



ST. HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

www.st-helens-inf.essex.sch.uk



"St Helen's ethos is 'the school is there to serve the children'. Pupils benefit from the relentless drive of all leaders to ensure every pupil succeeds. It is a very inclusive school where pupils are taught in a loving and caring atmosphere. Pupils show the values of kindness and consideration in abundance." (OFSTED March 2024)

Headteacher: Ms A. McAuliffe
Chair of Governors: Mrs K. Sullivan

Please note that every effort has been made to make sure the information provided was correct when printed.

With Jesus alive in our hearts, we celebrate each other and learn together as a family.

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About the School

St Helen's Catholic Infant School was built in 1960 in Queens Road, Brentwood. During February 2009, the school relocated to Sawyers Hall Lane, Brentwood, to a brand new school building on a site situated next door to its sister Junior school.

Mission Statement

Our mission statement is embedded in every aspect of school life:

*With Jesus alive in our hearts,
We celebrate each other and learn together as a family.*

Special Educational Needs

The school follows the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, produced by the Department for Education for Children, Schools and Families. There is a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) within the school who is responsible for monitoring those children who have special educational needs. Any child who is regarded as having special education needs, will be given support depending on their particular need. The Head teacher, the Special Needs Co-ordinator and the child's class teacher, will work in close partnership with parents. Where necessary, an individual learning programme will be implemented.

Safeguarding

St. Helen's Catholic Infant School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Everyone in our school has a responsibility to provide a safe learning environment in which our children can learn. All staff members are aware of the local early help process and our role in it. They are aware of signs of abuse and neglect so they are able to identify children who may be in need of help or protection. All staff members are aware of and follow school processes and are aware of how to make a referral to Social Care if there is a need to do so. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they must act on them immediately and speak with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) – they do not assume that others have taken action.

Parent / Teacher Partnership

We believe that parents have an important role to play in the education of their children and we greatly value their support and encouragement.

During the Autumn Term an Information Meeting will be held for each year group. Specific information regarding the curriculum and daily arrangements are discussed and shared during these meetings.

Parent/teacher consultations are held during the Autumn Term and Spring Term where progress is shared with parents and targets are set for the coming term

In the summer term a celebration evening takes place to share the year's achievements. Children are encouraged to bring their parents/carers to the school to show them their books and all their work,

their Art work and the displays - it is an opportunity for the children to share their learning. We welcome all family members, including brothers, sisters and grandparents etc to this occasion.

A Reading Diary is provided and encouraged as an ongoing means of communication between the teacher and parents. Primarily, it is used as a communication regarding the targets that are set in Reading. The class teacher will put in a weekly reading focus that relates to a specific reading book as a guide for the types of questions to ask. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in the completion of the home/school diary and are requested to comment on the target. Parents are also encouraged to enjoy, read and talk at home about their books and any other reading materials that the children take home.

Homework

All children should read regularly at home. Information Meetings are also held in the autumn term at the school to inform parents of the methods being used.

Weekly updates are provided on the website also includes activities which will support your child's learning at home. Once children reach Band 6 in reading, they will be given a Homework book and they will be asked to write 1 or 2 sentences per week about the story. From Band 7 onwards, children will have a written task to complete in their Homework book. They will have 1 week to complete this activity. However, we recommend that no more than 20 minutes be spent completing the questions.

All children will have access to online Maths challenges and Reading challenges – completed weekly.

In addition, child may also have to complete a short piece of work relevant to something they are learning about in school each week. Homework needs to be kept in the plastic pocket provided and should be in the child's Book bag every day.

Behaviour Management

There is a whole school behaviour system, known as the 'Peg system'. Each child starts the day on a yellow 'Happy Face'. If their behaviour doesn't match up to the teacher's expectation, their peg is moved to the pink 'Straight Face'. If further instances occur, the peg will move to the blue 'Sad Face.' The child concerned will then need to visit the Year Group leader and may miss a playtime or spend some time with them.

If their peg is moved to the 'Sad/Blue Face' a second time, the child will visit a senior member of staff. If a third time, they will be sent to the Head Teacher and she will then write to the child's parents/carers who will need to come to the school to discuss the behaviour.

Pegs can move down during the day but they can also move up. This gives each child the opportunity to show that they have learnt from their mistake and have changed their behaviour. All pegs are returned to the happy (yellow) face the next day. Class teachers keep a record of each time a child's peg is moved to the straight (pink) face or the sad (blue) face.

Statutory Assessment

Reception and Y1 undergo statutory assessment.

Reception

In Reception, whilst not tests, children are assessed using Baseline Assessment when children start school and against the Early Learning Goals at the end of the year. There is an expectation they meet the standard of an Early Learning Goal (ELG). Assessments are on-going throughout the year with the final judgement being made in June.

Year 1

The statutory phonics test takes place in June for Year 1 children. If a child does not pass the test they re-sit it in Year 2.

Reports

An annual report for parents is sent out in July each year. The report reflects the achievements made during the academic year. Attendance and statutory test results are also included in the report pack.

EYFS Curriculum

In Nursery and Reception, learning is planned using Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This curriculum is split into 7 areas of learning and development that shape the teaching and learning.

Prime areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Communication and Language
- Physical Development

Specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We also teach phonics using Little Wandle Phonics.

Key Stage One Curriculum

English

Reading

The school's aim, following the National Curriculum for English, is to teach each child to read with fluency and understanding. The children have access to a wide range of books within the classroom, both fiction and non-fiction, classic fairy tales and poetry. They are encouraged to enjoy books whether they are fluent readers or not.

A variety of reading schemes are used, which provide the children with a certain degree of independence when choosing their new books. These are colour coded to distinguish levels of ability.

Book Bags are brought to school every day and Children take their reading books home every night. This gives parents the opportunity to become active in hearing their children read and in monitoring their progress.

As well as reading activities, writing, handwriting and spelling tasks are planned in accordance with the National English Curriculum for Year 1 and Year 2.

Maths

Our daily programme, which is planned in accordance with the National Curriculum for Maths, aims to provide the children with a sound understanding of number concepts through practical and written work. This will enable them to understand the application of a variety of mathematical ideas within the classroom, in the home and the local environment.

Science

The school has developed a programme of study in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum for Science. The children will learn about themselves and the world in which they live through a variety of topics which will provide opportunities for observation, identifying and classifying, investigation and learning through simple experiments.

Art and Design

We give children a wide range of experience using a range of materials. We encourage them to be expressive, to experiment in their use of these materials and to enjoy their work. The children have the opportunity to use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination.

Computing

All children have access to computers within their classrooms as well as iPad's. The school is committed to ensuring E-safety and ensure children are trained in it, at a level appropriate to their age. The school has developed a programme of study in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum for Computing where children are taught to use technology purposefully, understand algorithms and create simple programs.

Design and Technology

This area involves designing, making and evaluating objects alongside learning technical knowledge about mechanisms. The children will use construction toys and other appropriate materials. They will be given the opportunity to learn how to use simple tools correctly and safely.

Geography

The children are encouraged to take an interest and develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They will be taught basic subject specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography. Maps are introduced to children and, through discussion and investigation and first hand observation, they will learn how people live in other countries.

History

Through a programme of study, the children learn how people lived in the past and about important incidents that have taken place. Children will be encouraged to ask and answer questions and identify similarities and differences between ways of life in different periods.

Music

The children are taught to use their voices expressively and creatively singing songs and speaking chants and rhymes. The children will play tuned and untuned instruments and listen to a range of music.

Physical Education

The children are taught to master basic movements, as well as develop their balance, agility and co-ordination. They will participate in team games and develop tactics for attacking and defending. The children will also perform dances using simple movement patterns.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

RSHE is taught throughout the curriculum especially the PSHE and RE curriculum. We aim to enable children to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life by equipping them with:

- the knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships
- the opportunity to put knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.
- recognition that everyone faces difficult situations in their lives – how can we support children to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

Religious Education

As a Catholic school, Religious Education is taught in accordance with the doctrine and teachings of the Catholic faith and through the Religious Education Directory: To Know You More Clearly. All children take part in Religious Education lessons and acts of worship arranged by the school.

Priests from the parishes take part in school assemblies and special celebrations.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from RE and collective worship. However, it is important to note that children who do not attend collective worship will have to spend that time in the school office.

Home Time Arrangements

You must let us know by filling in the Home Time Arrangements form (purple form), your child's home time arrangements for each day. If they are to be picked up, you must let us know who will pick them up each day. Please Note if a person arrives to pick up your child who is not on your form, we will not let the child go with that person.

If there are permanent changes to these arrangements, a new form must be completed. If there are temporary changes, you must either write a letter to the class teacher informing of the change for that day or you must ring the school office before 2.00pm – a verbal message from a child is not considered adequate. Email to the school office is also NOT accepted.

If your child is to go home by coach, you must fill in this form detailing the Coach Contract Number, Route and Stop. If for some reason your child is not travelling home from school by coach when this is the normal arrangement, a letter MUST be sent into the Class Teacher explaining the change of arrangements – a verbal message from a child is not considered adequate. Email to the school office is also NOT accepted. All coach children will be escorted to their usual coach unless a letter or a phone message is received by 2.00pm.

Car Park

The car park is available for parents who request a permit. Permits are allocated to families who hold a blue badge or live furthest away. Once all permits have been allocated, further requests will be put on a waiting list.

Medication

If your child requires medication during the normal school day but is well enough to attend school, you may come into school to administer the medicine during break time or lunch time (please make arrangements through the school office). Staff do not administer any medicines/treatments apart from asthma treatments.

For Health and Safety Reasons, children must NOT bring in any forms of medication to school including throat lozenges, lip balms etc... Never, ever put any medication of any type in your child's book bag.

Asthma / Allergies

If your child suffers from Asthma you must inform the school. For asthma sufferers (or any other allergies that requires prescribed medication) you must speak to the school office before your child is admitted. You will be required to complete a form before any medication can be administered. You will need to provide the relevant medication which will be kept in the school office. You will need to ensure there is sufficient medication and that it remains 'in date'. In some circumstances, a Care Plan may need to be drawn up in consultation with the Inclusion Leader.

School Lunches

Infant school children are entitled to a free hot school dinner every day. There is a meat option and a vegetarian option every day. Menus are sent to each parent for you to discuss with your child and then return to school via the electronic ParentMail system with your choices.

If you do not wish to take up this entitlement, you must send in a packed lunch for your child.

Packed lunches should be put in a suitable named container and should be insulated. Lunches should be 'Healthy'.

No NUTS or EGGS of any kind PLEASE BE MINDFUL WHEN PURCHASING CEREAL BARS

No Hot Food (e.g. Hot Soup in Flasks)

No Peanut Butter

No Fruit Winders

No Individual Sweets

No Lollipops

No Bars of Chocolate (but can have snack bar e.g. penguin bar)

No Crisps

No Fizzy Drinks

No Glass bottles

Government Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

Each child is offered a piece of fruit before morning break time. If your child has any allergies to fruit please ensure that you have informed the school.

Water

Drinking water is available throughout the day for the children to access. We ask you to send in a plastic bottle of water for your child each day - clearly marked with your child's name (and surname) and class number. No metal water bottles please.

School Website and Social Media

Information regarding the school can be found on the School Website on www.st-helens-inf.essex.sch.uk. We also have an Instagram and Facebook account which celebrates what is going on at school. Weekly information is also emailed out to parents every Friday via the school newsletter.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

There are a number of before and after school clubs for all children. These are run by staff (free) and outside agencies (a fee which is payable by the parent directly to the club). These run from Monday to Friday before and after school.

Educational Visits

Children will have opportunities to take part in educational class visits from time to time. These visits are made both locally and further afield but are always part of work undertaken in class. They are important as they promote interest and widen the children's experience.

Parental permission is always necessary for a child to take part in an educational visit. Parents are asked to fill in a form as their child starts school, agreeing for their child to take part in local outings, for example, walking to the cathedral. For outings further afield, a separate consent form will be required to be completed. A voluntary contribution towards educational visits may be requested, but children will not be excluded from an activity or trip if parents are unable to make this contribution.

Parents Association

There is a Parents' Association, which arranges social functions and fund raising activities for the benefit of both the Infant and Junior schools. All parents automatically become members of the association when their children start at the school.

Complaints Procedure

Because of our emphasis on partnership, we hope that all problems will be dealt with speedily by informal means. The first person to consult, is the child's teacher and then the Head Teacher. However, should concerns not be resolved by informal discussion, a formal complaint may be made in writing to the Chair of Governors and addressed to the school.

Arrangements made to deal with such a complaint are detailed in a formal document available in the school.

School Uniform

School Uniform items can be purchased directly from Smartypants:
<https://www.smartypantsschoolwear.com/>