

# **Nursery Handbook**

## **2020-2021**



**A guide to starting Nursery  
at St. Mary's CE Primary School**

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## St. Mary's CE Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Welcome to St. Mary's CE Primary School, Putney!**

This handbook, together with the A to Z of EYFS, aims to answer any questions you may have about our school.

We are a popular and happy Church of England Primary School with a longstanding tradition of very high standards in core learning skills and a strong Christian ethos. The school is forward thinking; offering excellence in education for our children through our dedicated and highly qualified staff.

As a school, our goal is to provide a full and interesting curriculum; to prepare your child for future education and give them the skills and enthusiasm to pursue learning for the rest of their lives.

Your contribution as a parent or carer is valued and needed. By working together, we hope you will encourage your child to contribute fully to the life of the school, taking part in and enjoying the many opportunities afforded here.

We hope that your association with our school is a long and happy one.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Cheryl Payne  
Head Teacher

# Introduction to Nursery Class

Your child will soon be part of the St Mary's Nursery class! There are 26 children in school at any time. First half of the week children are in school for full days on Monday and Tuesday, and for Wednesday morning. Second half of the week children are in school for Wednesday afternoon and for full days on Thursday and Friday. Some children will hold full time places and will be present for all five school days.

There are three adults present in the classroom during each session; one class teacher and two additional adults.

## Your Child's Teachers

The class has one class teacher and two learning assistants. You and your child may also see the head teacher and the Early Years and KS1 lead around school too. Staffing for 2020-2021 is as follows:



Mrs Alison Davidson  
Class Teacher



Miss Cheryl Payne  
Head Teacher



Mrs Wendy Livingstone  
Early Years and KS1 Lead  
Deputy Head

# Ways to Help Your Child Prepare for Nursery

Starting at a new Nursery setting is an exciting and daunting time for a young child! There are lots of ways to best prepare your child/ren for their first day:

-**Attend** the induction events! Although the induction events will look different this year, they will still provide the information you need, and allow children to get used to their new setting. Details of the induction events will accompany this Handbook - please put dates in your diary and return slips where necessary.

-**Talk** about it together! Be positive and excited yourself, point out school as you pass, and read picture books together about starting Nursery.

-**Equip** your children with a high level of independence, to allow them to flourish at Nursery. Imagine starting a new job and not feeling confident to go to the bathroom! Where at all possible work with your child to teach them skills to go to the toilet by themselves, put a jumper and coat on or off by themselves, and eat independently using a spoon and fork. Reading stories and playing short games together will help prepare your child/ren for adult focused activities in Nursery too.

Please send in a family photo with all of you together during the first week. This can be via email (see 'Communicating with Your Class Teacher and the School' section). Your child will be able to access this in class so they can talk about their families to others. The photos often soothe an upset child too.

## Starting Nursery and Inductions

Starting in a new setting, even if they have been to a Nursery previously, can be an overwhelming and worrying time for children, therefore St Mary's have carefully planned a gentle transition period. Even if you feel your child would be able to start full time, it is important for other children that there are reduced numbers in the class so staff are able to give more attention to each individual and get to know your child well.

Part time Nursery children have a one-hour induction session and two half-day sessions in their first week. In their second week, they have one whole day session (including their first school lunch) and a half-day session. The third week is the start of normal Nursery hours.

Full time Nursery children have a one-hour induction session and four half-day sessions in their first week, and then three full days in their second week. The third week is the start of normal Nursery hours.

You will have been provided with the details for your child/ren's staggered start into Nursery in September. Please check this information carefully and keep a note of the dates, as they differ from child to child.

In September, just before children start, the class teacher has an individual 15 minute meeting with parents and carers of each child, via Zoom. This allows teachers to answer any questions, and receive important information about your child. Your child also join this Zoom session, allowing them to see and get to know their teachers in the setting.

**All the dates for these sessions have been provided to you - please keep these details carefully and return necessary slips. Details of how to access the Zoom meeting will be sent to you in September.**

## **What Your Child Will Need\***

St Mary's uniform is different in the Nursery - please see the sheet in your induction pack, and on the school website. **EYFS uniform is different to allow for increased independence with toileting and comfort when playing in a variety of situations.** Please note that children are often engaged with 'messy play' - expect uniform to sometimes come back dirty - this means they have had a great day, and learnt a lot!

In addition to their uniform children will need:

- A clearly named PE bag (drawstring) containing a **complete change of uniform clothes** inside - spare shoes are also needed in case of an 'accident' or wet play. This will be kept in school on your child's peg and will go home only when it needs to be replenished.
- A clearly named school book bag\*. Please bring this into school on the first day of your child's school week (i.e. Monday or Wednesday). Book bags only go home on their last day of the week (i.e. Wednesday or Friday).
- Weather appropriate clothing: a thick, waterproof coat, with scarf, hat and gloves, and a sunhat and suncream already applied in summer.
- **PLEASE NOTE Nursery do not need a separate PE kit.**



St Mary's uniform can be ordered on line via our uniform supplier Stitch Design - visit [www.stitchdesign.co.uk](http://www.stitchdesign.co.uk) . Orders can also be made via the school by completing a uniform order form - these are available in the school office or on the school website.

<http://www.stmarysschoolputney.co.uk/parents-and-pupils/school-uniform/> via [www.stitchdesign.co.uk](http://www.stitchdesign.co.uk) ).

**It is very important that ALL of your child's clothes are clearly labelled, including shoes, socks and coats please!** We highly recommend 'sew in' labels, as these stay on the longest.

**Children should not bring any toys, books or food with them - we have everything they need.** If a child occasionally has a special object, book or a photo to share one day (nothing too big or valuable please), please bring this in **clearly labelled**.\* Jewellery is not permitted in school, except for an inexpensive watch and plain stud or sleeper earrings.

*\*some details may be subject to change in September due to COVID-19*

# Dropping Off and Picking Up Children\*

The details for dropping off and picking up children, including the timings of the school day, are significantly different this Autumn, due to COVID-19.

## Timings\*

Full time children:	9:15am - 3:30pm - Monday to Friday
'First half of the week' part time children:	9:15am - 3:30pm - Monday and Tuesday 9:15am - 11:45am - Wednesday Morning
'First half of the week' part time children:	1:00pm - 3:30pm - Wednesday Afternoon 9:15am - 3:30pm - Thursday and Friday

## Drop off and pick up at school

For morning drop off please wait in a socially distanced line by the middle black gates. At the appropriate time the children will go into school with the teachers. Due to Covid-19 regulations, parents and carers will not be allowed onto the school premises, even when settling your child. Please prepare your child to say goodbye at the middle black gate (on the pavement) and allow them to come into Nursery with a member of the Nursery team. If your child is unsettled please talk to one of the Nursery team. We find that children settle very quickly once they have left parents, even if initially upset. If children are unsettled we do our best to call you and let you know when your child has settled down. For the Wednesday afternoon drop off please also wait by the middle black gate, where you will be met by the Nursery team.

Please don't be late, as registration takes place promptly and **lateness can be distressing to the child and disruptive to the rest of the class.** If you are late and the gate is closed please take your child to the school office. A member of the office staff will then escort your child to Nursery.

Due to Covid-19 Buggies, scooters and bikes will not be allowed to be left on the school premises.

**Home time:** Children are to be collected at the middle black gate. The class teacher dismisses the children one by one. Please stay outside the school premises and wait for your child.

**If anyone other than yourself is collecting your child, please let the Nursery staff know in advance via the class email.** This, you will understand, is extremely important. **Children will not be allowed to leave with an unknown person.** Please ensure you tell the staff if there is a change in the pickup arrangements.

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# A Typical Day in Nursery

Most children will go home and say they have done "Nothing!" This is definitely not true! Children are very busy and their average day will take the following structure.

## Transition:

Children come in and put away their things with increasing independence. Each child has a labelled coat peg and tray to store personal belongings. Each child finds their name label to 'register' themselves into class before walking straight to the carpet area

## Carpet time:

We start each day altogether with a morning song, the register and a whole class 'carpet session'.

## Independent learning time:

The majority of your child's day is spent in independent learning time. Children leave the carpet and engage in child-initiated learning. Children can go between the indoor and outdoor classrooms during this time. During this time adults in the setting will be teaching and supporting your child. This could involve playing alongside your child/ren as they engage in child-initiated play and helping to extend their learning. Adults will also be assessing and recording children's achievements. During children's independent learning time staff carry out adult-initiated focussed groups to further children's learning. These can be individual or small group sessions and can include cooking, gardening, art, mathematical or phonics games. In Nursery we aim to cook with the children once a week. For more information about teaching and learning see the EYFS A-Z.

During independent learning time, snack time starts: children come to the snack table in turns, and have a drink (either milk or water) and some fruit. This is provided by school.

Tidy up time: All children participate in helping to reset the classroom for the afternoon.

Carpet time: All children come back to the carpet for a second carpet session. Carpet sessions involve direct teaching from the class teacher. These sessions take the form of a story time, a circle time or a game to further children's learning and development.

Lunch\*: Children go over together to lunch in the school hall. Children can either have a packed lunch or a school dinner - this can be confirmed with the class teacher in September, and children can switch between these options during the year. Payment for school dinners can be made via the school office. During the Autumn term 2020 Nursery will be having their lunch in the Nursery classroom. All surfaces will be cleaned thoroughly before and after lunch. Children will have the option of a packed lunch from home or a packed punch provided by the school meals team - Caterlink. If your child has a food intolerance or requirement then they will be given a red or green band to show this. See more details in EYFS A-Z. We will let you know if your child has not eaten well.

*\*some details may be subject to change in September due to COVID-19*

Independent Learning Time: When children have finished they return to the classroom and go straight back into independent learning time.

Carpet session: Children gather again for the third carpet session of the day.

Independent Learning Time: Further independent learning time.

Tidy up: Final tidy up time

Story time: All the children come to the carpet for a final time. This is always a story time, usually linked to the current topic.

Home time: Children collect their belongings from their peg and tray, and then line up to meet their parents and carers.

Wednesdays look slightly different, due to the change in classes, but the structure remains much the same. On Tuesday mornings, the first half of the week children will have Music, Art and PE sessions taught by specialist teachers in class\*.

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# The Nursery Classroom

In the Early Years a child's environment plays a huge role in their learning and development. Our Nursery classroom is designed to make children feel confident, secure and challenged, allowing them to lead their own learning. Resources are readily accessible to children allowing them to self-select what they want to play with. Adults support and teach children to do this at the start of the year. Resources are continually available so children can continue to interact with them, developing and furthering their ideas from previous days. Different resources are added to enhance and extend children's learning. Open-ended resources, objects which can be used to represent lots of different items in imaginative play, are used to build up children's creativity.

The Nursery classroom consists of both indoor and outdoor classrooms, and children may flow between them as they wish, whatever the weather! The classroom is divided into distinct 'zones' which each encourage specific areas of learning, carefully linked to the EYFS curriculum. Inside these include: water play, mark making area, block play and small world play area, small construction area, maths area, reading corner, creative table, role play area and a prayer area. We also have room to display children's previous work and celebrate their achievements!

The outdoor classroom is usually shared with Reception class.\* The outdoor learning zones, rather than exactly mirroring the indoor classroom, seeks to take advantages of the unique opportunities of the natural outdoor environment. There are therefore particular places for children to develop physical development, understanding of the world, creativity and problem solving. Different outdoor areas include: climbing area and access to bikes, scooters and balance equipment, growing areas, water play and sand play, mark making table, maths area, small and large construction areas, and small world play.

Nursery class have their own child-sized toilets and sinks, and these join on to the indoor classroom, and so are very easily accessible to help the children be as independent as possible in this area. Children can come and go on their own.

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# Curriculum: How and What Your Child Will Learn

Our Early Years curriculum is structured around seven areas of learning and development.

Prime Areas:

- *Personal, Social and Emotional Development* - developing confidence, self-awareness and relationships
- *Communication and Language* - building up children's listening, attention, understanding and speaking skills
- *Physical Development* - improving fine and gross motor control, as well as furthering children's self-care and independence

Specific Areas:

- *Literacy* - beginning to form the skills needed to read and write, following the Jolly Phonics scheme
- *Mathematics* - exploring concepts including number and shape, space and measure
- *Understanding the World* - investigating the world around us, including people and communities, the environment and technology
- *Expressive Arts and Design* - expressing themselves through art, music, dance and role play, using imagination and a range of techniques

Teaching and learning in each area is devised to ensure children meet the national expectations for children of five years of age - the Early Learning Goals. All children are assessed against these at the end of Reception.

Young children rarely separate their learning into subjects; so much of our teaching and learning in the EYFS goes across multiple areas of learning simultaneously. The prime areas are fundamental to children's learning and development in the EYFS, and so they are prioritised at St Mary's. The specific areas, including Mathematics and Literacy, should grow out of these prime areas. We centre our learning around topics: All About Me, Animals, Let's Pretend, Plants and Flowers and Minibeasts. Children's learning will be further detailed in half termly newsletters available on the school website.

Early Years loves being part of the St Mary's school community and we take part in many of the special days that occur across the school, such as DT Day, RE Day, whole school productions and church services.\* Learning on these subject days will be tied into the EYFS curriculum.

St Mary's is a Church of England School and therefore Religious Education (RE) is taught as a discrete subject. Children in Early Years take part in collective worship.\*

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## **Characteristics of Effective Learning (COEL)**

Running through and underpinning the EYFS curriculum are the Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL). The Characteristics of Learning represent not 'what' the child is learning, but 'how'. They play a key role in producing lifelong, effective, and independent learners. Children will have opportunities to grow in these characteristics, and the end of year written Nursery report feeds back on your child's characteristics of effective learning.

The Characteristics of Effective Learning are:

- Playing and Exploring (engagement)
  - Finding out and exploring
  - Playing with what they know (including role play)
  - Being willing to 'have a go'
- Active learning (motivation)
  - Being involved and concentrating
  - Keeping trying
  - Enjoying achieving what they set out to do
- Creating and thinking critically (thinking)
  - Having their own ideas
  - Making links
  - Choosing ways to do things

# How We Record Your Child's Progress

All your child's learning, development and achievements will be collated online in digital Early Years Learning Journey. For this we use an online tracking and assessment tool called the Early Excellence Assessment Tracker (EExAT). It is designed to capture key moments of your child's learning and development. Parents/carers are able to access throughout the year via the EExAT Parent app and webpage.

These Early Years Learning Journeys will include:

- Photos and written observations of your child engaged in child-initiated learning, including comments on their COEL.
- Records of your child's talk
- Photos and pieces of work from adult focussed activities undertaken.

Parents and carers are warmly encouraged to contribute to your child's Early Years Learning Journey!

You can do this by using EExAT to comment on photos and videos added by the Nursery team. You can also share your own photos and short videos or your child's learning and development to show what they are achieving at home via this online system. The class teacher will provide a unique code and details for access in September.

Children's physical work will be collated in school, for you to collect at the end of the year, alongside the digital Early Years Learning Journey. This will be available to view at various points in the year, including during the twice yearly Progress in Learning meetings (Parent Teacher Meetings), and during end of topic celebrations (Exit Points), where parents and carers are invited into the classroom.

Children's learning and development is also detailed during twice yearly meetings between the class teacher and parents/carers (Progress in Learning meetings), and in an annual formal written report in the final term. If you wish to discuss a child's progress outside of these times, please make an appointment with the class teacher via the class email.



# Communicating with Your Class Teacher and the School

We hope that this handbook, alongside the "A-Z of EYFS Information" provided, will be a useful reference point for queries you have throughout the year. It is also worth checking on the school website, and keeping up to date with class communications, particularly the half termly newsletters. Please ensure you keep all communications from school; these are sent out for your information and save staff from repeating key information, allowing them to focus on the education of your child/ren. Please also read In Touch (a weekly school newsletter) to be aware of events going on in school.

If you have concerns about your child, please do not hesitate to contact school as soon as possible. We encourage an ongoing dialogue with parents and carers throughout the school year. **The first point of contact should always be your child's class teacher.** Teachers are available at the end of the school day or you can request an appointment.

## Class Email (PACT System)

We use an online parent-teacher communication system to pass messages between home and school. If you have a query, or there is something you need to tell the teacher before school starts e.g. your child has had an upset which may impact upon their day, or there are altered pick up arrangements, please email the class email: [classnursery@st-marys-putney.wandsworth.sch.uk](mailto:classnursery@st-marys-putney.wandsworth.sch.uk) before 9am. The email will be checked once a day only, due to time constraints. **If you have an urgent message after this, including if you child will be picked up by someone else, please phone the school office (020 8788 9591).**

We will also send important information back via the email address. Please make sure this email address is saved so it does not go into your junk folder, and please note any messages each night, as it may be about school the next day!

Class teachers will also send out a **half termly class newsletter** which contains important information and dates for your diary, as well details of what your child will be learning that half term. **Please check these carefully!**

To set up the class email system at the start of the year you will need to **send a test email to the above email address**, stating your child's name with the subject line 'TEST', in order to be added to the class email list. Please send the test email in September before your child starts their first school day.

## Whole School Communications:

The school office use an email service called **ParentMail** to send urgent and general information out; please make sure that you register your email address in the school office so that you can receive this information at the start of the year. There is a weekly whole school newsletter called **InTouch** which will keep you up to date with what has been happening at school.

### Contacting Other Members of Staff

All concerns or queries should be addressed to the Class Teacher in the first instance. **If you feel your query is not dealt with sufficiently by the Class Teacher please contact the Early Years and KS1 Deputy Head Teacher - Mrs Wendy Livingstone.** The Deputy Heads are usually available on the gate to the main playground before or after school or they can be contacted via the school office. Please make sure you leave your child's name, class and contact number.

If you need to telephone the school please use the following number: **020 8788 9591** and leave a message with the office for any of the members of staff. Messages can be sent via the fax 020 8789 9508 which is checked through the day, but remember it is not confidential.

Should any of the contact above prove insufficient, then you may wish to speak with the Head Teacher - Miss Cheryl Payne. Phone 020 8788 9591 if you wish to book an appointment. The Head Teacher is usually in the playground at 8.55am as school begins or at 3.20pm at the end of the teaching day if you wish to have a brief word.

## Ways To Support Your Child Through The Year

Nursery children develop hugely during the year! This can only be achieved via effective partnership with you! Some previous parents/carers have found the following tips useful in the past:

- Be organised!** Keep hold of this Nursery handbook, and 'A-Z of EYFS Information' to answer queries during the year - hopefully they contain everything you need to know! Please read and keep all class communications, and newsletters - and put dates in your diary straight away. Please make sure you check the book bags each week for letters and important information.
- Talk to the class teacher!** If you have a worry or concern about your child, however small, do come straight to a member of the Nursery team - they would rather know, and it might be very straight forward to sort out!
- Label everything in obvious places!** Uniform which all looks the same can easily go astray...
- Be punctual!** Young children can get really upset by a change of routine, and if they are late the day starts on the wrong foot. It also interrupts the morning carpet session and affects the rest of the class.
- Expect your child to be exhausted!** At the beginning of the year, and towards the end of terms in particular, Nursery get very very tired. Plan activities after school accordingly, and bring a snack and drink at pick up.
- Put your phone away when dropping off or picking your child up.** Give them your full attention - they are very excited to see you after a long day.
- Playdates!** Regular playdates are really beneficial for your child throughout the year once your child has settled in.\*

**-Get involved!** There are so many amazing opportunities to get involved with St Mary's life - we hope you enjoy your time here, and make the most of volunteering opportunities, workshops and FoSMs (Friends of St Mary's) events!\*

**We hope that you have a wonderful time at St Mary's! We are really looking forward to working with you and your child/ren.**

## **Term Dates 2020-2021**

### **Autumn Term**

INSET Day: Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020

First day of Term: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

(Nursery and Reception children will be sent their own start date)

Half Term: Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020

INSET Day: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020

Last day of Term: Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020

### **Spring Term**

INSET Day: Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

First day of Term: Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Half Term: Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021

INSET Day: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021

Last day of Term: Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

### **Summer Term**

INSET Day: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021

First day of Term: Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Bank Holiday: Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021

Half Term: Monday 31<sup>st</sup> May to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Last Day of Term: Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021