



**St John's**  
Church of England  
**Academy**

*Part of the*



## School Prospectus 2021 – 2022

'Guided by God to be the best  
that  
we can be.'



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Dear Parent/Carer,

On behalf of all the staff, children and governors, I would like to welcome you to St. John's Church of England Academy. We look forward to working with you as part of a happy, caring home/school partnership and meeting with you and your family on many occasions during your child's time with us. As a Church school, our Christian values underpin all our work and particular attention is given to the spiritual and moral development of our pupils.

The education of your child is as important to us as it is to you. Education is the key to success and the single most important factor in increasing your child's chances in life. Co-operation between home and school is vital if we are to maximise the potential of every child in our care. Staff will be very happy to discuss your child's progress and give you any help or advice that you may require along their learning journey.

This brochure gives essential information about our school. If you wish to know more, please do not hesitate to contact us on the details below. Visits to the school are welcomed.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Ramsay

Headteacher

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\* The information is correct at the time of publication.

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# Why Choose St John's CE Academy?

- We are graded by Ofsted as an 'Outstanding' school that provides high quality teaching from caring, conscientious staff who are committed to ensuring that every child reaches their full potential.
- We have a high-quality Nursery with provision for ages 2-4 years old.
- We are a small Church School where Christian family values are fostered. We were rated as 'Outstanding' in our last SIAMs inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) and have strong links with St John's Church, Darlington Deanery and the Durham Diocese.
- We set high expectations and achieve very good standards, giving strong emphasis to basic skills.
- We provide a rich, meaningful curriculum with lots of exciting, first-hand experiences. Our children regularly take part in school trips and work with a wide range of visitors including authors, dancers, poets, artists and theatre companies.
- We provide a rich variety of extra-curricular activities and have a popular early morning Breakfast Club.
- Our children have access to a range of technology to support their learning, including iPads, laptops and a fully equipped computing suite.
- We actively encourage parental involvement in their child's education and provide regular opportunities for parents to be involved in the life of the school. These include Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association and Family Learning courses.
- We provide a safe and secure, stimulating and well-maintained environment with a large playing field, wildlife garden and Spiritual Garden.
- We have active, supportive governors as well as good links with feeder schools and the local community.

# School Mission and Aims

Our mission statement is:



‘Guided by God to be the best that we can be’



We aim to:

- Create a safe, happy and caring learning environment, where everyone is welcomed and valued as a unique individual within the eyes of God and each other.
- Provide a broad, balanced and meaningful curriculum, which offers all pupils the widest range of educational opportunities in order to inspire a love of learning.
- To prepare them for the next phase in their education and life in modern Britain.
- Create an “I can” culture and raise individual self- esteem through praise and independence so children are not afraid to make mistakes. To become confident and resilient with a thirst for learning.
- Encourage pupils to develop spiritually, mentally, physically, culturally and morally into well balanced, reliable British citizens who take responsibility for themselves, their school, the local environment and the wider world.
- Ensure that equal opportunities are provided for all, and all forms of discrimination are actively challenged.
- Work in effective partnerships with governors, families, feeder schools and other agencies, to ensure that every child matters and achieves their true potential.
- Commit to excellence for all. Through the process of continual reflection and evaluation, constantly strive to improve.

# Admissions

## Children Starting in Nursery

Children are admitted to the Foundation Unit the term following their third birthday. Names can be placed on the waiting list from the beginning of the school year in which the child will be two years old. We will arrange home visits so that your child can settle smoothly into the life of the Foundation Unit. Good attendance is essential as it is an important time when children make progress towards independence and full-time education.

We also have provision for **two-year-olds**. Please contact the school to arrange a visit if you require our services.

## Children Starting in Reception

Children are admitted to full time education in the September before their fifth birthday. Most of the children who have been to Nursery will secure a place in our Reception class. This creates a seamless transition because the staff already know the children. However, this is not automatic, and all applications will be subject to our Admissions Criteria. If your child has attended another nursery, our Reception class teacher will visit them at their Nursery prior to the home visit.

Parents will also be invited into school for an informal meeting with the Headteacher and Reception Teacher. There will be opportunities for your child to visit and become familiar with routines. For the first two weeks, there will be a shortened school day for the children to support a smooth transition.

The Governing Body of St John's CE Academy is the Admissions Authority for the school. Children are offered places to the school in line with the Admissions Code. We intend to admit 30 places each year.

Please refer to our latest [Admissions Policy](#), which you will find on our website or by [clicking here](#) where you can find our Admissions Criteria.

## In Year Admissions

Parents/carers of older children who wish to be admitted to school are asked to ring the Town Hall who coordinate in year admissions. Please ring if you would like to visit the school.

## **Special Arrangements**

Please inform the school if you or your child suffers from a disability so that we can assess need and make any reasonable adaptions to ensure a smooth transition into school.

# The School Day

The timings of the Key Stages vary slightly. The school day operates as follows:

	EYFS	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Doors open	08:45	08:45	08:45
Registration	08:55	08:55	08:55
Session 1	09:00	09:00	09:00
Playtime	10:15	10:30	10:45
Session 2	10:30	10:45	11:00
Lunch	11:45	11:50	12:10
Session 3	12:55	12:55	12:55
Home Time	15:20	15:20	15:20

## Every Second Counts!

We open the doors and allow the children to arrive from 08:45. They will be welcomed at the door by a member of staff and be directed to their classroom. This ensures children are in school and settled in time for registration at 08:55. Lessons start at 09:00. Anybody arriving after this time must report to the school office and they will be marked as late.

Lessons begin at 09.00 so children who arrive late miss the most important part of the first lesson - often a time when the instructions are given. Each time a child is late, it is recorded on the school system. Parents/carers of children who are persistently late will be referred to our Attendance Officer, who will take appropriate action.

Children who choose to go home for lunch can be collected at 12 noon (Key Stage 1) 12.10 (Key Stage 2) and should be returned by 12.55pm, when school restarts.

## The End of the School Day

The school day ends at 15:20; their class teacher will escort the children to the playground where they will be directed to parents who are asked to stand at the edge of the playground to ensure the teacher's view is not blocked. Children who walk home alone are dismissed at this point. Those not collected

will return into school with their teacher who will then make enquiries. If you are going to be late when collecting your child, please let us know in advance by phoning the school office who will deliver the message to your child and their teacher. If you are sending someone else to collect your child, please let us know, preferably in writing, beforehand.

# Attendance

Attending school every day is central to making progress and raising attainment, giving our children the best possible start in life. It is a parent's duty in law to see that their child attends school and that they are punctual.

If your child is suffering from an illness, it is essential that you **phone** the school on the first day of absence. Routine dental or medical appointments should be made outside of school hours where possible.

Leave of absence during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. All children are required to sit Statutory National Assessment Tests (SATs at the end of Year 6). Leave of absence will not be authorised before or during SATs week. In exceptional circumstances, leave of absence will be authorised. Parents/carers can access the leave of absence form by [clicking here](#) or visiting the school website.

Please refer to our Attendance Policy for greater detail. The policy is available by [clicking here](#) or visiting the school website.

Attendance awards are given every half term for children with exceptional attendance. Those with a full year's attendance receive a special prize in July.

# School Uniform

School uniform and general presentation including hair style plays a valuable role in contributing to the ethos of the school, setting an appropriate tone and expectation of high standards. Governors introduced the policy as a way of encouraging positive behaviour and discipline whilst protecting children and parents from the pressures of succumbing to the latest trends and fashions. We find that with all children wearing uniform, they have a sense of common identity and pride in membership of our school community. Parents say that it avoids competition for 'designer garments' and that it is cost effective.

Our uniform consists of:

- Royal blue sweatshirt/Cardigan.
- Sky blue/white polo shirt.
- Grey trousers/skirts/pinafore dresses.
- Royal blue fleece
- Blue/white checked summer dress.
- Girls – grey tights or white socks.
- Boys – black/grey socks.
- Plain black shoes/trainers/plimsolls.



## Hair

Hair should be tidy, preferably tied up with a small tie in school colours. We discourage any 'extreme' hair styles, which attract undue attention such as shaved patterns or hair dye.



## P.E Kit

- Black plimsolls or trainers; blue shorts.
- Plain-white t-shirt.

P.E Kit should be brought in at the start of the term and kept in school. It should only be taken home every half term for washing. Please ensure that all clothing is clearly and permanently named.

You can collect a uniform order form from the school office or through our website by [clicking here](#).

### **Jewellery**

Jewellery should not be worn except for wristwatches and stud earrings. For P.E, Games and Swimming, earrings must be removed. Staff and Governors will not accept any responsibility for the loss of, or damage to any article of jewellery.

### **Lost Property**

Lost Property is placed in storage boxes by the children's entrance. Every effort is made by staff to match missing items to their owners. However, this is very difficult if they are not named. Children are encouraged to look in the boxes for missing items.

We will display lost property items in the playground at the end of the day at several times throughout the year.

# School Dinners and Playtime

Our Catering staff produce healthy, nutritious meals on the premises and offer a choice of three healthy hot meals or a school packed lunch. All meals are pre-ordered in advance and the menu is changed termly. We are a 'Healthy School' and promote healthy eating. Our school meals are excellent value for money.



## Dinner Money

Dinner Money is paid via ParentPay, a secure system that avoids the need to bring cash into school. School dinners cost £10 per week and should be paid for in advance. To sign up to ParentPay, please contact the school office for a username and password then follow the link via our school website by [clicking here](#).

## Free School Meals

If you think you are eligible for free school meals, an application form is available from the office. All children in Reception and Key Stage 1 receive a universal free school meal.

## Packed Lunch

As a 'Healthy School', any packed lunches brought onto the premises should be a nutritious, healthy meal in a clearly named lunch box. Fizzy drinks, sweets and chocolate bars are not allowed. All rubbish/waste must be taken home in the lunch box. If parents/carers wish to change from school meals to packed lunch or vice versa, we require two weeks written notice.

If you wish for your child to go home for lunch, please discuss the child's allocated lunchtime with the school office. They may not miss any lesson time by going home for lunch.



## Lunchtime Supervision

Children are supervised by school support staff. Children are expected to conform to the Lunchtime

Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in eating their lunch in isolation or having lunch at home.

### **Break Times**

We encourage the children to drink plenty of water throughout the school day. All children are provided with a reusable drinks bottle to avoid unnecessary waste and plastic pollution. Children are only permitted to bring their own drinks as part of a packed lunch.

# Behaviour

For children to be successful learners it is vitally important that their learning environment is calm and secure. We work together to encourage and bring about self-discipline in each individual. We demand the highest standards of behaviour at St John's, and we expect parents to fully support us in putting our policy into practice. A copy of our Behaviour Policy is available on the school website by clicking [here](#).

At St. John's we have three 'School Rules,'

- Be ready
- Be safe
- Be respectful



Under these main rules, we aim to teach the children the following values:

- At St John's we aim to teach the children the following values:
- Self-discipline and proper regard for authority
- An awareness of the consequences of unacceptable behaviour
- Respect and regard for themselves, others and property
- Good manners and courtesy
- Truthfulness
- An awareness of the difference between right and wrong

## How We Discourage Inappropriate Behaviour

There are times when children forget our aims for good behaviour. When this happens, it becomes necessary to remind children of the consequences of their actions, using the following strategies:

- A verbal warning and reminder of the Code of Conduct
- A second warning
- Loss of a privilege such as playtime.
- Sending the child to an area of the class for 'time out'.
- Sending the child to the Headteacher.
- Invite parents into school to discuss their behaviour.
- Individual behaviour targets agreed by teacher, child and parent/carer.
- Daily/weekly reports to parents
- A fixed term exclusion.

- A permanent exclusion.

We look forward to your co-operation on all matters related to discipline.

### **How We Encourage Positive Behaviour**

We believe that positive behaviour should be recognised and praised. Here are some of the ways we positively encourage children.

- Praise from the teacher.
- Sent to the Headteacher for praise.
- Sent to another class to share achievement.
- Merits awarded via the Class Dojo system.
- Give appropriate responsibilities.
- Receive an award in the weekly achievement assembly.
- Parents informed by a telephone call, online message or verbally.
- Recognition via the school social media pages.

### **Wilful Damage & Vandalism**

In addition to any sanction imposed, the Governors reserve the right to charge parents for the cost of any wilful damage done to school property by a pupil.

# Anti-Bullying



We recognise that as in all schools, bullying does occur at times. We actively teach our children what to do if they are being bullied or if they are aware of other children suffering. A copy of this policy is available for parents to read on our school website by [clicking here](#).

## Definition of Bullying

There are many definitions of bullying. At St John's, we consider it to be:

- Deliberate behaviour to hurt, threaten or frighten someone
- When it is difficult for victims to defend themselves due to greater strength, greater numbers, or superior position.
- It happens several times on purpose.

Bullying can take many forms. The main types are:

- Physical – Hitting, kicking, taking belongings
- Verbal – name calling, insulting, threats, spreading rumours
- Social – exclusion from a group, inciting others to bully
- Psychological – tormenting, spreading rumours, taunts about sexuality
- Cyberbullying - Using technology to send, post, or share negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else

It can also include racist, sexist or homophobic remarks; writing hurtful things about or to someone and demanding money or possessions.

## What does not constitute bullying:

It is important to understand that children are often involved in conflicts and must learn to deal with these as part of their social skills. Examples that are not considered bullying include:

- Two children having a one-off fight.
- Friends falling out.
- Arguing
- Bumping into another child in the playground.

## Advice to Parents

Every school is likely to have some problem with bullying at some point. Parents are often the first to detect the signs and symptoms of bullying. Signs to look out for include headaches, stomach aches, anxiety and irritability. Please contact the school immediately if you have any worries. Whilst we understand that bullying can be very upsetting for children and parents, we ask that parents remain calm and allow the school to follow the correct procedures.

### **If your child has been bullied:**

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved; how often the bullying has occurred; where it happened and what has happened.
- In the event of cyberbullying, keep screenshots of any evidence.
- Reassure your child that he/she has done the right thing to tell you about the bullying
- Explain to your child that should further incidents occur, he/she should report them to a teacher or another adult immediately.
- Make an appointment to see your child's class teacher or headteacher
- Explain to the teacher the problems your child is experiencing.

### **Talking with teachers about bullying:**

- Try and stay calm – bear in mind that the teacher may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened, give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school; let them know if things improve or if problems continue.

### **If your child is bullying other children:**

Many children may be involved in bullying at some time or another. Often their parents are not aware. Please keep an open mind and do not assume that your child would not be involved. Remember we have a duty of care to investigate any allegations and if your child is suspected as being involved, we will do our best to ensure the problem is resolved.

### **Children sometimes bully others because:**

- They don't know it is wrong.
- They don't realise the effect their behaviour is having on others.
- They are copying older brothers/sisters or people in the family/community they admire.
- They give in to peer pressure.
- They are experiencing a difficult time and are acting on aggressive feelings.

If your child has seriously hurt another child or has repeatedly been involved in bullying, you may be asked to make an appointment to discuss the problem.

### **To discourage your child bullying others, you could:**

- Talk to your child, explaining that bullying is unacceptable and makes others unhappy.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or using aggression to get what they want.
- Discuss how your child how to resolve difficult situations without using violence or aggression.
- Discuss with your child's teacher to explain the problems your child is experiencing.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Provide your child with lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people.

# Communication with Parents

## Home-School Agreement

Working in partnership with parents is essential in ensuring that all children receive the best education. Please read at our Home School Agreement; a copy of this can be found in the appendices by [clicking here](#). All parents/carers are required to sign this when their children start school as a sign of their commitment to working together.

## Regular Communication

We endeavour to keep parents informed of events that are happening in school. We produce regular newsletters and information is frequently sent home/mailed via Class Dojo, advising parents of events and visits. If you are unsure of how to operate Class Dojo, please contact your child's teacher. It is good practice to ask your child each day if he/she has a letter and regularly checking Class Dojo, the school website, and our social media pages. We have a parents' notice board near the school entrance, which we keep updated with key information. At the start of each term, you will receive a curriculum letter to inform you about your child's learning.



**ClassDojo**

We also ask that parents keep the school informed about any issues in the children's lives that may affect their schooling. Please discuss any matters with your child's teacher if you wish to discuss any matters that may affect your child's learning. Any information given will be kept completely confidential. It is essential that you keep us informed when you change your mobile telephone number so we can contact you in the event of an emergency.

We operate an open-door policy. If you wish to speak your child's teacher about small matters, parents may approach the teacher after school once all of the children have been dismissed. For issues that require a longer meeting, please make an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Appointments are at the school office.

If a matter is urgent, please contact the Headteacher or Home School Support Worker.

## **Parent Consultation Meetings**

We hold parent consultation sessions during the Autumn and Spring terms. Parents are invited into school to discuss their child's progress and set future targets with the teacher. Annual Reports are issued towards the end of the Summer Term. At other times, if you have any concerns about your child's progress, please make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher.

## **Volunteers**

We welcome and appreciate parent volunteers into school to support learning. If you would like to volunteer to help in the classroom, please contact the Headteacher. We do not allow parents to volunteer in the same class as their child due to the distractions it can cause. All volunteers wishing to help on a regular basis will be subject to a police check to ensure the safety of all children.

## **Family Learning**

We work in partnership with Darlington College to run Family Learning sessions in school. The courses are fun, free and designed to give parents an insight into what your child is learning and how you can help. New parents are always welcome. For more information, please contact the office.

# Our Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes which will support children throughout their school lives and into adulthood. These include the basic skills of communication, through speaking and listening, reading and writing, and maths skills. They also include those skills which will help children become independent and confident people who know how to stay safe and keep fit and healthy.

Our curriculum also aims to help children develop positive attitudes towards themselves, towards others and towards the wider world in which they live.

**The National Curriculum organises the Key Stages as follows:**

Key Stage	Age	School Year
EYFS	2-5 Years	Nursery; Reception
Key Stage 1	5-7 Years	Y1; Y2
Key Stage 2	7-11 Years	Y3; Y4; Y5; Y6

## **EYFS**

The curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is designed to provide a broad and balanced education that meets the needs of all pupils from our 2-year-old Nursery, 3- year-old Nursery through to the end of Reception. It facilitates the children to gain the skills, knowledge and understanding, as they start out on their educational journey.

Together with parents/carers, we engage each child and support them to learn through play, including a mixture of adult-led and child-initiated activities which include following the children's interests. During play, children learn at their highest level, they explore and investigate, helping them to make sense of the world. Activities are planned for both the inside and outside areas.

Many of our children arrive below the national expectations for their age. As such, we prioritise Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication and Language in the curriculum, teaching them how to listen, speak and meet the high expectations for behaviour by working together and being kind. Our enabling environments enable staff to deliver a curriculum to develop a love of reading, writing and number. We provide opportunities for

cross curricular links as well as promoting the unique child by offering activities that follow the children's interests and ideas.

More information about our EYFS Curriculum can be found on the school website by [clicking here](#).

## **Reading**

At St. John's we believe that reading is the key to success which opens doors to a world of knowledge. It is central to general progress and developing an understanding across the curriculum. As such, the teaching of reading is given a high priority at the heart of our curriculum.

Our aim is for all pupils, irrespective of their needs, abilities or background, to learn to read fluently and with understanding through a variety of discreet and cross-curricular learning opportunities. We aim to meet, and where possible exceed the expectations in the Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum with progress being rapid and sustained throughout school. Once pupils can decode effectively, we aim to build word recognition and develop comprehension skills in order to produce secure, confident and independent readers who enjoy and understand the benefits of reading.

You can find out more about our Reading curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## **Writing**

At St John's, our aim is to support the development of writing in order that pupils can clearly and accurately communicate their thoughts, feelings and ideas in a range of contexts, for a range of purposes and audiences through the written word. We strive to support the development of confident, enthusiastic writers who write to entertain, to inform and for their own pleasure.

With this in mind, writing is a crucial part of our curriculum; the teaching of writing can be discrete but is often cross-curricular and linked to wider learning. We want to develop writers who can edit and improve their own writing using appropriate grammar and vocabulary for effect so that they can communicate effectively and are prepared for the next phase of education.

You can find out more about our Writing curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## **Maths**

The National Curriculum for Maths aims to ensure that all children:

- Become fluent in the fundamentals of Mathematics.
- Are able to reason mathematically.
- Can solve problems by applying their Mathematics.
- 

At St. John's, these skills are embedded within Maths lessons and are developed consistently year on year. Maths is a universal language and a secure understanding of the subject is essential for a deeper understanding of, and success in, other curriculum areas.



With further education and future careers in mind, we are committed to ensuring that children can recognise the importance of Maths in the wider world and that they are also able to use their mathematical skills and knowledge confidently in their lives in a range of different contexts.

We want all children to enjoy Mathematics and to experience success. We are committed to developing children's curiosity as well as an appreciation of the beauty and power of Mathematics.

You can find out more about our maths curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## Science

Science lessons at St. John's aim to nurture our children's natural curiosity and desire to find out about the world around them. We study animals, humans, evolution, plants, materials, forces, electricity, light, sound and earth and space. Wherever possible, our children learn through practical activities, which encourage them to ask questions, collaborate, predict, investigate, observe, discover and conclude. Our children are encouraged, and are able, to use the correct and appropriate scientific vocabulary to explain what they observe and draw sensible conclusions.

You can find out more about our science curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## History

Our history curriculum is ambitious and has been carefully crafted to ensure our pupils develop a sense of who they are locally, nationally and globally. Our pupils





have a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain’s past and that of the wider world. We encourage our pupils to be curious and ask questions about the process of change, the complexity of people’s lives, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups. Within each year group, history learning is revisited in a progressive manner, to ensure knowledge, skills and concepts are firmly embedded and subject specific vocabulary is used in context.

You can find out more about our History curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## **Geography**

Our geography curriculum is ambitious and empowers our children to become confident global citizens. Our pupils have a secure knowledge of their local area, their town and the country they live in. We encourage our children to be curious and ask questions about the wider world, including places and people and make connections between them. Our geography curriculum enables our pupils to develop their understanding of the key geographical concepts of location and place, cause and effect and change. In every year group, our pupils learn geographical skills which focus on map and atlas work. Our geographical enquiry incorporates fieldwork and investigations. We want our children to remember their geography fieldtrips, to cherish these memories and embrace the geographic opportunities they are presented with.

You can find out more about our geography curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## **Computing**

At St. John’s we follow the Purple Mash scheme of work to progressively develop children’s skills in computing, which takes place through discretely taught lessons. We aim to develop children’s computational thinking skills, knowledge of computer science concepts and application of digital literacy skills. Our children use information technology to create digital content that enables them to express themselves and develop their ideas as active participants in a digital world. Underpinning our approach is a commitment to the teaching of how to use technology safely and respectfully. Learning and teaching within the computing curriculum empowers children to become digitally confident in their daily lives which helps to prepare them to become independent users of technology beyond the classroom.

Teachers at St. John's have excellent computing subject knowledge as a result of high-quality training and support from leaders. This enables them to plan engaging learning experiences that develop digital understanding and reasoning. Our Computing curriculum creates opportunities for skills to be applied across a range of subjects, giving pupils ample opportunities to practise and refine their skills.

You can find out more about our geography curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## Art

Our teaching of Art and Design is based on the National Curriculum programs of study and has been designed to develop a range of skills. Children explore a variety of media and materials in order to develop their understanding of them and to therefore be able to manipulate them to create different effects. Children are encouraged to make their own decisions, be adaptable and to be able to explain their choices. Drawing, painting, sculpture and collage are used to develop and share ideas, experiences and imagination. As children progress, they become more competent in the use of colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space. The work of famous local, national and international artists is explored to enhance the children's learning and to allow them to develop their own artistic style. Children are encouraged to describe the differences and similarities between the works of artists, and to make links to their own work. Sketchbooks are used to record observations, to explore different medias and techniques, and to review and revisit ideas.

You can find out more about our art curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## Design Technology

At St John's Church of England Academy, our children will gain experience and skills of a wide range of formal elements of design and concepts of technology in a way that will enhance their learning opportunities in both Design and Technology and the broader curriculum. The Design and Technology at our school encourages children to learn to think and



intervene imaginatively to solve problems, both as individuals and as part of a team. It is important to us that we are creating a curriculum that nurtures creativity, encourages innovative thinking and challenges children to be bold and take risks within their work. Above all, we feel that children should master Design and Technology to such an extent that they are inspired to go on to pursue a career within Design and Technology and make use of the skills taught to them in everyday life.

You can find out more about our DT curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## RE

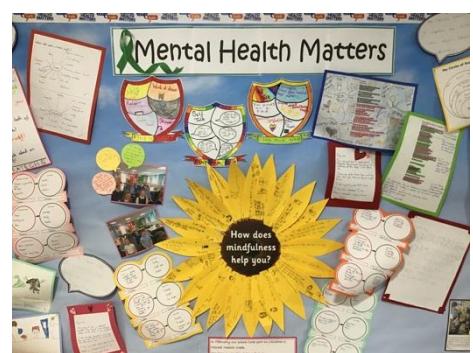
In our outstanding church school, we believe that Religious Education (RE) holds a central place and is fundamental to achieving school aims, especially that of developing the ‘whole’ child. At St. John’s, RE is concerned with the promotion of each pupil’s self-worth, enabling them to reflect on their uniqueness as human beings and to appreciate the importance of forming and maintaining positive relationships. We support young people to develop their beliefs and values in the knowledge that, in gaining a greater understanding of themselves, children will develop a more sympathetic understanding of the needs of others and of the place of religion and belief in the world.

We strongly believe that RE contributes educationally to the spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development of all pupils enabling them to be better equipped to cope with the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Through RE, we promote religious understanding and respect, and challenge prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping. We promote religious literacy and want children to be able to hold a balanced and well-informed conversation about religion and belief. We encourage this by exploring and asking questions.

You can find out more about our RE curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## PSHE

Our intention is that, when children leave St John’s CE Academy, they do so with the knowledge, understanding and emotions to be able to play an active role in today’s society. We want our children to have high aspirations, a belief in themselves and realise that anything is possible if they put their mind to it. Personal,



Social and Health Education (PSHE) is an embedded part of our broad and balanced curriculum. We endeavour to maximise the outcomes for every child so that they know more, remember more and understand more by completing their programmes of study for each year group. This involves the statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.

You can find out more about our PSHE curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## **PE**

Physical Education at St. John's provides challenging and enjoyable learning through a range of sporting activities including; invasion games, athletics, gymnastics, dance and swimming. Staff are actively encouraged to model active lifestyles to the children, further elevating the importance of healthy lifestyles within school. The long-term plan sets out the PE units which are to be taught throughout the year and ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. Pupils participate in two quality PE lessons each week, covering at least one sporting discipline every half term. In addition, children are encouraged to participate in the varied range of extra-curricular activities. Lunchtime sports activities are available each day and children can attend after school sport clubs. Participation is tracked to ensure we are as inclusive as possible. Each year, Year 5 and 6 children are invited to become Young Leaders for the school, which gives them the opportunity to develop leadership skills by arranging activities during lunchtime.

You can find out more about our PE curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

## **Music**

During our Music lessons at St. John's, we aspire to provide children with the opportunity to learn, experience and perform, specialising in the ukulele throughout Key Stage 2.

At Key Stage 1, we offer a range of instrumental opportunities to enrich our pupils' musical experience and to evoke a love for the performing arts, including performance opportunities during the Christmas performance. At Key Stage 2, We invest in a service level agreement with Durham Music Service to ensure our children experience expert tuition in the ukulele. We want all our children to experience 'real' instrumental tuition at an early age on an

instrument that is affordable and can be transferred onto other stringed instruments.

By the time our children leave they will have played melody, chords, have a firm understanding of key musical vocabulary and performed as part of a group to an adult audience.

You can find out more about our music curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

### **Modern Foreign Languages**

Our MFL curriculum is designed to progressively develop skills in French. We will be using resources from the 'Lightbulb Languages' scheme to deliver lessons. Lessons will ensure children acquire a bank of vocabulary organised around topics and build on prior learning as children progress through units. Lessons are active and engaging, with actions, songs and games which help children to apply the language skills and vocabulary learnt. As children progress through their French learning, we also place a focus on sentence building, recognising word classes and grouping words according to their phonetic 'family'. Classrooms have French displays, with a focus on key vocabulary. All children in Key Stage 2 are taught French in a weekly session, and signage around school is in both French and English to further extend learning.

You can find out more about our MFL curriculum via our school website or [clicking here](#).

### **Collective Worship**

In accordance with Education Acts, children will take part in a daily act of collective worship. Children are given the opportunity to reflect on a range of spiritual, moral and religious themes as well as having the opportunity to take part in worship, which involves praise, song and prayer. The clergy and other Christian groups have regular input into collective worship. Each class presents its own assembly each term at which parents are invited - the children gain confidence from the support of a friendly face at the back of the hall. Your child's class teacher will send a note home when a class assembly is due. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from Acts of Collective Worship but must discuss this with the Headteacher prior to any withdrawal.

You can view our collective worship policy via our school website by [clicking here](#).

## **Homework**

The school operates a homework policy for children in all year groups. The majority of parents want to help their children and increasing the partnership between home and school has a significant impact upon the raising of awareness and standards.

The purposes of homework are:

- To encourage pupils to develop skills, confidence and motivation to study effectively on their own.
- To consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding, particularly English and maths.
- To allow parents to work with their children and keep them up to date with projects that are covered in the class.

Please help your child by:

- Providing time and a suitable place for homework.
- Making it clear that you value homework.
- Giving praise for the completion of homework.

At St. John's, we find that online homework is the most effective. It reduces the risk of worksheets becoming lost or damaged and it means that teachers can track your child's progress more effectively. If you lack the equipment to complete online homework, please contact your child's teacher, who will be able to offer alternative provision.

The school operates an afterschool Homework Club for Key Stages 1 and 2. The club offers a space for children to complete their homework with some adult support. Please ask your child's teacher if you would like your child to attend.

## **Extra-Curricular Activities**

At St John's, we are passionate about providing children with experiences that nurture their interests and talents. The school offers a huge range of free afterschool clubs. These include:

- Dance
- Football
- Environmental Awareness
- Homework
- Computing
- Multi-sports
- Science
- Team building

Permission is sought from parents, in writing, before a child is allowed to remain on the school premises after school hours.

### **Breakfast Club**

Our Breakfast Club operates daily from 7.45 to 8.40 and provides a healthy, nutritious start to the day. It is a low-cost service for working parents and is free for children entitled to free school meals.

### **Educational Visits – Governors’ Charging Policy**

The school regards educational visits as being an important resource to support and enhance the curriculum. Many visits will be subsidised by the school, but it is often necessary to rely on voluntary parental contributions to be made in order to cover costs. No child would ever be excluded from an educational visit because of financial hardship or inability to pay. However, a visit may have to be cancelled if voluntary contributions were insufficient to cover the costs.

### **Year 6 Residential**

Each year, our Year 6 children are offered the opportunity to spend four nights in Seahouses, Northumberland. Whilst there, they develop their understanding of physical geography and conservation through coastal walks and visiting the Farne Islands.



A visit to Holy Island (Lindisfarne) via the ‘pilgrims walk’ nurtures their spiritual development and increases their knowledge of Saints Aiden and Cuthbert.

The significance of Bamburgh Castle and the role of Grace Darling in the rescue of shipwrecked passengers in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century is explained when we visit the quaint village of Bamburgh.

The week is a truly magical experience and one that our children will never forget.



## Assessment and Achievement

To track the progress of your child's learning, a variety of assessments are carried out starting with baseline assessments soon after your child starts school and ending with the National Curriculum Assessments (SATs) in Year 6.

In between, we use published tests and teacher assessments to ensure that tasks are accurately matched to your child's abilities and needs.

We expect parents to attend meetings twice a year to discuss their child's progress and next steps. Parents are always welcome to make an appointment to speak with the class teacher or Headteacher if they have queries about their child's learning.

Each July, parents are provided with an annual report, which will give a full overview of your child's achievements and progress as well as suggesting targets for the forthcoming year.

# Special Needs and Medical Matters

## **Disability Access**

St. John's is a fully inclusive school. Staff and governors are committed to reducing any barriers to learning so that there is access for all and equality of opportunity. The Governing Body have produced an Accessibility Plan, which complements the local authority's accessibility strategy; all areas of school are accessible.

## **Medical**

During their time at school, pupils will undergo health-screening checks carried out by a doctor, dentist and/or school nurse. Carried out in accordance with Local Authority policy, parents are informed to allow them to be present when necessary. Where further action is deemed necessary, parents will be informed in order that they might make suitable arrangements with their own doctor, dentist, optician, or clinic as preferred.

## **Medicines**

The school is not legally responsible for medicines. However, if prescribed by a doctor, medicines may be brought into school in accordance with our Medication Policy, providing that the medicine is in the original bottle, displaying the child's name and dosage. Medicines must be brought into school by an adult and a consent form must be signed. These can be obtained from the school office.

## **Care Plan**

Care Plans are completed in partnership between parents/carers and the school and where relevant any other medical organisation where a child requires extra support with their medical needs. These include asthma, diabetes, or a short-term requirement such as a broken bone.

## **Illness**

If your child is unwell and needs to stay at home, please inform the school before 9.00am.

## **Illness at School**

If your child becomes unwell at school, we will inform you using the contact numbers you have provided. It is important that these numbers are kept up to date. In the event of an emergency and being unable to contact parents or relatives, we will take appropriate action 'in loco parentis.' - i.e. we will act in the same way as any responsible parent would act.

\*Please inform us immediately of any changes in telephone numbers or addresses.

## **COVID-19**

We follow government guidance relating to COVID-19. The school receives regular updates via a weekly Public Health Clinic. Because the guidance changes regularly, we will notify you via Class Dojo, the school website, and our social media pages when the guidance changes.

## **Other Infectious Diseases**

The school follows government guidance regarding infectious diseases. The guidelines outline a period of exclusion for children suffering from various infectious diseases such as chicken pox.

### **Head Lice**

Children attending school often pick up harmless infestations of head lice. Head lice can spread quickly and there is nothing shameful about finding them, they can 'visit' any family. It is essential that you check your child's hair regularly.

If you discover lice in the hair of any member of the family, it will be necessary to treat the whole household with a lotion, which can be obtained either on prescription or over the counter at the chemist. Further advice can be found on the NHS website by [clicking here](#).

### **Toileting**

As children get older, we educate them to go to the toilet at playtime or lunchtimes. Our policy is to let children go to the toilet if they ask twice within a five-minute period. Children with a medical condition relating to the bowels will be allowed to go to the toilet with written confirmation from a parent.

# Health and Safety

The safety of our children is our highest priority and therefore we have clear procedures for visitors to school. Parents and carers are very welcome on the understanding that they abide by the following rules:

- St John's is strictly a no smoking school; please do not smoke on the premises or the school playground.
- Dogs are not permitted on the school grounds.
- Parents/visitors must always use respectful language. We will not tolerate swearing on the premises or yard.
- Vehicles should not be driven onto the school premises at any time unless they are registered disabled and display an appropriate badge. The car park is very congested, and children are not permitted to be in the car park area.
- The driveways and entrances should be kept clear for emergency access purposes. The yellow zig-zag lines must be kept clear at all times. Please do not park on the double yellow lines adjacent to the school gates; this is for the safety of our children and parents crossing the road.
- All entrances to the school are locked at the start of the day. Visitors and parents are asked to report to the main office.

## **Child Protection Statement**

Parents and carers should be aware that the school has a duty to take reasonable action to ensure the safety and welfare of its pupils. In cases where school staff have cause to believe that a pupil has been subjected to any form of abuse or neglect, staff will adhere to our child protection procedures and inform the social services of their concern. This may involve a visit from a social worker and or police officer.

The Designated Child Protection Lead in school is Mr Ramsay. There are two Deputy Designated Leads: Mrs Baker & Mrs Lambert.

## **Travelling to School**

In accordance with our School Travel Plan, we work closely with our Road Safety Team and Cycle Team to encourage pupils to walk or cycle to school. All pupils have access to pedestrian and cycle training throughout their time with us. We have a secure cycle shed, which can be used to store bicycles. However, governors cannot take responsibility for bicycles stored in the shed. Where it is

necessary to bring children in cars, we ask that parents park responsibly in the car park opposite the school and not on any areas demarcated by yellow lines.

## Unavoidable School Closure

As the school years 2020-2021 proved, there will inevitably be occasions when, due to circumstances beyond our control, it may be necessary to close the school. Every effort will be made to inform parents before the start of school, but no child will be sent home unless arrangements have been made.

In the case of inclement weather, we will inform the LA who will post a notification on their website and inform the local radio stations. Parents will also be notified via our website, social media pages and message parents via Class Dojo.

# Complaints Procedure

We sincerely hope that you will have no cause for complaint during your child's time at St John's. However, should parents have any cause for complaint then we would hope to resolve it verbally. Parents should feel free to contact the class teacher or Headteacher to discuss any problems that are of concern.

If the complaint remains unresolved after a consultation with the teacher and Headteacher, a formal complaints procedure is available on our website by [clicking here.](#)

## Contact Information

Headteacher: Mr M Ramsay

Chair of Governors: Mrs V Cadd

St John's Church of England Academy

Fenby Avenue

Darlington

DL1 4UB

T: 01325 380725

E: [admin@stjohnsceacademy.co.uk](mailto:admin@stjohnsceacademy.co.uk)

[www.stjohnsceacademy.co.uk](http://www.stjohnsceacademy.co.uk)

**\*The information contained in this brochure was correct at the date of publication (September 2021).**



# Home/School Agreement

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

At St John's CE Academy, we recognise each child as an individual, and aim to give all children every opportunity to realise their full potential. We believe that a close partnership between the school, parents and the child is essential if we are to achieve this aim. We therefore ask all parents and children to sign up to our Home/School Agreement.

## **The responsibilities of the school:**

At St John's we will:

- Provide a secure, happy, and stimulating learning environment where the Christian faith leads our way.
- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum which challenges your child to reach their potential and fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- Encourage your child to show friendship and respect for others and to abide by the school code of conduct, ensuring a safe, caring environment for all.
- Keep you informed about your child's progress and behaviour, as well as their termly curriculum along with regular Newsletters regarding events. Set regular and appropriate homework for your child.
- Make you feel welcome whenever you visit the school and respond to your questions or concerns as quickly as possible.  
Allow children safe and secure use of the Internet through a combination of site filtering, supervision and by fostering a responsible attitude in all pupils, in partnership with parents.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Headteacher)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **The responsibilities of the parents/carers:**

Having chosen St John's Academy for your child, we ask that you positively accept the school's aims and Christian values. All parents/guardians will:

- Ensure that your child attends school punctually every day unless there is a valid reason for absence (e.g. illness).
- Notify the school by letter or telephone on the first day of absence.
- Support the school's policies and guidelines on learning, behaviour and uniform.
- Attend parent/teacher meetings to discuss your child's progress.
- Support your child with homework that is set, including regular reading.
- Keep us informed of where to contact you in case of emergency.
- Promptly inform the school of any concerns or problems that may affect your child's learning, behaviour or happiness at school.
- Support school in the teaching of safe and secure Internet use at home.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/carer)      Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **The responsibility of the child:**

I will try my best to:

- Do all classwork and homework as well as I can, asking questions when I don't understand.
- Be respectful towards others and behave in a safe and responsible way.
- Be kind, helpful and forgiving.
- Be honest.
- Use the Internet safely as I have been taught in class.
- Understand that I have the right to be listened to, be helped, be safe, be happy, join in games and feel special and wanted.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Child)      Date \_\_\_\_\_