



# St. Bede's

Catholic Primary School

## Foundation Stage Information Booklet





# St. Bede's

Catholic Primary School

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## ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER

*Inspiring independent learners with Jesus by our side*

Dear Parents/Carers

We welcome you and your child to our school and hope that your time with us will be both a happy and fruitful experience.

At St. Bede's Catholic Primary School our aim is to help your child develop their full potential, acknowledging that s/he is an individual with many and varied talents.

We strive to provide a wide range of sound educational experiences, which with your support as caring parents will help us to achieve our aims.

Best wishes on behalf of the whole team.

Mr. Chris Lawton  
Chair of Governors



## Our Mission Statement

### **ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE TOGETHER**

*Our purpose is to develop learning in a Christian, caring environment and to promote the Catholic faith.*

#### **Inspiring independent learners with Jesus by our side**

##### OUR CORE VALUES

#### **Pride ~ Respect ~ Responsibility ~ Challenge ~ Curiosity**

Our aim is:

- To **enable** everyone within the school to develop their full potential - spiritually, academically, socially and physically.
- To **provide** a high quality education which promotes the most desirable attitudes, values, skills and understanding.
- To **foster** the Catholic faith of the school community through prayer, worship and liturgy and to encourage and develop links with the family and the parish.
- To **promote** moral issues - justice, care, forgiveness, respect, self-discipline and to value the importance of relationships both within school and in the wider community.
- To **promote** equal opportunities by acknowledging and respecting the needs of individual children and by celebrating their achievements.
- To **maintain** school improvement through critical appraisal and the pursuit of challenging targets.

At St. Bede's we follow *The Way, The Truth and The Life* syllabus for our Religious Education. A developing understanding of the love of the Lord Jesus Christ is central to the daily life of our children. In Reception, your child will learn about how God created the world; God's gift of Jesus; how to respond to the love of Jesus; the true meaning of forgiveness; new life through Jesus and the Church family of God.



## What is the Foundation Stage?

The Foundation Stage is the period of education from age three to five. During the first year the children may be in a range of settings such as LEA nursery schools or classes, private day nurseries, playgroups or childminder provision.

The second year of the Foundation Stage is often called the Reception year as the majority of children join a school reception class during this time. Children at St. Bede's join the reception class in the September of the academic year when they become five.

## Why is it important?

The Foundation Stage claims its name and importance from the fact it gives children secure foundations for later learning. Early experiences affect children's attitude to learning so it is vitally important we get it right.

All children learn best from experiences that are suitable for their stage of development. Play is key to the way young children learn. Through play children can develop, for example: the confidence needed for learning; the social skills needed for personal development and the skills needed for reading and writing.

We encourage independence from an early stage to aid problem solving skills. Taking all this into account, the children will be given the opportunity to learn through a carefully planned, well-balanced, topic based curriculum.



## What does it involve?

There are seven areas of learning and development in early years. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

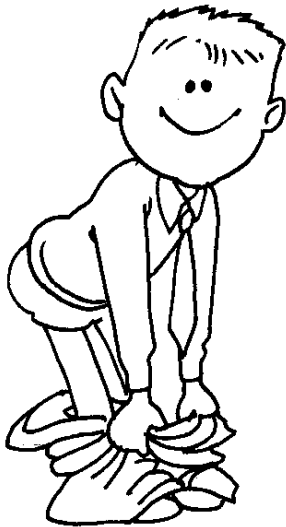
- **Communication and language development:** giving children opportunities to experience a rich language environment; to develop their confidence and skills in expressing themselves; and to speak and listen in a range of situations.
- **Physical development:** providing opportunities for young children to be active and interactive; and to develop their co-ordination, control, and movement. Children must also be helped to understand the importance of physical activity, and to make healthy choices in relation to food.
- **Personal, social and emotional development:** helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves, and others; to form positive relationships and develop respect for others; to develop social skills and learn how to manage their feelings; to understand appropriate behaviour in groups; and to have confidence in their own abilities.
- **Literacy development:** encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
- **Mathematical development:** providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measures.
- **Understanding the world:** guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.
- **Expressive arts and design:** enabling children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play, and design and technology.

During the Foundation Stage, these areas of learning will be introduced in ways that are suitable for young children. i.e. through practical, fun, stimulating and challenging activities. The children will be given opportunities to build upon their existing skills and interests to aid their development.

To help your child during this important stage of development, we suggest that you encourage progress in the skills outlined in this booklet.

### Personal Skills

When your child starts school it would be helpful if he/she could do some of these things....



Dress and undress him/herself.



Put on and fasten his/her Coat.

Small fingers find some of these difficult to master but do encourage them. It does help when changing for PE if your child is wearing a short sleeved blouse or shirt in the winter.



Change shoes and trainers.



Use the toilet properly and flush it.



Wash and dry his/her hands and face.



Use a knife and fork.



Tidy/clear away their own toys after an activity.



Use a handkerchief/tissue.

## English is Fun!

Learning to read and write is an exciting challenge. Together we can make it a happy, successful and rewarding experience for your child.

### Speaking and Listening:

Children need to be able to speak clearly and listen carefully to appreciate words and therefore read and finally write. Listen to your child and talk throughout the day together. Share nursery and nonsense rhymes. Play games such as 'I Spy'. Encourage your child to complete sentences, avoiding baby talk.

If your child is having pronunciation difficulties or receiving speech therapy please let the teacher know as soon as possible.

Encourage your child to listen and respond to simple instructions. Get them to identify the sounds around them. Help them distinguish between similar sounds and words. Let them appreciate silence.

Letter sounds 'phonemes' will be introduced to your child. They will be asked to listen for the sounds in the order they occur in regular words. They will also start to break words down into their individual phoneme sounds for spelling.

### Reading:

Children love having stories read to them. To help your child foster a love of books, take time to enjoy stories together. Why not introduce your child to the public library?



Once a child has mastered some good speaking and listening skills they will start matching sounds to written letters and words. Phonics is the art of recognising the individual sounds that make up words. Sounds may consist of one or more letters, these are called phonemes. Graphemes are the written letters that make the sounds. Letters have a name as heard in the alphabet but letters can also make more than one sound.



We will be introducing the different sounds through our phonics programme. Early recognition of words is mainly through breaking them up into sounds. In the English language there are a number of words that have to be sight read because they do not follow the rules of phonics. Your child will be introduced to high frequency sight words that will help their reading.

Children can often decipher words by using clues from the pictures in their books or the context of the story. All these strategies build up their reading skills. With early reading do encourage your child to follow words with their finger as they say them. This helps them to match the word shapes with the spoken word. Look for words within words. Encourage them to have a go at decoding words they are stuck on.

Draw attention to any of the 'tricky words' or high frequency sight words they may be working on (these will be sent home once your child starts phonic sessions). Many books are written with repetitive text to promote confidence. Watch out for children with good memories who read the words 'parrot fashion' rather than matching individual words and sounds. Ask questions about the text and pictures to make sure your child understands what they are reading.

Learning vocabulary associated with books is also important. Remember to point out the title, the author, the publisher, the illustrator to your child and show them how a book works. It is also important to remember that we as adults take a lot for granted! It is never obvious to a child that the pages turn a certain way or that the text is the words, they go from left to right and the illustrations are the pictures! Re-tell the story together in your own words, following only the illustrations. Draw attention to the characters, plot and setting. Maybe half way through you could predict the ending, and see if you were right.

## Writing

At home, encourage free use of pencils and crayons to strengthen hand muscles. Let your child do writing patterns, such as vertical lines, zig-zags and circles. Gradually children start to make marks, often through their play activities, which as they mature, will develop through emergent writing stages to accurate writing of words, then sentences and finally pieces of text.



Good quality reading and listening experiences lead to imaginative, interesting and detailed writing. Good writing depends on both technical and creative skills.

Children are more willing to write if they are inspired or if they see a purpose. Please encourage your child to write as often as possible. They may write out a shopping list, copy their reading book words out, write notes to their friends, thank you letters, postcards etc!

Many children start quite early with writing their own name. This should be in lower case letters except the starting capital. When children are learning the graphemes to match a sound we also look at how we write the letters so that later on they can move easily to cursive (joined) writing. At St. Bede's, we introduce children to both capital and lower case forms. We start with print and introduce joining strokes in Years 1 and 2 in preparation for moving into Key Stage 2.

Although knowing the alphabet is useful we start by looking at letter sounds and formation rather than order. We also introduce spelling of high frequency words in a usage-graded order. Punctuation and early grammar is introduced informally by example from shared texts. Specific teaching comes in year 1 and 2. We do encourage full stops in the Foundation Stage when a child is ready to write. We use overwriting and copywriting until children are confident enough to have a go at their own words. We often model sentences for younger children.

It is essential that your child is encouraged to form each letter correctly from the earliest possible time. Bad habits are easily learned but are very difficult to unlearn, and may cause your child much confusion in the future.

### **Support from home is vital:**

Remember that reading and writing are extremely complex skills to learn and therefore praise is important. You can support and reinforce all the good practice taught in school, by ensuring that homework is done and returned on time, spellings learned, writing practised and reading done and commented upon in the reading diary.



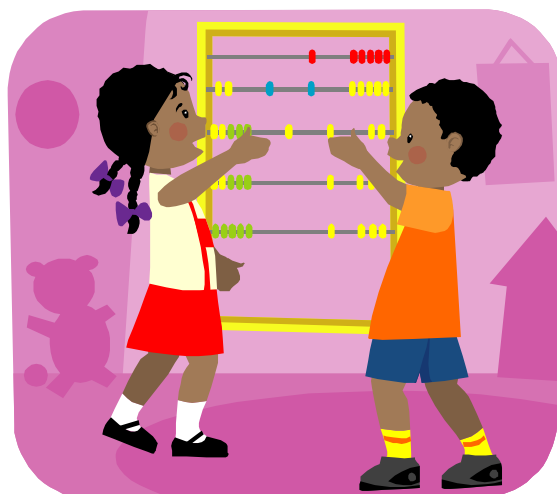
## Maths is Fun!

At St. Bede's we aim to promote a positive attitude to learning. All children love the physical freedom of PE and games, the creativity of art and music and the excitement of literature; maths too can be an enjoyable area of the Early Years Curriculum.



From a very early age children experience mathematical concepts in ordinary, everyday life. They recognise the pattern of their day for example, learning that getting dressed comes after breakfast or that bedtime comes after bath-time. You have nurtured them in a supportive environment that has developed many mathematical concepts confidently and competently.

This information is designed to help you to continue to foster a love of maths in partnership with our teachers here at St. Bede's. The following activities provide many valuable opportunities for developing specific mathematical language and concepts with your child.



## Getting Dressed

### Pairs:

Can you find another sock the same as this one?

Is this shoe different to that one?

One pair of gloves means two gloves.

How many fingers on one glove?

How many fingers in both gloves

### Sequencing and Ordinal Number:

We put your vest on first and your T-shirt second.

What shall we put on next?

What comes after your socks?

What are we going to put on before your cardigan?

What goes on last?

### Position:

Put your jumper over your blouse/shirt.

What have you got on under your cardigan?

Put your arms in the sleeves.

### Counting and matching:

How many buttons are on your blouse/shirt?

How many buttons are on the cuffs?

How many buttons are on your trousers/dress?

How many altogether?

Which has got more?

Which has got the most?

Which has got the least?

### Measuring and Comparing:

Talk about -

Clothes which are too big, too small, bigger than, smaller than etc.

Sleeves which are too long.

Trousers/skirts that are too short.

### Left and Right:

Shoes, hands, feet and turns.



## Mealtimes

### Counting, Matching and Position:

Setting the table.

We need a plate for each person.

Put a knife and fork on each side of the plate.

Put a cup on each saucer.

Put the salt next to the vinegar.

### Dividing:

Cut sandwiches, cakes, pies, pizzas etc. into equal portions.

Talk about halves and quarters.

Your piece is the same size as mine.

Let's have half each.

You have got more than me!

I've got the most.

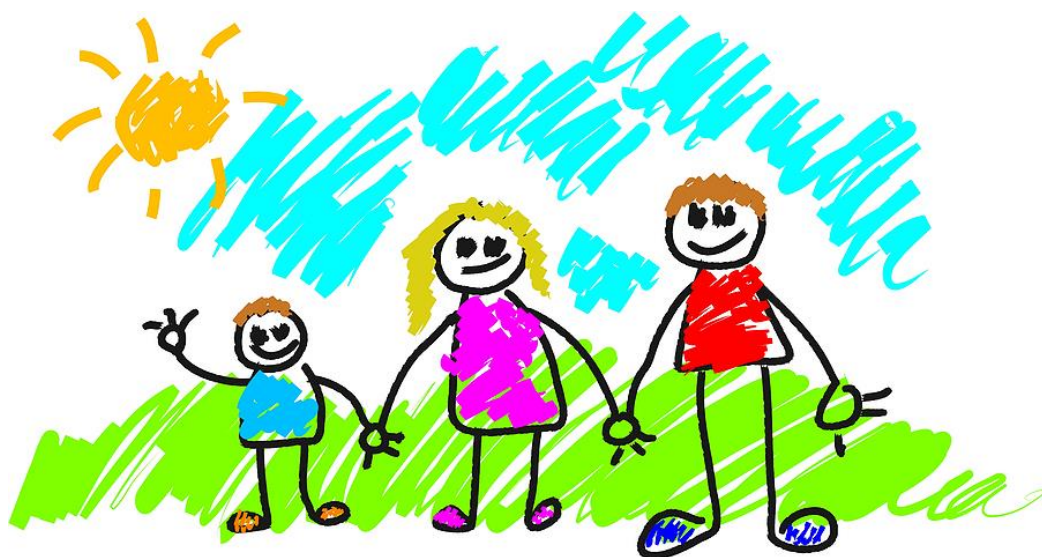
It's not fair!

### Shopping:

Taking your child shopping provides a wealth of mathematical experiences. You can talk about how much things cost, what the total bill is, how much change you get, the different coins. You can show them how to use the scales and how much things weigh. Talk about kilograms and grams, litres and millilitres and look out for the different shaped packages and tins. Sometimes it is just as valuable to role-play the situation at home, and not quite as fraught!

### Baking:

Children also love to cook, so this is an excellent mathematical opportunity. As well as being able to measure quantities using scales and measuring jugs, children are able to measure time and temperature.



### In Addition:

To extend your child's mathematical understanding further you can also -  
Sing number songs and rhymes.

Thread buttons and beads.

Sort objects according to what is the same or different.

Use different sized and shaped containers at bathtime.

### Homework:

We also encourage you to support the learning process that takes place in the classroom by helping your child with their homework. These are tasks for you to do together at home, which have a clear mathematical purpose and are linked to the work we have been doing in school.

Please remember, that making mistakes is a crucial part of the learning process. Children should always be encouraged to take risks and have a go, and feel that their efforts are valued. True learning takes place when children think for themselves.

Learning about numbers and mathematical ideas is a creative investigational process. That's how mathematics works!

By working together we can make maths fun for everyone!



## **Arrangements for coming to school in 2020**

Arrangements for starting school will be communicated as soon as we can.

We look forward to working in partnership with you to provide the best possible start for your child's education.

If you have any further questions, concerns or queries please do not hesitate to ask. You are welcome to ask at the general office at any time or phone school on 01606 852149 for a chat with us after school.

### **School Times**

Morning session 9:00am - 12:00pm

Playtime 10:40am - 10:55am

Afternoon session 1:00pm - 3:20pm

Always try to be on time for the beginning of the school day, the doors open at 8:50am ready for registration at 9:00am. If you are delayed, please telephone the school office.

If your child is unable to attend school due to sickness, please could you telephone the school office to let them know before 9.15am on the first day of absence.

## **Morning Breaktime**

Free fruit is provided for all Reception and Key Stage 1 children and under 5's also receive free milk. Over 5's can purchase milk - Please ask Reception staff.

Can you please ensure that your child brings a named water bottle into school each day.

## **Lunchtime**

School meals:

Since September 2015 all children in Reception, Year 1 and 2 are entitled to a Universal Infant Free School Meal.

Packed lunches:

If your child brings a packed lunch we ask that it contains healthy choices and their box and flask be clearly labelled. For safety reasons do not send containers made of glass to school. Please teach your child how to open his or her lunchbox and flask.

Provision for Special Diets:

Catering Services is responsible throughout Cheshire West and Chester, for the administration of special dietary requirements for children in schools. If your child has any allergy that would require a special diet you must inform us immediately.

## **Home Time**

Children can be collected from school at 3:20 pm each day. They will be escorted out to the waiting parents via the gate to the outside area of the Reception classroom. The children will not be allowed to go unless there is a known adult waiting for them. Please inform the class teacher in writing if a different adult will be collecting your child, a note in the homework diary or a separate letter is sufficient.

Remember that the St. Bede's community is for you as well as your child. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any concerns, come and support all our activities whenever possible and join the 'Friends of St. Bede's (FOSB)' parent teacher association. If you have any time to spare, please sign up and join our "Helpers" list.

We look forward to working in partnership with you over the coming years.