community of pupils, staff, parents, governors and parish where the teaching and values of Christ are at the heart of all our activities.
- To sustain the Catholic life of the school through the religious teaching, through the experiences of prayer and worship and through the Christian values of the school.
- To provide a secure and welcoming environment for the children, parents, staff and visitors.
- To recognise and respond to the individual needs of our children. Each child is valued as a member of our community.
- To foster a happy and stimulating atmosphere of mutual trust and consideration in which children can develop the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to enhance their future lives.
- To provide opportunities and encouragement where the full potential of every pupil will develop.
- To cultivate an awareness and respect for the needs of others, so that each child may learn to live as a member of God's family world-wide, in a peaceful and fair multi-cultural society.

GENERAL INFORMATION

St Vincent de Paul School is a Catholic Voluntary Aided School. It is a co-educational primary school catering for the needs of children between the ages of 3+ and 11. The Archdiocese of Westminster is the trustee and the school is maintained by Hertfordshire County Council.

The School Day

School starts at	8.50am
Playtime	10.35am
Dinner Time	12noon
Afternoon School starts	1.00pm
School ends	3.15pm

Throughout our school there are two classes for each year group. In the Foundation Stage there are two Reception classes and two Nursery sessions. At Key Stage 1 there are four classes and at Key Stage 2 there are eight classes.

We have a morning and afternoon Nursery class with a maximum of 26 in each session. The Nursery staff have regular contact with the Good News Playgroup, thus making the transition into our school as smooth as possible.

The Nursery Day

Morning Nursery starts at	8.45am
Morning Nursery finishes at	11.45am
Afternoon Nursery starts at	12.30pm
Afternoon Nursery finishes at	3.30pm

OUR GOVERNORS

Our school Governors work closely with the school. They are kept up to date with news and views and meet on a regular basis.

Our governors can be contacted either via the school or email on: governor@stvincent.herts.sch.uk

Our Governors are:

Mr John Sloan	Chair (Foundation Governor)
Mrs Chris Akrill	Vice-Chair (Foundation Governor)
Mr Peter Keane	Headteacher
Mrs Geraldine Cartwright	Foundation Governor
Mrs Mary Hewitson	Foundation Governor
Mrs Joy Singzon	Foundation Governor, Parent
Mrs Catherine Tollington	L.A. Governor
Mr Ryan Pearse	Foundation Governor
Mrs Michelle Ambrose	Staff Governor
Mrs Christine Shimali	Foundation Governor
Mr Mick Allin	Foundation Governor
Mrs Kenny Olofinmoyin	Foundation Governor
Mrs Rosemary Sherry	Associate Governor
Mrs G Palmer	Clerk to the Governors

Vacancies – Two parent Governors (elections taking place when gone to press)

OUR CURRICULUM

We try to ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced education which is relevant to their needs, meets national requirements and will be enjoyable. Children may work individually, in groups or as a class. The teachers work in year group teams and develop plans of work for the forthcoming year. They plan this work in detail each week.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

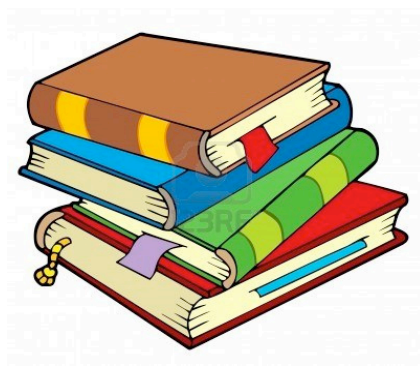


The whole Catholic community is responsible for the religious education of its children. Our governors, parents, staff, priests and sisters assume this responsibility to co-operate and complement one another in bringing our children to a living, active, maturing faith.

Religious Education is the heart of our curriculum. It is a living vibrant activity that involves learning to live in Christ, not simply "learning" about the Church.

Plans for Religious Education are stimulated by the liturgical events of the church calendar supported by related Bible Studies and regular attendance at Parish Mass on a rota basis (Year 1-6). Class assemblies are included, as well as whole school celebrations which family and friends are warmly invited to attend.

ENGLISH

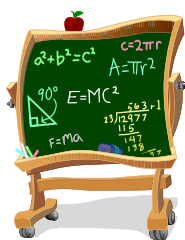


We consider **reading** to be of crucial importance. We have structured reading schemes through which our children progress to become fluent, enthusiastic and independent readers. We believe that parental involvement is the key to developing the child's confidence in and enjoyment of reading. Reading books are sent home with the child and parents are encouraged to help as much as possible. We encourage parents to hear their children read regularly, ask questions about the stories and characters and to tell the children the words they do not know. The materials through which our children develop as readers include fiction, non-fiction and poetry. We have a large central fiction and reference library.

There is a **handwriting** style in use for the whole school. Children are given writing practice in order to achieve a pleasant, legible hand. Good **spelling** habits are encouraged through developing the children's knowledge through phonics, word families and the use of dictionaries.

The children are also taught to **write** for different purposes; stories, poems, descriptive and factual writing. The children's **speaking and listening** skills are developed through drama, story telling and factual presentations. New technologies such as CDs, DVDs, interactive whiteboards and the internet are used to enhance and support the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS



The children study a broad and balanced Mathematics curriculum. The areas we teach are concerned with Number, Algebra, Measures, Shape, Space and Data Handling.

We believe that the best approach to developing mathematical thinking in children comes through practical and mental activities leading to formal recording.

We set by ability in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

SCIENCE



An exploring and enquiring mind makes learning and acquiring knowledge possible. We are committed to providing opportunities for our children to enquire about the "what", "how" and "why" of Science. Thus they are taught to design and carry out investigations and interpret their results and findings.

Parents can help a great deal by responding positively to children's questions and encouraging them to explore the world around them.

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY



We aim to enable pupils to gain basic Information Communication Technology skills and become familiar with computers and other new technologies. Pupils are encouraged to use I.C.T. in a cross-curricular context and to decide for themselves when it is appropriate for their work.

Pupils have access to our purpose built Computer Suite.

HISTORY



An awareness of the past is developed from the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) through stories, artefacts, buildings, music etc. Throughout the school, work is presented in many different ways e.g. display models, friezes and display folders.

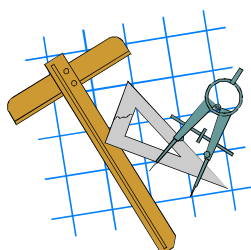
Visits to museums and historical buildings are arranged, if possible, to bring the topics alive.

GEOGRAPHY



We aim to develop within the children a greater knowledge and understanding of the world around them. We foster a caring attitude towards the environment, starting with their home and school locality and extending to cover other areas of Britain, Europe and the world.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY



The essence of our Design and Technology curriculum is to develop careful planning, making and reviewing of a project.

The children are always encouraged to choose the best materials and tools for the task and to work in an ordered and safe fashion.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION



During Physical Education we aim to develop control, co-ordination and body awareness which the children learn through observation, planning, performance and evaluation.

Connections are made between fitness and health.

The children have the use of two well-equipped P. E. halls, two hard-surfaced playgrounds and extensive playing fields.

ART AND DESIGN



The children experience Art and Design in a wide range of mediums including sewing, print, painting and model making.

This includes creative work as well as work done in connection with other areas of the curriculum.

MUSIC



Music plays an important part in the life of the school. We aim to encourage a love for music through listening, composing and performing. The children enjoy singing and playing instruments at concerts, assemblies and Mass.

Recorder lessons are part of the Music curriculum in Year 4. Group and individual violin and brass lessons are available.

HOMEWORK

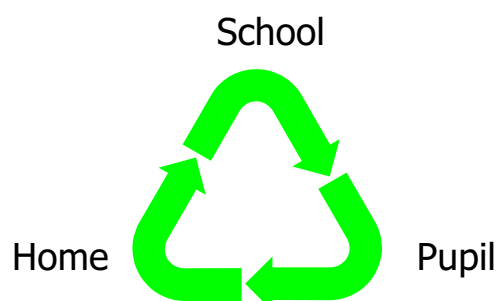


We believe that Homework is an important factor in a child's education and we hope that parents will encourage children to complete and return their work on time.

PASTORAL CARE AND DISCIPLINE

The overall Pastoral Care of the children is the responsibility of the Headteacher. The child's immediate needs are catered for by the class teacher, but this responsibility is shared by all staff who try to ensure the happiness and well-being of each child. Children are taught to respect each other, their teachers and all who are associated with the school. They are expected to be well-mannered and courteous, to take pride in their work, their appearance and the appearance of the school. The cultivation of self-discipline is encouraged and sanctions are rarely necessary.

HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT



As a child enters our school, we ask that they and their family enter into an agreement with us in which we each promise to work together in the best interest of the children's education.

PARENT CONSULTATIONS AND SCHOOL REPORTS



Parents' consultation evenings are held twice a year, once in the Autumn term and again in the Spring term, when parents can come to school to view their child's work and to discuss their progress and targets with the teacher.

School reports are sent out in the Summer term with an assessment of the progress, behaviour and overall development of the child. In addition to these occasions, teachers are always willing to discuss any worries that you may have by appointment through the school office.

Towards the end of the Summer term we hold an Open Evening where parents and children are invited to visit all areas of the school.

SPECIAL NEEDS

It is not uncommon for children to experience some specific difficulty during their school career, and all our teachers are aware of this. If any concerns arise, these are shared with parents. Extra encouragement from home and inside the classroom with teacher or Teaching Assistant help is often sufficient to help the child over the difficulty.

If the teacher or parent is still concerned, more detailed differentiated work is planned, and extra help, either from our Special Needs Co-ordinator (SenCo), Miss Williamson or Teaching Assistant, will be allocated to the child.

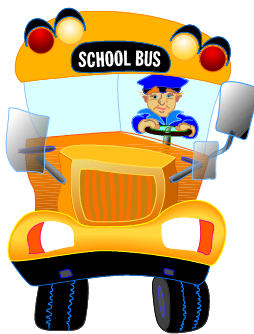
Overall, sympathetic teaching and the awareness that each child is an individual with different needs help to make our school an effective learning place for all children.

SEX EDUCATION

It is the policy of the school's governing body that Sex Education is provided at the school. During Year 6 the children are shown a video explaining puberty. This is followed by a teacher/nurse led discussion about the physical and emotional changes that come with adolescence.

Parents will be informed when this is to take place and will be given the opportunity to preview the DVD.

SCHOOL TRIPS AND CHARGES



Throughout the school, children are taken on trips which are considered to be an important part of their education and we ask parents to make a contribution towards the cost of these visits. These contributions are voluntary and no child will be excluded from any trip or visit on the grounds of the parents' inability to pay.

We must, however, make it clear that the activity will be cancelled for all children if we do not receive sufficient contributions towards the cost.

We charge for materials used in cookery, sewing and model making; the finished item may then be taken home.

If any charge causes difficulty, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Keane. This will, of course, be treated in the strictest confidence.

SCHOOL BUILDING FUND



Our school has 'voluntary aided' status which means that although we are in the state system, we can retain our traditions and organise our school on the basis of the teachings of the Church.

In return, we are required by law to raise 10% of the cost of developing and maintaining the school buildings.

This fund is called the 'School Building Fund' and relies on the financial support of the parents who decide to send their children to our school. Therefore each family is asked for a contribution of £30 and you will receive more information when your child starts school.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

We do expect all our children to wear school uniform. We ask for parents' co-operation to ensure that their children come to school in the correct uniform, clearly marked with the child's name.

Full details are in the Parents' Handbook.

CLUBS

We run several clubs and activities during lunchtimes or after school. These are offered according to interest shown and facilities available. At the moment they include RE Club, Boys and Girls football, netball, Science, Writing, Junior and Infant choirs, Chess, ICT and Choi Kwang Do.

CYCLING PROFICIENCY



Our Year 6 pupils are encouraged to study for and take their Cycling Proficiency Test.

Cycle racks are available at school. Parents should ensure that pupils are provided with locks for bicycles as the school cannot be responsible for losses.

THE COOL AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

There is an After School Club which currently operates in the Infant Building.

Please call into the school office for further details.

PARENT STAFF ASSOCIATION

The school has a thriving PSA which contributes greatly to the school. Successful social events are organised which help to foster the community spirit of the school.

Many of the events are excellent fund-raisers, allowing the PSA to contribute materially to the resources of the school. Meetings are also a forum for discussions about aspects of school life.

All parents are warmly invited to join the PSA or simply to attend meetings. It is a good way to get to know staff and other parents and if you would like further details, please contact the school office.

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 abuse 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. Mrs Sherry is the Designated Senior Person for child protection, Mrs Ireton is the Deputy Senior Person for child protection and 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 a copy of Hertfordshire Area Child Protection Procedures are available on request for parents/carers to see. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection will be happy to discuss any questions or concerns parents/carers may have about child protection policies and practice.

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 the Headteacher.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL - NURSERY



We admit children to our Nursery in September (birthdays that fall between 1st September and 31st August). They attend Nursery for 5 sessions per week, either in the mornings or in the afternoons.

Our Nursery is fully integrated into the life of the school and aims to provide an environment which fosters Christian values and gives the children the opportunity to develop social skills, physical co-ordination, speaking and listening skills, an appreciation of books and stories, understanding of mathematical concepts through simple practical activities, an enjoyment of music and the opportunity to develop their creativity through using a variety of media and materials.

In the Nursery we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum Guidance, which involves small groups of children participating in a structured learning activity for a short period. Each child is then able to plan which other activities they would like to do, find the materials they will need and tidy away when they have finished. We find that this builds up confidence and independence.

Our Nursery has strong links with the Reception class; together they form the Foundation Stage of education. Nursery children attend Infant assemblies and participate in Infant liturgies and family masses. They also use the Infant hall for P. E. and are able to visit the Reception class for short periods. This makes for a much smoother transition when the children move on to Reception as they are already familiar with their surroundings and many of the staff. They settle very happily into their new class.

Please see the separate Nursery Prospectus for further details.