

Welcome to St Francis R.C. Primary School



Foundation Phase Information Booklet for parents/carers

'Together with Jesus we live and learn'

Acting Headteacher: Miss M Langsdale
Acting Deputy Headteacher: Mrs D McHugh
Chair of Governors: Deacon J Mullin
Parish Priest: Father David O'Donnell

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The Catholic Life of the School

At St Francis RC Primary we put Christ at the heart of everything we do and strive to put a love of learning and a love of the gospel message in the heart of every child in our care.

The Catholic Life of our school is rich in opportunities for children to encounter God and to deepen their relationship with Him as a loving, compassionate Father. Through prayer, both tradition and informal, through liturgies and Religious Education lessons, where children receive direct teaching of the faith through the relationships and support for each other that children, staff and parents enjoy within the school community, we enable children to come to know and love God.

Displays of work in Religious Education are always of very high quality and can be seen in classrooms and all around the school, including the school's main reception area. Each class has a prayer focus area, with a liturgical cloth in the appropriate colour.

Religious statues are present around the school and each class has its own crucifix present in the reflective prayer area. This highlights the underlying belief that everything that we do at our school is founded on our Catholic faith.

Our Mission states:

"Together with Jesus we love and learn."

Christ is the reason for our school, the unseen but ever-present teacher in its classes, the model for its children and the inspiration for its teachers.



Prayer and Worship

Prayer and worship are central to the daily life of our school. We aim to provide opportunities for children's spiritual growth and development through participation in a variety of forms of worship and through experiencing all forms of prayer: formal, informal, spontaneous, private, shared, petitionary and meditative.

In this way we aim to help the children to come to value and respect the power of prayer and its place in their relationship with God.

The key events in the liturgical year are celebrated in many forms such as whole school Masses, Christmas Carol Services, Nativity performances, Lenten Liturgies including Ash Wednesday, opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Holy Week plays. Feast day celebrations, the Rosary and Stations of the Cross all take place.

Pupils are actively involved in planning and leading worship, both in class groups and whole school settings. Shared acts of worship take place in an atmosphere of reflection and stillness, where we encourage each other to listen to God speaking to us and to respond.

Children are encouraged to write prayers; this is a skill which we explicitly teach.



Religious Education

The programme of Religious Education that we follow is in line with the Catholic Directory as specified by the Bishops Conference of England and Wales. Religious Education is taught to all children for two and a half hours per week and is considered central to the whole school curriculum. We follow the Come and See religious education Scheme of work.

The school as a Catholic Community

All staff, led by the Acting Head teacher, Acting Deputy Head teacher and Governors are aware that the school's foundations are built on the Catholic faith and beliefs and that is our shared responsibility to transmit the Catholic faith to the children in our care. All staff receive regular In-Service Training as part of their continuous professional development. Staff pray and work together to support each other in providing the very best Religious Education possible for the pupils.

Religious Education is taught through four-weekly topics.

The topics followed over the yearly cycle are:

Autumn Term

Myself
Welcome
Birthday

Spring Term

Celebrating
Gathering
Growing

Summer Term

Good News
Friends
Our World

The aim of the programme is to provide a systematic presentation of the Catholic event, message and way of life, in an appropriate way, according to the age and stage of development of the individual child. It aims to help members of the next generation to have a deep love and knowledge of Christ which will enable them to be joyful witnesses to him in the world.

Foundation Phase Aims

The Foundation Phase aims to offer high quality educational experiences that will enhance the children's early learning through rich and purposeful play opportunities.

In St Francis RC Primary School we aim to promote:

- A caring environment
- A place to 'have a go' without fear of failure
- A place where we are all thought of as special
- A place where we know that what we say matters
- A place where we understand that what we say can affect others
- A place where self-esteem is given a high priority

In order for pupils to become:

- **Ambitious, capable learners ready to learn throughout their lives**
- **Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work**
- **Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world**
- **Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.**

The learning opportunities and activities are designed to meet the needs of all children, regardless of gender, ethnic origin or social circumstance. The Foundation Phase offers a nurturing classroom environment where all children and adults will be respected and encouraged to achieve their full potential.



Information- Our School Day

8.45 a.m. - Doors Open

8.55 a.m. - School Starts

- Bring your child to the Reception class doors and your child will hang up their coats before going to get their milk
- The doors will be locked at 9.00 a.m.
- If you do arrive late, you will need to bring your child to the main entrance of the Foundation Phase building, where a member of staff will allow your child entry and record the reasons for lateness in the late book.
- Attendance and punctuality are closely monitored at St Francis RC Primary.
- Holidays are **not** allowed to be taken during term time.
- If you are going on a cultural/heritage visit please contact the school secretary for further information.
- If your child is unable to attend school, please phone the school and leave a message with the school secretary to explain why your child is absent.
- If a message has not been received a phone call will be made by staff at the school to your home to enquire about your child's absence.

8.55-11.00 - Learning time

11.00-11.15 - Fruit, milk and break time

St Francis RC Primary has been awarded 'Healthy Schools' status Level 5. This means that we promote a healthy lifestyle. **At snack time, all children will be allowed to eat a piece of fruit.** This can be purchased from school at a cost of **20p a day** or **£1/week payable at the start of the week.** Alternatively you can provide your child with their own piece of fruit. No other snacks are allowed and will be returned to the parents.



Water bottles also need to be brought to school on a daily basis. Please remember, your child is only allowed water (no squash, fizzy drinks). **Please ensure water bottles are clearly labelled with your child's name and class.**

11.20-12.10 - Phonics, Reading and Reading Activities.

At St. Francis we encourage children to start reading as soon as they are able. Reading is very important and therefore during this time your child will take part in a range of phonics and reading activities. This will help them to learn their sounds, spellings and reading words. They will be in a group that is suitable for their needs. The group will be small which will allow them to excel in this area.

12.00-1.20 - Lunch time

Lunch begins at 12.00pm and continues until 1.20pm. The school will provide a safe, clean, sociable environment, indoors and out, for children to eat their lunch. In doing so, the school requests children adhere to the following rules:

- All children are required to sit at a table for a reasonable length of time, in order to eat their lunch
- Children are encouraged to eat all or at least try to eat most of the food provided, either by the school or in their lunch box
- Lunchtime supervisors will help any children who have concerns or cause concern during meal time.
- Children are expected to behave whilst eating their lunches, be polite and helpful
- If a child has a problem they should raise their arm and wait until a lunchtime supervisor speaks to them
- Children leave the area when they have eaten their lunch in a reasonable clean and tidy condition.

Your child may either have a school meal or a packed lunch provided by the parent/carer. All Rubbish from packed lunches will be returned home for recycling.

All lunch is eaten in the main school hall.

School Meals and ParentPay



Like many Cardiff Schools (including Mary Immaculate High School.) St. Francis RC Primary uses **ParentPay** to pay for school meals. You can order and pay for your child's School meals online.

Meals need to be ordered and paid for in advance. Simply visit www.parentpay.com and activate your account via the **Account**

Login area on their home page. This can be done using a computer or **your mobile**

phone. You will be asked to use the unique activation username and password that you will be given when your child starts school. You will then be prompted to **change these and to keep them safe and secure as your Username and Password for future logins.** You will need an active email account to do this. The ParentPay system is not just for school dinners, we will eventually be a cashless school and all payments, including school trips and other events, will be paid this way. Therefore please sign up to ParentPay as soon as possible even if your child does not have school dinners.

This is a great system for parents as it enables parents to select meals with children. You can then see exactly what they are having for lunch!

If you have two or more children at the school, you only need to activate one account to create your main account then add your other children via the **Add a child tab** on your home page.

Money **MUST** be added to your account before ordering meals, as you cannot order without having money in your ParentPay account.

If your child is entitled to Free School Meals, please activate your account as above, and pre order your child's meals, as above. Your child's account will be credited with the Free School Meal entitlement for each day; therefore no payment is required.

School meals **MUST be ordered by the Sunday, in preparation for the week to follow.** It is important that all parents (both paying and those entitled to Free School Meals) pre order meals for their children. **Failure to do so may result in desired meals not being available for your child.**

Packed lunch

We recommend that a child's lunch should include only the following:

- A portion of starchy food, e.g. wholegrain bap/bread, sesame seed pitta bread, plain crackers, pasta or rice salad
- Fresh fruit and vegetables, e.g. apple/orange/banana, cherry tomatoes, carrots sticks, mini fruit chunks, etc
- A portion of milk or dairy food, e.g. cheese, plain/fruit yoghurt, etc.
- Small portion of lean meat, fish or alternative, e.g. two slices of ham, chicken, beef, Quorn, cheese, tuna, egg or hummus, etc.
- A drink - fruit juice (not fizzy or diluted squash), water (not flavoured), milk (not flavoured)

Parents are advised to include an ice pack. Food products prepared and stored in ambient temperatures, can after a period of between two to four hours, have increased levels of bacteria in them, which may be harmful to your child. Although the school provides ambient storage facilities, the school cannot take legal responsibility for foods prepared at home and then brought into school.

In addition, the school requests that parents **do not** include the following items in packed lunches:

- Sweets, chocolate, etc.
- Crisps or any packet savoury snacks high in salt and fat
- Fizzy drinks/sugary drinks
- Sweet cakes, e.g. sugary cakes, doughnuts, etc.
- Sweet nut bars, etc.
- Foods containing salted nuts, etc.
- Packets of salted nuts

After the children finish eating their lunch they are able to play on the school yard. Where they will be supervised by midday supervisors and teaching assistants, who will support children's play through a range of games and enable children to engage with others in an appropriate manner in line with school policy. All teaching assistants are trained in First Aid.

1.15 p.m. - Tooth brushing

During the lunch break, your child will also brush his/her teeth. This is part of the **Welsh Assembly Project** to lessen tooth decay in children.



1.20 p.m. - Afternoon registration and meditation

1:30 p.m.- Big Maths Daily session followed by Learning Time

3.00 p.m. - Home time



Please inform us if someone other than yourself is collecting your child at the end of the session. Your child's safety is very important to us.

Uniform

All our children are expected to wear school uniform. This consists of:

- white/red polo tops,
- grey/ black skirts, trousers and shorts
- Red sweatshirts, jumpers or cardigans

You can order sweatshirts and cardigans with the school logo from School trends (details on school website or the main reception)

Alternatively you can purchase plain jumpers, sweatshirts etc. from other sources e.g. Tesco, Marks and Spencer, Asda.

Please ensure your child wears sensible footwear to school.

We advise that **belts are NOT to be worn** as children often find them tricky to undo when they need to go to the toilet. We encourage the children to be as independent as possible.

All uniform is to be clearly marked with your child's Name and class as the school is unable to accept responsibility for unnamed items.

PE kit - School PE kit consists of

- White T-shirt and black shorts for PE
- Jogging bottoms and sweatshirt for outdoor lessons
- trainers.

All items must be clearly marked with your child's name and class.

Please bring P.E. kit in a **bag clearly marked with your child's name** every week.

Outdoor clothing - Wellington boots, waterproof jacket and trousers are required as learning will take place outdoors in all weather conditions. Please can these be brought in at the start of the year in a **named bag** to be kept in school. If you are unable to provide waterproof clothing or wellington boots please let your child's class teacher know as soon as possible.

During the **summer term** we advise that children have a sun hat and wear sunscreen on sunny days for outdoor activities.

Please **do not** send your child to school in **high-heeled shoes, open-toed sandals or wearing any jewellery** as this can be dangerous.

St Francis RC Primary Breakfast Club

Our school breakfast club opens at 8:15 a.m. This is for children who like to eat breakfast at school. Pupils receiving Free School Meals have priority for this club. The only rule if a child joins this club is that they must eat breakfast.

Breakfast is a wholemeal or white piece of toast with either cereal or yoghurt. A cup of fruit juice. One portion of fruit is also available. Currently there is a waiting list for this breakfast club.

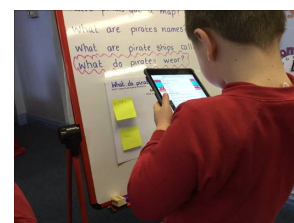
During Breakfast club, statutory guidelines are adhered to. All Breakfast Club staff are in receipt of Basic Food Hygiene qualifications and the coordinator has a Level 2 award in Food safety and Catering.

Illness



If your child is not well, on any medication or is suffering from something that may be passed on to another child, please keep them home and let us know as soon as possible by leaving a message on the school office telephone, **02920 591666**. It is especially important that children who have highly infectious conditions such as **gastro-enteritis and diarrhoea** stay at home until the condition is clear; **this is after a minimum of 48 hours**.

Inhalers for asthmatic conditions must be clearly labelled and placed in the hands of teaching staff. A medical form will then need to be completed at the school office. If your child becomes unwell and needs medication to be admitted throughout the school day then please hand the named medicine to the class teacher and fill out a medical form at the school office. If your child needs ongoing medication please talk the issue through with their teacher. When your child starts school, or at any subsequent time, it is very important that you inform us of any condition, ailment or allergy that your child has.



Areas of Learning in the Foundation Phase

1. Personal and Social Development, Well Being and Cultural Diversity
2. Language, Literacy and Communication
3. Mathematical Development
4. Knowledge and Understanding of the World
5. Welsh Language Development
6. Physical Development
7. Creative Development

Each half term, the children will explore these areas of learning through a new context:

Autumn Term 1- Do you want to be friends?

Autumn Term 2- Why do squirrels hide their nuts?

Spring Term 1- Will you read me a story?

Spring Term 2- Why do zebras have stripes?

Summer Term 1- Can I switch it on?

Summer Term 2- Why do ladybirds have spots?



Reading together



Set time aside to read with your child. Snuggle up and enjoy this special time.

- ⦿ Read to your child every day
- ⦿ Point out words/signs everywhere you go
- ⦿ Share a story with younger/older siblings
- ⦿ Look at newspapers, leaflets, brochures, food packaging.
- ⦿ Visit the library or the hub
- ⦿ Choose books that will interest your child
- ⦿ Talk about the title and front cover- what does it tell us about the story?
- ⦿ Look through the pictures so your child can see what the story is about
- ⦿ Show your child how to read the story placing your finger under each word as you read (tracking the print)
- ⦿ Read the story again and encourage your child to join in
- ⦿ Give lots of praise as your child reads with you
- ⦿ Re-read the story as this help builds their confidence
- ⦿ Talk about what happens in the story
- ⦿ Question your child about what happened in the story, favourite parts etc
- ⦿ How many times can you find the word 'like' in the story/on the page?



Helping your child with math's when they start school



As with reading, try to make math's as much fun as possible - games, puzzles and jigsaws are a great way to start. It is important to show how we use math's skills in our everyday lives and to involve your child in this.

Identifying problems and solving them can also help your child develop math's skills. If you see him or her puzzling over something, talk about the problem and try to work out the solution together. *Don't shy away from maths if you didn't like it at school.* Try to find new ways to enjoy the subject with your child.

Tips for helping your child to enjoy maths:

1. Point out the different 2D and 3D shapes to be found around your home
2. Take your child shopping and talk about the quantities of anything you buy.
3. Let your child handle money and work out how much things cost.
4. Look together for numbers on street signs and car registration plates.
5. Use the useful maths games set by your child's class teacher.
6. Help your child learn their big maths Learn Its which can be found on the website



How can you help at home?

- Encourage your child to use the toilet properly, dress and undress, including doing up buttons, buckles and zips. Encourage their independence.
 - Teach your child to put away all toys and books after playing with them.
 - Give your child opportunities to play and share with other children.
 - Learn songs and nursery rhymes and sing them together.
- Encourage your child to colour, draw, cut out, play with plasticine, construction toys, dress up, help with cooking etc.
 - Play matching games such as Snap or Pairs.
 - Read books with your child and talk about everyday events.
- Use family dinner times to stimulate conversation and develop language and vocabulary.
- Encourage lots of physical exploring play by providing e.g. sand, water, wooden bricks, and a patch of garden to dig in.
- Ask your child questions and encourage him/her to ask you questions to develop listening skills.
 - Encourage your child to persevere with activities that they find tricky.
- Above all, help your child to become independent. The school will encourage pupils to think for themselves too. You can assist this process by encouraging children to try out something for themselves. Always offer your support and praise their efforts.

Homework and Reading Bags



Homework is an essential part of your child's education. Homework must be completed weekly. A register is kept to monitor completion of tasks. Every child will have an individual homework book for homework to be completed in. Please ensure your child completes their homework with your support and guidance. We encourage the children to take pride in their work and presentation and ask that you would support us in this.

READING BOOKS AND BOOK BAGS MUST BE BROUGHT TO SCHOOL ON WEDNESDAY

Reception Weekly Homework

- Reading book (weekly, once your child has started reading)
- High frequency words key rings (ongoing)
- 2 task's per week either related to the literacy, maths, topic or RE (weekly)

Homework will be set on a Friday and should be returned by the following Wednesday. You will find the weekly homework on the class page of our school website.

Please inform your child's class teacher if they do not have access to the internet at home.



Prayers



The following prayers are said on a daily basis in class. Please use these at home with your child.

The sign of the cross is the most important way to begin and finish prayers

The sign of the cross

In the name of the Father,
And of the Son,
And of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.



Morning Prayer

O my God you love me
You're with me night and day
I want to love you always
In all I do and say
I'll try to please you father
Bless me throughout the day.
Amen.

Evening Prayer

God our Father
I've come to say
Thank you for your love
today
Thank you for my family
And all the friends you
give to me
Guard me in the dark of
night
And in the morning send
your light. Amen.

Children also take part in meditation where they are asked to have time with God to reflect on their day.

Parish: -St Francis Church Presbytery 277, Cowbridge Road West, 029 2059 1503.
Mass times: Saturday evening 6pm, Sunday Morning 9.30am & 11.00am

ALN (Additional Learning Needs)



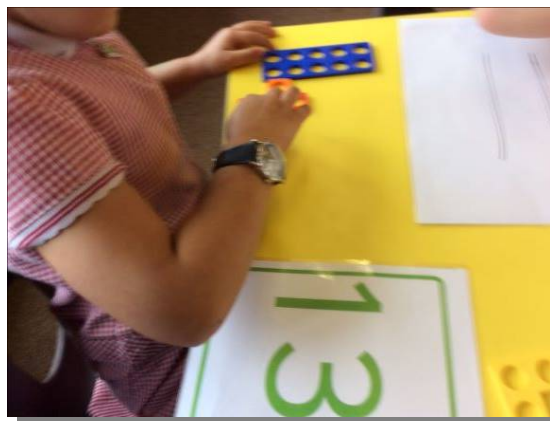
The school ALN Co-ordinator is Mr Philp.

Each child's development both socially, emotionally, behaviourally, intellectually and physically will be carefully monitored and assessed. Every effort will be made within the school to meet any educational need.

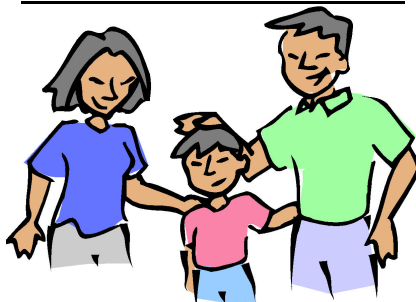
If problems do occur, we will discuss them with you and your help and support will be sought to ensure that both home and school work together to try and work through the problem.

If necessary, then professional help will be sought from outside agencies and you would be made fully aware of the steps that would be taken.

If you wish to make an appointment with the ALNCo regarding any concerns or issues then please phone the school office and Mr Philp will arrange a suitable day and time, if available.



Parental consultations



Parent's evenings take place on two occasions over the year. Parents are designated a time to meet and discuss their child's progress, targets, behaviour and attitude to learning. These meetings are very important! All parents/carers are expected to attend.

Parent Volunteers



We welcome parents as volunteers on school trips or within the classroom to support learning. Please inform your child's class teacher if you are available to volunteer.

Families First and Families Connect

Families First is a parent learning programme run by Cardiff & Vale College and is designed to offer block courses that will help you support your child's learning.

The courses support the learning of children aged 5-7/.

Families Connect is an eight-week course lead by school staff. The course is aimed at supporting Personal Language and Mathematical development of children aged 5-6.



Newsletter for Parents



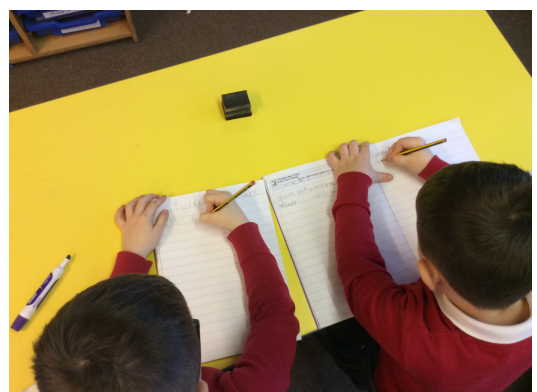
Every Friday, a school newsletter is distributed to parents via Schoop, e-mail and on the website. The newsletter contains an article from every class in the school about the learning experiences from that week.

This includes photographs, examples of children's work and quotes from the children.

The newsletter also includes important diary dates, pupil achievement and what each class will be learning about the following week.

Seesaw

Seesaw is a secure online learning journal where children can create and upload their work to document their learning. Your child will add photos, videos, worksheets, drawings and voice recordings to their Seesaw journal. Seesaw journals are private and only accessible by the teacher, students, and parents. As a parent, you can sign up for a free Seesaw parent account, download the parent app to your phone (giving you access to your child's learning journal) and choose to be notified when your child adds new content. You will receive your child's personal login details at the start of the school year.



And finally...

If you have any worries or concerns about your child, or their progress within the school, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are always willing to discuss your child's progress any concerns or enquiries.

**We are sure your child will be very happy and enjoy making new friends and having fun learning at
St Francis R.C Primary School.**

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