

St Nicholas CE Primary School Handbook

Early Years

Welcome to St Nicholas CE Primary School

Welcome to St Nicholas CE's Early Years Unit. Kingfishers is our mixed Nursery and Reception class, with our 3- and 4-year-olds benefitting from high quality learning experiences from the term after they turn 3yrs old. When children begin their Reception year with us, there is a seamless transition into school life. Adult led teaching sessions, alongside continuing opportunities to be challenged through high quality adult interactions and play ensure the children leave Reception ready to move into Key stage 1 as inquisitive and engaged learners.



We aim to provide a nurturing environment where each child can build lifelong skills of independence, confidence and resilience. We have included information to help you and your child settle in September. Thank you for choosing us!



Vision, aims and values

-Be the best you can be for yourself and for others.

'Learning from the life of St Nicholas, we value each individual's unique gifts, enabling them to be the best versions of themselves while inspiring others. Our children enjoy life in all its fullness by being respectful and compassionate for themselves and others in our own community and in the wider world.'

St Nicholas CE School is a welcoming, warm, secure learning environment where our focus is the wellbeing of each member of our school family. Our core Christian values of **Belonging, Compassion** and **Resilience** provide strong foundations on which all children can develop the confidence to be aspirational, independent, spirited and creative individuals.



Intent statement

Here at St Nicholas Primary School we offer a rich and engaging school experience for all of the children which is underpinned by our belief in 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10).

We recognise that each child is unique with their own natural curiosity for learning. Therefore, we strive to achieve a curriculum which is creative and ambitious that excites and challenges each and every child in our school whilst preparing them with the knowledge and skills needed for the next stage in their education and as future members of our local and global community. We highly value our partnerships with families, the church, and the local community to support our culture of equality and aspiration.

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Teaching and Learning in the Early Years

The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework for children aged 0–5 are the standards that all Early Years providers must meet to ensure children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. The EYFS Framework describes four guiding principles which underpin all practice:

Themes	A Unique Child	+	Positive Relationships	+	Enabling Environments	=	Learning and Development
Principles	every child is a unique child, who is constantly learning and can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured		children learn to be strong and independent through positive relationships		children learn and develop well in enabling environments with teaching and support from adults, who respond to their individual interests and needs		Children develop and learn at different rates. All the areas of learning and development are equally important and interconnected.

The EYFS comprises seven areas of learning and development, these are divided into three prime areas and four specific areas. The prime areas are the most essential for your child’s healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in the four specific areas of learning. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected.

The EYFS Framework details Early Learning Goals, which describe the level of development which children should be expected to have attained by the end of EYFS (end of Reception Year).

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Prime Areas of Learning and Development	Specific Areas of Learning and Development
<p><u>Communication and Language</u> <i>-Listening ,Attention and Understanding</i> <i>-Speaking</i></p> <p><u>Physical Development</u> <i>-Gross Motor Skills</i> <i>-Fine Motor Skills</i></p> <p><u>Personal, Social and Emotional Development</u> <i>-Self-Regulation</i> <i>-Managing Self</i> <i>-Building Relationships</i></p>	<p><u>Literacy</u> <i>-Comprehension</i> <i>-Word Reading</i> <i>-Writing</i></p> <p><u>Mathematics</u> <i>-Number</i> <i>-Numerical Patterns</i></p> <p><u>Understanding the World</u> <i>-People, Culture and Communities</i> <i>-The Natural World</i> <i>-Past and Present</i></p> <p><u>Expressive Arts and Design</u> <i>-Creating with Materials</i> <i>-Being Imaginative and Expressive</i></p>

We also support children in becoming resilient, life-long learners through promoting and celebrating the 'Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning' within our learning environment and daily interactions.

These are as follows:

'Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning'
<p>Playing and Exploring – Engagement <i>-Finding out and exploring</i> <i>-Playing with what they know</i> <i>-Being willing to 'have a go'</i></p>

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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

Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:



- playing and exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'
- active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements
- creating and thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things

Activities and provision are carefully planned and the indoor and outdoor learning environments are set up to challenge and support an exciting early year's curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop as independent learners who are confident and capable within the school and the wider community.

The Early Years team plan and provide a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all children. Many of the learning objectives are addressed through practical and engaging activities that may be led by an adult or that develop in accordance to the children's own agenda and interests. This approach ensures high levels of interest and engagement from children, which in turn drives their learning and progress.



Classdojo



Learning Journeys

Observation and assessment are a vital part of the adults' role in the Early Years. Progress is documented and monitored throughout the school year. Staff will regularly collect pieces of work, observations and photographs to add to this document to record your child's learning, identify learning need and plan accordingly. We highly encourage families to upload anything the children have done at home that they would like to share with us – we love to celebrate the children's achievements at home too!

We just need your email address and relevant permissions to sign up to Classdojo. We encourage you to use it to tell your child's new teacher about their interests and achievements and stay connected. You can upload pictures, documents and even videos.

Practical day-to-day information

Our school day starts at 8.45am for Reception and ends at 3pm. This is the same for KS1 and KS2.

From September 2022 we provide 15 Nursery places per session. These are available to children from the term following their third birthday in accordance with our Admissions Policy. Children are eligible for a minimum of fifteen hours of funded provision per week, with working parents able to claim extra hours of funded provision. Further information re: [30 hour entitlement can be found here](#). These need to be requested prior to the term they begin and are subject to availability.

Morning session (8.45am-11.45am) – 3 hrs

Afternoon session (11.45am-3pm)- 3 ¼ hrs

All day (8.45am-3pm) – 6 ¼ hrs

For those attending an afternoon or an all-day session, there is a £1 a day additional charge for the lunch session.

Collecting your child

Nursery: Nursery children should be collected at 11.45am from their classroom, you can buzz in at the side green gate. For those children in Nursery who are attending for the entire day, they will be dismissed alongside Reception at the end of the day. This will be from the building's main entrance accessed through the school playground.

Reception: Please promptly collect your child at 3.00pm from The Burrow's door in the annex. Members of staff will not release your child until they have made eye-contact with the person collecting.

Please bear with us as we learn who you are! If someone different from usual will be collecting your child, we need to be informed, so that we can update our 'regular collections' paperwork: we can only release a child to a known adult with an agreed collection password. For this reason, it is imperative that we receive your 'Collection Arrangements' form before the start of the school year. Please note that we can only release the children to those over 16 years old. We ask that you ring the office if you are running late.

Attendance, illness, and accidents

If your child is unable to attend School or Nursery for any reason, please telephone the Office on 01235 763858 at the earliest possible opportunity.

Reception children: If you know that your child is going to be absent from school for any reason other than illness, please see the school office to collect a 'request for absence' form. This will need to be completed and handed back to the school office for the Headteacher to approve. Under government legislation, children are not permitted to take holidays in term time. A request for absence will only be permitted by the Headteacher in exceptional circumstances.

Occasionally children become ill at school or have an accident. If this should occur, we will make every effort to contact you using the contact numbers you have given us. If we are unable to do so, a member of staff may act on your behalf. If you change address or telephone number, **please ensure that the school has your new contact details**. If there is a change in your child's medical details, please ensure that the office staff are informed.

We do ask that children are given a full 48 hours at home to recover from sickness or diarrhoea. This gives your child time to recover fully from their illness and protects them and other children from the spread of infection.

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Snacks

We participate in the Government's School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme which entitles Reception children to receive a free piece of fruit or a vegetable each school day. Nursery children will be charged a weekly £1 charge for a snack, there is no need to send in any snacks to school. Children are entitled to free milk until age 5 years, and after this age you may choose to pay for your child to continue having milk.

All children bring a named water bottle to school, containing water only please.

Lunch

Nursery children bring their own packed lunch and eat within the classroom.

All children in Reception are entitled to a Universal Free School meal. This is primarily a cooked meal. A school packed lunch can be ordered in exceptional circumstances. If your child has any specific dietary requirements, then please let us know by filling in a form which can be collected from the school office.



If you would prefer your child to bring a packed lunch, then please make sure food is brought in a sturdy container which is clearly named. We ask that children are given a healthy, balanced lunch and do not bring sweets, chocolate, or fizzy drinks to school. Due to allergies, we also ask that children do not bring in any foods that contain nuts.

School Uniform

All Reception children must wear our school uniform. The school colours are navy blue sweatshirts with grey skirt or trousers and white or navy shirts. Long or short trousers may be worn. During the summer, the children may wear blue checked dresses. Please ensure that all uniform is clearly labelled with your child's name.

Nursery children are encouraged to wear St Nicholas uniform.

Children need to be able to take their shoes on and off independently. Therefore, we recommend Velcro straps – no laces in the Reception class.

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Blue sweatshirts, cardigans and white polo shirts with the school logo are on sale from two suppliers:

'PMG Schoolwear'

8 Regal Way,

Faringdon,

SN7 7BX,

01895 809 321

The link below will take you directly to the St Nicholas section of their website:

[http://pmgschoolwear.co.uk/school/St Nicholas C of E Primary School Wantage](http://pmgschoolwear.co.uk/school/St_Nicholas_C_of_E_Primary_School_Wantage)

Uniform can also be purchased from: [Myclothing.com](http://myclothing.com)

PE Kit

Physical activities are an integral part of the Early Years Framework, promoted across the curriculum, however Reception children will also benefit from additional PE lessons. We will advise you of their PE day in September. Kit is as follows.

- plain navy or black shorts;
- blue 'St Nics' P.E T-shirt (available from the school office);
- trainers for outdoor games/PE sessions; and
- navy tracksuit or hoodie.

Long hair must be tied up for all PE sessions, so a hair band is also essential.

Earring studs must be removed or covered for PE

Outdoor learning

As part of our commitment to outdoor learning and the creative curriculum, we follow a Forest School programme, as well as making the most of all opportunities to have outdoor lessons. We spend time outside whatever the weather! We are keen to encourage and inspire our children to engage with nature through positive outdoor experiences.

We therefore ask that the children come to school in appropriate clothing so that they can access the outdoor environment. Here are some of the things you will need:

- warm clothes in winter (hat, gloves, scarf, etc.);
- waterproof coat;
- sunhat and sun cream (applied before school) in summer; and
- a pair of named wellies that can be kept in school.

Please put your child's name on **everything!**

Use the 'What do I need for school?' checklist on the next page to make sure you have everything ready.

What do I need for school?



Book bag(Reception only)

This will be used to share books and letters between home and school.



Water bottle

Named/ stickers added to the bottle so that children recognise their bottle. These will need to be taken home every day to be washed and re-filled.



Wellies

The children need a pair of wellies that they can **keep in school**. Children need to wear wellies to access some of the outside spaces.



Spare clothes

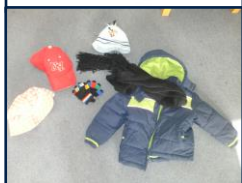
The children will need a bag of spare clothes which they can **keep on their pegs in school in a drawstring bag**.

We suggest a few spare pairs of underwear and socks. Plain trousers/leggings/jogging bottoms and a t-shirt. Spare clothes do not have to be uniform.



PE kit

Your child will need a plain navy or black shorts and a plain blue St Nicks PE T-shirt



Weather-appropriate clothing

We go outside in all weather conditions as we use our outside space as part of our learning environment. Please provide clothing suitable to the weather and changeable conditions.

Please ensure children always have a waterproof coat - A lightweight waterproof for summer & warm waterproof for winter.

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Moving from Nursery into Reception -Supporting your child to be more independent

Being independent

At school your child will be encouraged to have a go at doing lots of things for themselves, especially in terms of organising their own things! Help your child to remember what their belongings look like and help them by getting them to have a go at being responsible for carrying them into school!

Willingness to communicate

Being able to talk to the adults and other children in school is vital for every child as they settle into school. Your child will want to talk to their friends as they play, to explain their ideas and create stories.

They will also need to be able to ask for help if they need to.

At home, encourage your child to talk clearly and confidently about the world around them, especially when exploring new situations.

Separating from carers

Settling into the school environment can be tricky for some children and they may feel unhappy when you drop them off. Help your child by reassuring them that you will be back to pick them up soon and keep dropping off times brief. Having a 'goodbye routine', e.g. kiss, cuddle and wave, which has been practiced before, can reassure children who feel a little nervous about separation.

Reading and counting

Share books with your child every day. Encourage a love of stories and show them how to look after their books. Ask them to answer questions about the story, recognise familiar characters and join in with repeated phrases. Make learning letter sounds fun by keeping sessions quick and easy and by looking for letters everywhere you go, especially those in their name! Being able to count is a fundamental skill. Help your child to develop a love of numbers by counting everyday objects and actions, such as steps, stairs and cars.

Eating

At school, the children will eat their lunch with their friends and will be supervised by familiar members of staff. If your child is having hot dinners please help them to practice using a knife and fork, as well as sitting at a table to eat. If not, support them in being independent in opening their own packets and eating tidily.

Toileting

For our nursery children, we will work with you on any toileting issues your child may have when they start with us. We will encourage them to manage their own toileting and personal hygiene. As they move into Reception, we will be there to help any child who needs some support, but it is important that they are willing to have a go on their own.

Dressing and undressing

At school, we will often change clothing: pull on coats and waterproofs, swap into wellies and even try on dressing-up clothes! Zips, buttons, Velcro, tights and pulling clothes on can all be tricky for children so praise your child at home when they have a go! Help them to practice getting dressed independently and show them how to make sure their clothes are the right way around!

Scissors and pencils

Using pencils and scissors can be really tricky for little hands and it requires lots of practice.

In school, we will do lots of activities to strengthen gross and fine motor skills but there are lots of fun things you can do at home to help too. Why not play games such as Operation or Buckeroo? Try threading games, using tweezers, playing with dough and using pegs!

Positive attitudes towards learning with others

Your child will interact with lots of other children at school, in many different situations. We will do lots of work on sharing, empathy, cooperation and taking turns. All children and adults will be expected to show respect to each other and their learning environment and resources.

Additional information

Breakfast and Fun Club

We provide a breakfast club for Nursery and Reception children.

Fun club (after school) is offered **just to Reception age children and above at present**. To book a place please contact the school office on officesn@stnicholasce.vale-academy.org

<https://www.st-nicholas-pri.oxon.sch.uk/breakfast-and-fun-club/>

Pupil Premium

Pupil premium is additional funding that is allocated to schools to support children. The government believes that the pupil premium, which is additional to main school funding, is the best way to address the current underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most.

Does my child qualify?

Your child may be eligible for Pupil Premium if you receive any of the following:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance;
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit;
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190);
- Working Tax Credit run-on, paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit;
- Universal Credit;
- Families with adopted children, or who are in the forces will also be eligible.

Nursery children may be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium

Please contact the school office if you think your child may be eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium / Pupil Premium funding; this information will be confidential.

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Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. They may need extra or different help from that given to other children in the class. You will always be consulted about this, and your views and knowledge of your child will be valued.

As a school we follow the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when identifying, assessing and providing help for your children with special educational needs. A copy of this document along with our Special Educational Needs and Behaviour Policies are available on our SEND page and in the school office for you to read if you wish.

How we stay connected

School Website: General information and news can be found on the school website, which is updated regularly. <https://www.st-nicholas-pri.oxon.sch.uk>

Parentmail: You should receive regular newsletters on a Friday to your email – please look out for these, alongside other valuable information.

Class Dojo: You can directly message your class teacher through Dojo, our online reward system. You will receive an invitation to sign up at the beginning of the school year. Your child can create their own 'dojo' – a little virtual 'monster' that receives points when they have done something above and beyond at school.



Meetings: You may request a meeting with your class teacher and are encouraged to do so – it is not always possible to find time at drop off or collection.

The Vale Academy Trust

The Vale Academy Trust's Vision

The Vale Academy Trust is a family of schools recognised for providing exceptional, stimulating, inclusive learning opportunities in a safe, happy environment where all can flourish.



More information can be found by visiting the website <https://www.vale-academy.org/>.

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School contact details

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Website: <https://www.st-nicholas-pri.oxon.sch.uk>