



**St. Paul's School
Chipperfield**

**Foundation Stage
Information**

Foundations

1. Foundations take longer to create than buildings.
2. The higher the building, the firmer the foundations have to be.
3. The more stress a building is likely to face, the more flexible the foundations need to be.
4. When building on poor ground, the foundations must be strengthened to compensate.
5. If new buildings are to be added to existing buildings, making the right connections between their foundations is crucial.
6. If foundations prove inadequate, it is very, very expensive to underpin them later on.

Welcome to St. Paul's School.

The Foundation Stage extends through the first two years of your child's time at St. Paul's. As the name implies, it underpins all other learning, and we strive to provide the highest and best, as well as the broadest scope of active, concrete experience, which acts as an introduction to their educational life at St. Paul's.

Staffing

Our Early Years team consists of two teachers, one nursery nurse and two teaching assistants, who between them have a wide experience of early year's education.

Our Aims for the Foundation Stage

- To create a happy environment in which every child is valued.
- To encourage parental partnership and family involvement.
- To provide a safe, secure, stimulating environment in which children enjoy learning and are eager to come.
- To provide a broad, balanced, relevant curriculum, which incorporates active learning and first hand experiences, so that each child is able to reach his or her full potential.
- To offer equal opportunities to all children and to develop an awareness of other cultures.
- To develop good self-discipline and acceptable behaviour.
- To develop an awareness of self and sensitivity towards others and provide opportunities for working co-operatively.
- To develop independent learning and an enquiring mind through creativity, initiative and inquisitiveness.
- To develop each child's physical ability.
- To create situations where play and language are promoted and valued as a vital means of extending thinking, understanding, feelings, ideas, behaviour and enjoyment.
- To monitor progress to meet the individual needs of all the children and to seek appropriate professional support where necessary.
- To create an environment which enables the child to make a smooth transition from nursery to school.

Parental Involvement

Parents are their children's first and most enduring educators. When parents and practitioners work together, the results have a positive impact on the child's development and learning. A successful partnership needs a two-way flow of information, knowledge and expertise.

At St Paul's we value the important and essential role parents play in their child's education.

We aim to:

- Listen and take account of parents' views of their child's development and any concerns they have.
- Make all parents feel welcome and valued through a range of different opportunities for collaboration between children, parents and practitioners.
- Make use of the expertise of parents and other family adults to support the learning opportunities provided by the Nursery.
- Encourage parents to volunteer to help in the Nursery, so that they may see the curriculum in action.
- Use a variety of ways to keep parents fully informed about the curriculum, such as brochures, newsletters, topic information and a parent's notice board in the cloakroom.
- Adopt a variety of ways of informing parents of their child's progress, through consultations, informal discussions, reports, sharing successes and sending home examples of work.
- Ask the parents to take home, and work with the children on the Firm Foundations materials, which are sent home weekly.

The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum

In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is divided up into seven areas of learning, with children working towards the Early Years Profile. It is anticipated most children will have achieved most of these objectives at the end of their Reception Year, when they will move to the National Curriculum in Year 1.

The 3 prime areas of learning are as follows:

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

This area of learning is about emotional well-being, knowing who you are and how you fit in, feeling confident and good about yourself and developing respect for others. The children will gain confidence and become more independent whilst learning to concentrate and enjoy sharing as part of a group. Developing a positive sense of themselves and a positive attitude to learning will lead to success in all other areas of learning.

Communication and Language

Communication and language is at the heart of your children's learning. This area of learning includes speaking and listening in different situations and for different purposes. The children can read a wide range of books, they are encouraged to share simple texts and will learn that writing is for a variety of purposes.

Physical Development

This area of learning is concerned with developing children's physical control. Their large motor skills are developing rapidly, and we plan and provide activities to develop and improve their control and stamina; improve co-ordination and help the children to develop a better awareness of space. Their fine motor skills are also developing rapidly. They are learning to hold a pencil, use other drawing and painting equipment and scissors, put on clothes, build and balance with construction equipment and generally manipulate items and materials. This area is inseparable from all other areas of learning because the children learn through being active and interactive.

In addition, there are 4 specific areas of learning:

Mathematics

This area of learning includes counting, sorting, matching, seeing and devising patterns, making connections, recognising relationships and working with numbers, shapes, space and measures. Mathematical understanding is developed through stories, songs, games, imaginative play, practical exploration, discussion and problem solving.

Understanding of the World

At this stage, children are exploring and trying to make sense of the natural and man-made world. They will learn about other people, religions and cultures. The children will have many first hand experiences, through indoor and outdoor activities. This forms the foundation for later learning in science, technology, ICT, history, geography, R.E. and multi-cultural education.

Literacy

The children are read a wide range of books, they are encouraged to share simple texts, and develop pre-reading skills. They will learn that writing is for a variety of purposes.

Expressive Arts and Design

This area focuses on the development of children's imagination, their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways. This area of learning includes art, music, dance, drama and imaginative play. Creativity is fundamental to emotional well-being and to successful learning. Being creative enables children to make connections between one area of learning and another.

The seven areas of learning help practitioners plan the learning environment and activities and experiences for the children. However, this does not mean that all of the children's learning is divided up into areas. One experience is likely to cover several areas of learning. For example, children building with blocks may co-operate in carrying bricks or moving the brick box, negotiate the best place to put them, compare the weight and dimensions of different blocks and act out an imaginary scene, while talking about the activity to other children. With this one activity children may be developing language, mathematical, physical and personal and social competencies through this one activity. What the seven areas do is to give us a focus and a main learning objective for the activity.

It is important when looking at the curriculum and the Early Learning Goals to remember that every child is an individual and that each one develops at a different rate in each area. Some areas will appear to have been achieved very quickly, others will take much longer. As children develop, it is important that they take with them what they have already learned, and practise and refine these skills to make use of them and thus help them to progress to the next stage in their learning.

Together we must encourage and support every child so that they reach their full potential and we look forward to sharing this role with you.

The Nursery Routine

Young children thrive on routine. It needs to be consistent from one day to the next, so that the child knows what to expect and to give them opportunities to make choices and plan activities.

The daily routine includes times when an adult directs the children and times when the children make their own choices; initiating their own learning.

The daily routine is as follows:

Welcome children and parents/carers into the Nursery

Self Registration and Busy Fingers activity

Learning time

Snack time and child initiated play - inside and outside

Tidy up time

Phonics/Story time

Welcome parents/carers into the Nursery

Self Registration and Busy Fingers Activity

When the children arrive at Nursery they will self-register and then we want them to start on a busy fingers activity immediately. If they are busy from the start of the day, the separation from their adult is much smoother. We ask the adult to settle their child at this activity before leaving. The work will be related to children's needs.

Examples of the activities include: threading, sorting, building, mark making, colouring, cutting activities and working with playdough.

Whole Group Time

Every day there will be a short time when the children are gathered together for a specific teaching activity. Examples of activities include: pre-reading activities, sharing a big book, number songs, counting, number recognition, discussing the topic and how to use specific equipment.

Teacher Directed Tasks

Every day there will be a planned learning experience that will involve some children in learning through doing. The children will be handling materials and actively involved. The activities are often open-ended, so that the children can develop and take further the activity, which has been introduced. New materials, skills and equipment are often introduced whilst old favourites can be rediscovered and extended with the support of adults and peers.

Snack Time

This is a very social time of the morning when the children have a drink and share some fruit together. The nursery children are entitled to free school milk, which is ordered in advance. If your child does not drink milk then they can have water from their water bottle. The children are also offered a piece of fruit and sit together and enjoy chatting with their friends.

Child Initiated Play

This is the time when children are initiating their own learning. They are actively exploring and discovering at their own levels, in their own ways. The adults will be interacting, assisting, observing and supporting the children during this time. The children may choose to work in several areas of the nursery, or may remain in the same area for the duration, because they have become engrossed in their play. During this time the children will have the choice of working inside or outside and there will be a member of staff available in both areas.

Tidy up Time

We all have to do it! The children do need to learn to tidy up after themselves. We endeavour to teach the children that they should be very proud of their Nursery; that if we don't tidy up, items will get lost and broken, but that if we keep our nursery tidy then things will be easier to find the next day. Children also learn that everything in the nursery

has its own special place. All of these skills are wonderful for their social development and for their sorting skills!

Phonics and Story Time

All the children come together to review the morning. We play a phonics game, read a story or poem and maybe sing before we finish the morning together.

The morning is very busy. We hope you will be able to volunteer for a session so that you may see the curriculum in action and appreciate how hard your child works and plays.

Once a week the children have a Gym time where we go to work on physical development and skills.

Lunch Club

The children can attend Lunch club, which is run by the local preschool, in the hall at the end of the school drive. The children are collected from the Nursery, and can enjoy some fun there until 1.30.

Organisation

Times

Nursery starts at 8.55 am and finishes at 12.00. We do ask you to try to keep to these times. If you are delayed collecting your child, please telephone the office so that we can warn your child. If someone else is collecting your child regularly please indicate this on the Confidential Entry Record, and if it is a 'one off', please can you tell a member of staff and write it in the 'Going Home Diary which is kept on the shelf.

Snack Time

During the morning children have milk and a piece of fruit.

Uniform

Children wear the school uniform of white polo shirt, grey skirt or trousers and a school cardigan or sweatshirt. The grey trousers and skirts or tunics can be bought at any High Street store and polo shirts, cardigans, sweatshirts - all with St. Paul's logo on - and fleeces for outside, again with the logo on, can be bought on-line from www.YourSchoolUniform.com. In the Foundation Stage all children, boys and girls, can wear black school-type jogging bottoms. The children come

to school in appropriate outside shoes (trainers are preferred) and change into black Velcro plimsolls indoors - the children need to be able to fasten their own shoes/plimsolls so we recommend Velcro fastenings. **Please name everything, as many items are the same and easily confused.** It is particularly helpful if the child's first name can be big and bold, so we can help them become more independent and find their own clothes. The children keep the shoes they are not wearing in a customised plastic shoe box under their peg (without the lid).

P.E.

To save changing time the children do not change for P.E. or gym sessions until the summer term. When we go into the gym for movement lessons they take off sweatshirts, shoes and socks. To conform with Health and Safety rules, hair needs to be tied back and no jewellery is allowed. Timetables have still to be confirmed, and I will tell you which day our gym session will be on but usually this is on a Friday.

Outside Play

The children have an entitlement to go outside every day, whatever the weather.

We work on the assumption 'There is no bad weather, only inappropriate clothing' and would ask that you send your child in appropriate clothing each day.

Hygiene

We expect the children to be toilet trained before starting school, but we do help them if they need it. We do understand that children will have accidents from time to time and are happy to act as a parent would and clean and change them. We do ask you to sign our Intimate Care Contract and let us know of any allergies or products, which are not suitable for your child. It is helpful if each child has their own spare clothes in a bag hanging on their peg. If your child has a particular problem, please do discuss it with the staff.

Illness

Like the rest of the school, we would ask you to telephone the office if your child is going to be absent, and follow this up with a letter of explanation on the child's return. Please can you let us know of any contagious diseases affecting anyone in your family in case we need to inform others (e.g. rubella, slap cheek). Also we must stress that

children should be off **AT LEAST 48 HOURS** from their last bout of sickness and diarrhoea.

Holidays

We urge you not to take holidays in term time unless unavoidable. It is a requirement of taking time off school that you write to the Headteacher requesting permission to take your child out of school before booking.

Nursery Fund

We suggest £10 per half term. The money is used to buy expendable items, such as, wipes; cooking ingredients and batteries and also larger items if there are sufficient funds.

Parent Volunteers

We are always grateful for offers of help and the children do like their parents to come in to Nursery. We do not ask for volunteers until the children are settled, and would ask that you only sign up for one session per half term to give everyone a chance to come.