



St Mary Star of the Sea

Catholic Primary School

Prospectus



Live, Love and Learn in God's name

Our mission at St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School is underpinned by the Gospel Values.

We **LIVE** the Gospel Values and shine our light for others around the world.

We **LOVE** each other as Jesus does and celebrate our unique and diverse school community.

We **LEARN** to follow spiritually in Jesus' footsteps and know that he guides us in all we do.





Welcome



We are a one form entry Catholic primary school and in our school the children are at the very centre of everything we do. We are committed to ensuring we deliver the highest quality education through exploration, enjoyment and creativity. We work hard to ensure our children fulfil and achieve their full potential and be the best they can be.

Everyone is welcome at our school. We are a rich, diverse and vibrant community. All the children are known as individuals, and their talents and strengths recognised. As a school we will ensure your child is safe, happy and making progress. We believe children should feel welcome, inspired and supported when they are learning. We celebrate the individuality of all children.

Our Catholic values underpin all that we do and give our school our distinctive Catholic character. We value the links between school, home and parish and recognise the shared responsibility we have in the development of all our children. As a Catholic community, we endeavour to celebrate the successes of our children in all areas of school life. We can do this by showing them that we believe in them, respect them and are proud of them.

We are proud to be a Catholic Academy within the Bosco Catholic Education Trust, but warmly welcome families of all faiths and beliefs, and none.

Together as a staff, we thrive to ensure every child reaches their potential through a broad and enjoyable curriculum. We hope your family will join our school community and journey together.

Mrs C O'Rourke
Headteacher



Safeguarding

The Safety of children is our number one priority here at St Mary Star of the Sea, from security of the site to the welfare of each individual. We have very clear guidelines in place to ensure our safeguarding is robust. we ensure that all staff, volunteers and visitors have current DBS checks before working with children.

Our Principles:

- The welfare of children, and their wishes and feelings are afforded consideration when developing and carrying out school activities.
- All children have equal rights to support and protection irrespective of their race, age, ability, gender, language and culture.
- All staff and volunteers have a professional role to identify and respond to the needs of children and report any concerns immediately
- Everybody is responsible for Safeguarding



Governance



Our aims are to:

- Create a happy school environment where children can grow safely in the knowledge and love of God.
- Help children learn that courtesy, good manners and consideration for others are very important qualities.
- Develop the ability to communicate with other people effectively.
- Encourage enjoyment of reading.
- Develop a knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts and be able to apply these in various situations at home, in the classroom and in the wider community.
- Encourage scientific curiosity and develop the ability to investigate and solve problems.
- Awaken an awareness of the world around us through historical, geographical and religious education studies.
- Teach skills in design, information technology, handwriting and the creative arts including music.
- Provide an enjoyment of physical activities, drama, movement and dance.

To achieve these aims:

- The Local Governing Committee (LGC) will strive to appoint teachers who combine personal conviction (and practice of the faith) with the required professional qualification and experience.
- The worshipping nature of the school will be expressed in a variety of ways; prayer, liturgies, assemblies and Mass.
- The school will support parents as the first educators of their children in ways of faith, attitudes and behaviour
- The school encourages home/school/parish links and mutual interest in the spiritual development of the child.

Early Years



The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Curriculum

All areas of the EYFS curriculum are followed and planned for to ensure there is a broad, balanced and progressive learning environment and curriculum. The children will learn new skills, acquire new knowledge and demonstrate understanding through the seven areas in the EYFS curriculum:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These seven areas are used to plan children's learning and activities. Planning for this curriculum is designed to be flexible so that a child's unique needs and interests are supported.

Daily guided activities are set up and planned to cover different areas of the EYFS curriculum and allow children to develop their next steps in learning. Areas of need and next steps are identified for all children to ensure good progress is made. There are also a range of stimulating and engaging activities which the children can access independently and a variety of opportunities for child-initiated learning. In planning and guiding children's activities, we reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in our practice.



Curriculum



St Mary Star of the Sea is a Catholic School and therefore the teaching of Religious Education is an integral part of the curriculum. Whilst parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from Religious Education lessons and Acts of Worship, we would hope that pupils of all faiths would be able to share in the richness that our Religious Education programme provides.

Curriculum Organisation

We follow the National Curriculum which is organised into the core subjects: English, Mathematics, Science and Computing. Religious Education is also a core subject in our curriculum. In addition, there are the foundation subjects: Art and Design, Design and Technology, Languages, Geography, History, Music and Physical Education. The National Curriculum provides an outline of core knowledge around which our teachers develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of our wider school curriculum.

Through our curriculum we aim to inspire children's curiosity and fascination to know more about the past and about the world around them, gaining knowledge and experiences that we hope will remain with them for the rest of their lives.





Religious Education

Religious Education is a core subject in a Catholic School. In our school we not only teach the Catholic faith but model the Church's concern for the whole spiritual and educational development of all children, their families and the wider community. We aim to reach high standards of teaching and learning for all our pupils by offering them the skills that they need to make a significant contribution to our society, underpinned by Gospel Values.

We aim to build on the values that our pupils have learnt from their parents since Baptism and nurture their spiritual journey as part of a living Catholic community.

Whilst there are formal R.E lessons, Religious Education in our Catholic school cannot be separate from anything else we do. We follow the Diocesan recommended Religious Education Programme 'To Know you more clearly'. The programme has been developed to respond to the needs of children today, to enable them to grow in their religious literacy and understanding so that they can gain the knowledge to reflect spiritually and think ethically and theologically about the demands of religious commitment in everyday life.

Children live in a fast changing global world and we try to prepare them for this. We respect people of other religions and realise that we live alongside others who may hold different religious views, or none. We teach our pupils not only facts about other religions but also how to reflect, learn and gain insights from them.

Throughout the year, and in particular One World Week, pupils have the opportunity to study many other faiths outside the directed time for R.E.

Mathematics

The basic skills of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division are thoroughly taught with guidance for appropriate strategies and resources used in our Calculation Policy. These skills are practised and applied in practical activities through to abstract problems to broaden and assess pupils' abilities. The use of a range of strategies such as estimation, mental arithmetic and written methods are encouraged, and children will learn to use the most efficient method to solve a problem.

Science

We aim to develop pupils' natural enthusiasm and curiosity from the earliest years, to engage and motivate through scientific activities. We aim to provide authentic science activities and experiences as well as opportunities for discussion to share ideas. Pupils will gain the skills needed to be able to work scientifically, for example by observing, classifying, researching and fair testing. They will be encouraged to ask and find answers to their own questions. Pupils will also learn about the life and achievements of famous scientists.

Computing

The core of the computing curriculum is computer science, in which the children are taught the principles of information and computation, how digital systems work and how to put this knowledge to use through programming. EYFS and Key Stage 1 and 2 have wireless laptops to use within the classroom. Computing is not, of course, confined to computer use and children are given opportunities to use many other tools, such as digital cameras, visualisers, robots and other equipment which require programming skills and the storage and retrieval of information. We use the 'Purple Mash' teaching resources and lesson plans. Each year group also has a focus on Internet safety.



History

Each year group has one main History topic taught throughout the Spring Term. Through these topics, we aim to give children a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. We teach the skills of enquiry, the search for evidence, and the examination of this evidence by sorting, evaluating and weighing it. This can be a simple explanation of how we know a toy teddy is old in Y1, through to an analysis of fragments of pot evidence when studying Ancient Greece in Key Stage 2.



Geography

Through our Geography topics, we aim to equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. We teach one main topic over the Summer Term.

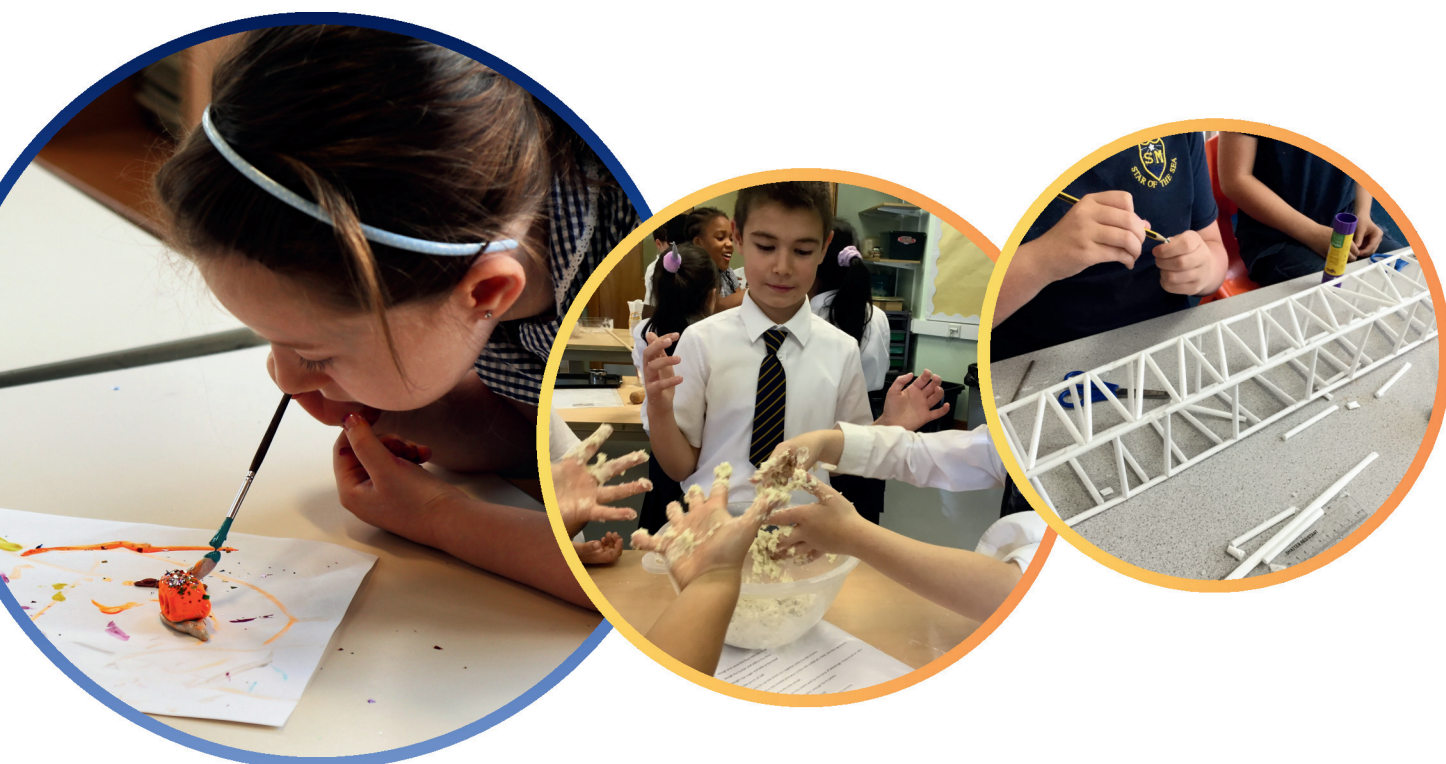
Art & Design

Through Art and Design, children are engaged, inspired and equipped to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design, as well as learning about great artists from the past. Displays of the children's own work help to make our school such a stimulating and attractive environment.



Design & Technology

Design and Technology draws on the knowledge of many disciplines and skills and allows the children to use their creativity and imagination to design and make products within a variety of contexts. The natural starting point is the child's own experience through play. Later, simple practical problem solving develops into identifying needs and creating, planning, designing and evaluating a design. From their earliest years in school, children are encouraged in this process, firstly by using and adapting structured apparatus and later by using their own chosen tools and materials for specific purposes.



Music

The music curriculum covers a wide variety of musical activities focusing on listening to music, including works by the great composers and the different periods of musical history, creating music and understanding the process, playing tuned and untuned instruments. Children also learn about the structure of music to include pitch, duration, dynamics, tempo, timbre, texture and appropriate musical notation, developing further knowledge as they move up the school. Children are given the opportunity to sing and use their voices in a variety of activities, and take part in a performance at the end of each project. Children also have the opportunity to take part in tuition offered by peripatetic teachers in violin, guitar and keyboard through individual and small group lessons

Physical Education

Our PE curriculum includes dance, gymnastics, invasion and net games relative to the age and developmental stage of pupils. Year 3 pupils attend swimming lessons at Summerfields on a weekly basis; Year 6 pupils have an additional term of swimming lessons to meet National Curriculum expectations. Interschool competitions include sports day, games days as well as inter-house sports days. Keystage 2 have the opportunity to be involved in Level 2 competitions against other schools in friendly games and tournaments in rugby, football, netball, athletics, hockey, cross-country and cricket.



Enrichment

Our curriculum extends beyond the National Curriculum and includes a wide range of enriching experiences and opportunities both within and beyond the school day. A primary focus of our curriculum is to raise aspirations, engender a sense of personal pride in achievement, and provide a purpose and relevance for learning.

During their time at school we provide opportunities for children to:

- learn to swim (Year 3)
- play the Keyboard (Year 4)
- cook a variety of meals/desserts (all years)
- Learn photography and animation skills (Year 4, 5 and 6)
- learn to take care of ourselves and our world through gardening and mindfulness activities (all years)

In Addition to this all children take part in Forest School activities (in our Forest School area) and take part in our Wild Beach School enrichment.

We also have an extensive programme of after-school clubs that support the core curriculum offer, as well as those which develop specialist skills. Sessions can be booked termly and the prices depend on the club. School run clubs charge a small fee and the sports clubs run by outside agencies carry a weekly fee. Enrichment activities may include; Art club, Homework Club, Martial Arts, Technology Club, Board games Club, Dance and Multisport. *Please see the office for further details.*



Liturgy & Worship

All staff and governors at St Mary Star of the Sea aim that Children are encouraged to believe that no matter where we are, whatever place we are in, Christ is there with us.

“The Lord tells us that the first task in life is ‘Prayer.’ Not prayer of words like a parrot but the prayer of the heart, gazing on the Lord, hearing the Lord, asking the Lord.” Pope Francis



As a Catholic School we pride ourselves on being a faith community based on the Gospel values. We focus on the development of children’s spiritual life. Spirituality is the essence of being human – to be related to God. Here at St Mary’s we recognise that we are created by God, in His image and likeness. We understand that He is calling us into a relationship with Him through His Son Jesus, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus proclaimed ‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life’ (John 14:6) it is by following Him that we grow in Christian faith, love and hope which is of crucial importance to our full human growth.

In order to develop this relationship with God we understand that prayer ‘raising of the mind and heart to God’ is of the essence and through prayer we will experience the importance of the Gospel and the need to live by it. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our own personal prayer we will experience the life of God within ourselves and through liturgical prayer we will experience our need for the life of our community.

We have close links with our Parish and the signs of our Catholicity are all around our school. Catholic worship is woven into our daily routines and is delivered through:

- Daily Worship Assemblies
- Class liturgies
- Key Stage liturgies
- Termly prayer assemblies
- Celebration assemblies
- Whole school church Masses
- Services of Reconciliation, Lent and Advent



Educational Visits

Children take part in a wide variety of visits during their time at the school. These may include local walks within the vicinity of the school, or day visits to museums, environmental centres, historical sites etc. Our Year 6 pupils enjoy an annual residential visit.



Children with Special Educational Needs

Work is adapted by the class teacher to meet the needs of all individuals. Our Sendco is responsible for coordinating special needs and supports teachers in developing individual learning programmes for those children who require them. When necessary, outside help can be sought from the outreach services available or the Educational Psychologist. The school liaises closely with parents in seeking to provide the best support possible for children with special needs and disabilities. For further information, please see our SEN information report on the school website.



English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Throughout the school, we have many children from all over the world for whom English is an additional language. EAL children entering the Reception class (or any class) are supported in a friendly, nurturing environment where they are encouraged to develop their language and communication skills through structured activities. Staff support children with EAL in a friendly, and reassuring manner, whilst ensuring that they are fully included in every aspect of school life. Children's strengths and creativeness are positively identified and exploited to prove their full potential. In addition, The English as an Additional Language Service provides a highly qualified teacher and, when necessary, Bilingual Support Officers may work with children using their mother tongue. All children are guided to work to a high level and to be proud of their successes and achievements.

Pastoral care & Behaviour

The safety and welfare of all children is our highest priority. We make every effort to provide an environment in which your child can work and play, free from any unnecessary anxiety.

Our Behaviour Policy is published on the school website. We praise good behaviour and reward children for effort and attainment as well as for making the right choices. We expect pupils to be well mannered, respectful of others and to play and work in safety. Pupils have their own 'School Council' to assist with and encourage good behaviour and to give them a voice within the school.

We have a home/school agreement and you will be asked to sign this when your child starts school and then annually thereafter. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated.

Co-operation between parents and school is crucial in establishing a successful pastoral care and discipline policy.

Getting Ready for School

Starting school for the first time is an important event for the child as well as for parents. We try to ensure a smooth transition from home or nursery to school in order to give the child the best possible start to their school life.

All new children are invited to an induction session and during this time parents have an informal time to share thoughts and get to know each other. Parents are given the opportunity to attend an open afternoon with the Headteacher, members of the Governing Body, the Reception class teacher and other agencies who work within the school.

Parents are often concerned about how much their child should know before starting school and many parents ask about reading. Sharing the pleasure that comes from listening to stories, talking about the illustrations and understanding that print has meaning is enormously important. Developing a love of books is far more beneficial than beginning formal reading, which usually comes later.

There are lots of opportunities for developing numeracy skills at home. Numbers are all around, but your child needs to be made aware of them e.g. reading numbers in the environment and weighing and measuring when cooking or shopping and playing number games with your child would be very beneficial.

It would also be useful if your child is encouraged to dress themselves, especially putting on their jumper and coat. This helps enormously at break and lunchtimes and when the children need to get changed for their PE activities or go to the toilet.

Whatever you do to prepare your child for school, it is extremely important that any learning opportunities are enjoyable. Praise your child's achievements at whatever attempts they make and the teachers will build on these achievements when your child is in school.

We all hope that the preparation beforehand will make for a smooth transition to school, but the first day of school can still be emotional for parents and children. We try to encourage as much independence as possible and are here to support your family any way we possibly can.

Uniform

We have a school uniform so that children are dressed in a smart and practical way and to promote a sense of community, but we do all we can to keep costs down and support parents in ensuring their children come to school ready for the day.



Years Reception – Year 5	
BOYS' UNIFORM	GIRLS' UNIFORM
Plain light blue polo shirt (<i>school logo is no longer required on polo shirts</i>) Navy blue school jumper with logo Grey school trousers or shorts Black shoes (trainers are not permitted) White/grey/black or navy-blue socks (not trainer socks) Plain coat	Plain light blue polo shirt (<i>school logo is no longer required on polo shirts</i>) Navy blue school jumper with logo Navy blue tunic or skirt or grey school trousers Black shoes (trainers are not permitted) Plain coat Flat black shoes with a bar or laces or a covered front (not boots) White, black or navy-blue long socks or tights (not trainer socks)
Year 6	
All uniform as above except Year 6 are to wear a white shirt and a tie.	

Additional Information

Health Information

During your child's first year at school the School Nurse will automatically offer your child a growth and hearing assessment. This is done during the school day and you will not normally be present. When your child is five, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire and your child may then be invited to have a full medical, for which you will be asked to attend.

It is essential that you inform the school of any medical conditions that your child has or develops.

Links with Secondary Schools

We have close links with the schools to which our children normally transfer at the age of 11, with the majority of our pupils going on to St Richard's Catholic College. There is a programme of familiarisation visits by teachers and pupils in the term before transfer.

Links with Parents

Strong links between school and parents are vital in promoting a successful shared approach to children's education. During the year, there are formal Parent Consultation evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms, where staff meet parents to discuss their child's educational development. Parents are very welcome to make appointments at other times during the year if they have any concerns about their child either at school or at home. All appointments must be arranged in advance either via the school office or directly with the class teacher. If the matter is urgent, a member of the Senior Leadership Team will try to see you straightaway.

To help keep parents well informed fortnightly newsletters are sent via email and published on the website.

We are very grateful for help from parents on both a regular and occasional basis.

All families are invited to attend assemblies, class or school Masses and any other special services that take place in the school or in the parish churches of St Thomas of Canterbury and Holy Redeemer.

Admissions

St Mary Star of the Sea is responsible for all admissions. However, we work in close liaison with East Sussex County Council who co-ordinate all admissions, both Reception intakes in September and in-year admissions.

In each school year (September to August), East Sussex Primary Schools try, wherever possible, to admit all children whose fifth birthday falls in that year and the Education Authority lays down a policy for planning admission during that year.

At St Mary Star of the Sea, we organise our classes in line with Local Authority policy. Currently, up to 30 children can be admitted to Reception each year. The ratio of teachers in Reception and Key Stage 1 is 1:30.

For admissions, please refer to the East Sussex County Council website to apply: <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk>

Note: Parents with a child/children on roll are still required to complete the relevant forms and provided the additional information for the applicant. Places are not automatically allocated to siblings. Please see our school website for additional information.





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