



## St Michael's CE Primary School

Howling Lane, Alnwick, Northumberland, NE66 1DJ Tel: 01665 602850  
[admin@stmichaelsalnwick.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stmichaelsalnwick.northumberland.sch.uk)  
[www.stmichaelsalnwick.northumberland.sch.uk](http://www.stmichaelsalnwick.northumberland.sch.uk)  
Head Teacher: Mr G Johnston MEd NPQH



*St Michael's is an inclusive Church of England School centred on distinctive Christian Values.*  
We create and provide a high quality, caring and loving educational environment where children can learn, grow and develop to their full potential.

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to St Michael's Church of England Primary School and welcome to our Early Years Foundation Stage which now includes our two year old provision as well as our Nursery and Reception. St Michael's is a happy and caring school very much involved with the local Parish and the local community. We offer a stimulating, structured and creative educational environment in which your child can develop as a whole person. We believe that one of the strengths of our school lies in the excellent relationships that exist between children, staff, governors, our parish and parents. The school has an open door policy for new and existing parents, so please do not hesitate to contact school if you require a guided visit, information or have any queries.

Starting school is an exciting time at any age and we are here to make sure that both you and your child enjoy the process and feel safe and secure in the knowledge that we provide a child centred and happy learning environment in which to begin their learning journey.

There are lots of advantages to choosing an Early Years unit and in particular St Michaels. We have experienced and well qualified staff working within our unit who have the well-being and care of your child at their heart and we have a wonderful and spacious environment, both inside and out, in which your child can grow and learn.

We understand that it is a big step in a child's, and their parent's, life to start school and we are here to ensure that your child goes into Nursery and Reception feeling settled and enthusiastic for learning. One of our main advantages of having an Early Years Unit is that parents and children get to know staff well and children grow confident and familiar with routines as they move through our school.

I hope that you will take the opportunity to visit our school and see our Early Years in action however within this brochure there is information about how our Early Years operates and how we value your unique child.

Gavin Johnston  
Headteacher

Cate Mackay  
Assistant Head/Early Years

Jacqui Chevaugon  
Chair of Governors

Rev Paul Scott  
Vicar



## OUR SCHOOL AIMS

At St. Michael's C.E. Aided Primary School we aim to provide a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum tailored to meet the needs of all children, in line with statutory requirements.

In striving to ensure this, the school will:

- Create a learning environment which is secure, safe, supportive, happy, visually stimulating and welcoming to everyone;
- Ensure adults and children within our school understand and use our chosen Christian values to care for all members of our school community.
- Help our children to grow in their own faith and respect and understand other faiths and ways of life.
- Create an environment of equal opportunity where expectations are high and each child can develop individual strengths in order to fulfil their full potential;
- Establish a culture of responsibility supported by a background of clear boundaries, resulting in self-discipline, confidence and developing self-esteem;
- Develop the whole child spiritually, culturally, socially, & morally
- Foster a positive attitude in all children which will provide the necessary foundations for future learning, and necessary skills for adult life;
- Further develop the working partnership between home, school, church and the wider community.

## ORGANISATION IN THE EARLY YEARS UNIT

Our Early Years Unit caters for 2 - 5 years olds providing a Foundation Stage curriculum. Children in our unit are Nursery age children - 3 - 4 year olds, and Reception age children - 4 - 5 year olds.

We also operate provision for 2 year old children which is within the Early Years remit but operates independently within a secure and safe environment.

The children within Nursery and Reception work within the Early Years Unit, which is staffed by teachers, high level teaching assistants and teaching assistants, organised within the correct ratios of adult to child.

Our two year old provision is run by a qualified HLTA with early years' experience and is also organised within correct ratios of adult to child.

Mrs Cate Mackay, who is the Assistant Head, is the teacher who is Early Years lead.

### **Key person:**

Each child within Early Years has a 'key person' who is responsible for provision of their learning opportunities, collection of assessment information and parental communication. It is important that you and the professionals caring for your child work together. You need to feel comfortable about exchanging information and discussing things that will benefit your child. These conversations can be with your child's "**key person**" or other staff within the early years. The key person however is the person who:

- Is your main point of contact within the setting
- Helps your child to become settled, happy and safe
- Is responsible for your child's care, development and learning
- Takes a careful note of your child's progress, sharing this with you and giving you an idea as to how to help your child at home

## **THE CURRICULUM**

**As a Church of England School, Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural educational development act as golden threads through our entire curriculum.**

Pupils in our Early Years Unit follow a curriculum which combines child initiated learning with adult focused learning which is based on the DFE' s guidelines for Foundation Stage which involves seven clear areas of learning.

### **Learning in the Early Years**

We provide broad learning opportunities, using the national statutory framework for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and guidance from Development Matters to support each child's learning and development.

Your child will be learning skills, acquiring new knowledge and demonstrating their understanding through the **7 areas of learning** and development detailed below.

Children should mostly develop the **3 prime areas** first. These are:

- Communication and language;

- Physical development; and
- Personal, social and emotional development.

These prime areas are those most essential for your child's healthy development and future learning.

As children grow, the prime areas will help them to develop skills in **4 specific areas**. These are:

- Literacy;
- Mathematics;
- Understanding the world; and
- Expressive arts and design.

These 7 areas are used to plan your child's learning and activities. The professionals teaching and supporting your child will make sure that the activities are suited to your child's unique needs. This is a little bit like a curriculum for older children, but it's suitable for very young children, and it's designed to be really flexible so that staff can follow your child's unique needs and interests.

Children in the EYFS learn by playing and exploring, being active, and through creative and critical thinking which takes place both indoors and outside.

### **Observation and Assessment:**

Children are observed in Early Years to assess their level of development and monitor their progress. We use a variety of methods to see what they can already do and what the next steps in their learning are. We also value the use of sustained and shared thinking methods to train adults in early years to develop children's thinking and focus through high quality interaction and conversation with our children.

We use photographic and observational evidence to support our own and your knowledge of the children and record it in their on-line Learning Journal which parents are able to view and contribute to. Parents or carers will be asked to sign a permission form to enable us to collect this evidence. Children also take home a Home School Me book which contains information and photos of their learning in school, asks for contributions from home of exciting news and events and we might also ask for some 'homework' tasks to be completed to support our learning.

Two year olds within our provision will, with parental/carers permission and contributions, have a two year old check completed.

Reception children at the end of Foundation stage will be, in line with statutory guidelines, assessed for a good level of development. These assessments will be discussed with parents or carers throughout the Reception year during regular parent/carers meetings and also shared with parents or carers in the summer term.

## The Environment

Our Early Years unit is comprised of three spacious classrooms and its own large purpose built outdoor play area, which is fenced in and secure. Outdoor provision is fully planned into the school day. The unit is self-sufficient with toilets, kitchen, cloakroom areas and entrance.

The areas within each room is organised around child centred learning and children are able to have child initiated experiences with a variety of resources. We provide chances for self-selecting opportunities such as role play, water and sand, paint, playdough, model making, construction, book corners, maths areas, writing areas, bikes and trikes, dressing up costumes and physical challenges, amongst many others.

Children will also enjoy adult led learning experiences based upon Early Years planning focusing on phonics, reading and writing, maths and topic based learning.

## Pre-school Visits including home visits

**Don't just take our word for it, please come and visit us and see our wonderful provision.**

If you just want to look around our school either on your own or with your child and you are still making a decision about which school to choose, you are more than welcome to give our school a ring and we will arrange for you to have a look around and see our school environment first hand.

However, if you have already decided to send your child to our school then often starting school can be a really daunting experience for children and for parents so we put in place some opportunities to familiarise children, and parents, with school, staff, the environment and routines. The term before children start in our Two year old provision or in Nursery or Reception (if they haven't previously been in our Nursery) we hold Parent/Carer information evenings to inform parents about how the provision will operate, introduce the staff and offer an opportunity for parents to ask any questions or fill out relevant forms. Parents or carers are also invited to bring their children to spend time in the two year old provision or in Nursery or Reception classes. Full details of these events will be sent to you well beforehand.

We also offer the opportunity of a home visit. This is to discuss in an informal situation on a 1-1 basis any questions or information you would like to know about our school. It offers parents and children the opportunity to meet staff in familiar surroundings and staff the opportunity to see and introduce ourselves to your child in the place where they are the most secure and relaxed.

## Admissions

Children are admitted into our two year old provision:

**The term after their second birthday when space is available, otherwise as soon after as is possible.**

Children are admitted into our Nursery class:

**The term after their third Birthday when space is available, otherwise as soon after as is possible.**

We have three intakes of Nursery children during the academic year: September, January and an intake following the Easter holidays dependent on the birth date of your child.

Children are admitted to our Reception Class:  
**The September before their 5th Birthday.**

(Please see our Admission Policy for further details.)

### **Class organisation**

Each year much consideration is given to the organisation of classes for the following academic year. This is dependent on a variety of factors such as size of cohort, numbers in key stages, age of children and number of children in morning and afternoon sessions in Nursery. Sometimes classes may contain the same year group and sometimes it will be a mixed age class. All classes are of mixed ability. Parents/Carers will be informed as soon as possible about the organisation for the following academic year. There will be an opportunity for parents to discuss their child's new class and meet their teacher.

### **Special Educational Needs within the Early Years**

Children who experience a variety of learning needs are given a variety of support both within the classroom and as appropriate on a one to one basis, dependent on need. When the school has any concern about a child's learning, parents will be invited to participate in discussions about how we can develop learning opportunities to fully meet their needs and will be asked for permission for school to devise intervention strategies to support. Similarly, care is taken to ensure that children with particular gifts are extended to their full potential.

Some children will benefit from completing an Inclusion wheel which is specifically for children in Early Years and supports teachers and parents in a discussion centred around the child.

We use programmes such as Early Talk Boost and Talk Boost to support the development of speech and language and communication in Early Years.

### **Child Protection**

The school is under a legal and moral obligation to comply with local and national requirements for ensuring high standards of child protection.

All staff within school receives periodic training on identifying and responding to possible child protection concerns and senior members of staff are designated Child Protection officers. They will make referrals to other agencies if they consider it necessary. At all times we will follow the Child protection Principles and Guidelines as laid down in the Northumberland County Council Guidelines, a copy of which is kept in school and is available to parents and carers.

## EARLY YEARS SCHOOL HOURS

**Two year old sessions:** 8.30am - 11.30 am

### Nursery sessions:

Nursery Mornings 8.45 - 11.45 am

Nursery Afternoons 12.15 - 3.15 pm

### Reception sessions:

Morning session 8.45 - 12.00

Lunchtime 12.00 - 1.00

Afternoon session 1.00 - 3.15 pm

Two year old children are able to access 15 hours per session, 5 days a week. They may be eligible for 15 hours fully funded provision or if not there is the availability of paid sessions.

All Nursery children are able to access 15 hours fully funded child centred learning during the week. This can be accessed on a flexible basis with parents choosing sessions to suit their needs. Some children are able to access 30 fully funded places within our provision. Please check eligibility with Northumberland County Council.

We have also increased our provision by offering additional paid sessions in Nursery where places are available for children not eligible for fully funded 30 hours to access up to a maximum of 30 hours. Please contact school for more information or to request the appropriate forms.

### Reception provision:

Reception children are full time. They attend school from 8.50 - 3.15 pm alongside the rest of the school.

A member of staff is on duty each morning for both Nursery and Reception children from 8:40 am. At 8:45 am the bell is rung in the main yard and parents bring their Nursery or Reception children into the separate outside Early Years area and into the Early Years unit.

In the summer term, to begin the process of transition into Year One, Reception children will start to line up in the yard at the start of day and come outside onto the yard to greet parents at the end of the day. They will of course be supported throughout by the adults in their class.

If you have any extenuating circumstances which need alternative arrangements please contact the Headteacher. The doors are closed at 9.00 am and entry is possible by an audio/video entry system located at the main entrance.



## **Lunchtimes, milk and fruit**

Children in Reception stay for lunch and either have a school lunch or bring their own packed lunch. Nursery children who come to a morning session are also able to stay for lunch but we would like them to stay for a school lunch.

Nursery children who come to an afternoon session have a mid-afternoon snack provided by school.

Here at St. Michael's we pride ourselves in serving varied, healthy and enjoyable meals every day. Our school cook {Unit Manager} prepares fresh meals each day and displays the menu in school and on our website.

We try to offer a wide and varied choice to suit the needs of all our children as well as catering for special diets. We also have special days throughout the week - Wednesday's are our Roast days and Fridays are our chip days. There are also promotional days or weeks with special menus. We also like to invite our parents into school during the school year to enjoy our lunches with us.

Please speak to our Office Manager if you think you may be eligible for free school meals if your child is in Nursery. Reception children are in receipt of the Universal Free School Meal scheme and therefore there is no charge for their school lunches.

Children in Early Years are eligible for free milk up until the term in which they turn 5. After this if your child wishes to continue to receive milk there will be a charge. Please see the office for details.

Children in Early Years are eligible for free fruit. Whether your child is a morning or afternoon or flexible offer Nursery child or a Reception child they will be able to have a piece of fruit every day.

## **Food allergies**

If your child has an allergy to any food or products could you inform school as soon as possible and specify on the appropriate forms. Our School Cook is able, with prior warning, to cater for children with allergies.

## **Encouraging independence**

Children during their initial start within Early Years children will be supported by their parents and staff to establish the arrival routine within Early years. We do however wish to encourage and help children to be as independent and confident as possible.

When settled into Early Years we will encourage parents to allow children to hang up their own coats, find their own names to self-register and put away their own reading packets.

We would also like to encourage parents to help children to be independent by ensuring that they wear the sort of clothes that they can manage themselves, and to reinforce and establish toilet procedures to ensure children can manage themselves.

## **Changing facilities:**

Nappy changing facilities are available in school for children who need this support from staff. Children who are still in nappies are expected to bring a small bag into school with them with a



supply of nappies and wipes. If your child comes into Early Years still in nappies we assume that parents are happy for us to change their child. Please ensure you speak to a member of staff regarding your child's needs.

Toileting issues are dealt with empathetically and privately. Clothing is present in Early Years to enable us to change children should an accident occur but you are more than welcome to send your child into school with their own clothes to change into. Please remember that most children need to be able to go to the toilet independently and therefore appropriate and easily removed clothing should be worn to enable this to happen. Most Nursery children are able to use the toilet on starting but we are able to facilitate support for children in necessary.

### **Safety, Medication and Illness**

On occasions when you are invited into our Early Years and in the interests of school security, all visitors are requested to report to the school secretary at the main school entrance. We have a signing in/out book for all visitors and you will be given a visitor badge to wear whilst you are in school with us. We also expect mobile phones to be switched off and not used. The Early Years is secured by locking gates into the unit. Should you arrive late these gates will be locked and you will need to access school through the main door. Our doors in school now all have high security locks for everyone's safety.

### **Arrangements in case of accident or illness.**

In the event of a child becoming ill or having an accident at school the Head teacher or delegated person with authority will need to contact parents quickly. You are asked therefore; to complete a personal details form, which is held in the main office. Parents are advised to keep these details in the office up to date to avoid any contacting problems. Details remain confidential. Children who have a minor bump to the head will be given a note to inform parents or carers and will be informed at the end of the day.

If your child is unwell we would not expect them to be in school. We request that you let the office know as soon as possible a reason for their absence. In some circumstances medication prescribed by a doctor may be administered in school. Please see office staff for details and for a permission form which will need completing.

### **Absence**

Although we do not encourage parents to send children to school when unwell we do expect children to attend school regularly. Please inform us if your child is ill as we will need to contact you to find out the reason for their absence. We seek your co-operation in asking you not to organise annual holidays during term time. Unfortunately, due to new Government directives we are only able to authorise absences in extreme circumstances. We would request that, should you choose to go on holiday during term time, you fill out a holiday form. Please contact school for further information or if you wish to speak to us about absences.

### **School Uniform**

At St Michael's we do have a school uniform which we require children to wear however there is no requirement for Two year olds or Nursery children to wear school uniform however parents seem to

prefer their children to do so. Our school uniform is royal blue sweatshirt or cardigan, grey or black trousers or skirt and a yellow polo shirt. Girls may wear a light, summer dress when appropriate. Order forms are available from the office or similarly coloured items that match the school colours can be purchased. You can see our uniform on our website.

Please could you ensure that clothing is labelled and named (including shoes) as items can be easily misplaced, lost or swapped by accident!

In Reception we require every child to have a pair of gym shoes; for young children the black slip-on style is best, blue shorts and yellow t-shirt and a drawstring bag in which to keep them. All of these items are available from the school office where there is an option to have them named or similarly coloured uniform can be purchased from stores.

No jewellery should be worn in Early years for safety reasons. If it is necessary for ear-rings to be kept in they will need to be covered up.

### **Bringing and collecting your child from Early Years**

It is important to establish the routine of bringing and collecting your child. We expect children to come promptly into Early Years either in the morning or afternoon and likewise to be picked up on time. We do however understand that occasionally there are circumstances where you may be delayed and your child will be supported in Early Years until you arrive. We will also request you inform us of those people who are likely to regularly pick up your child from school and to inform us of anyone new who will be picking up your child. If they are unknown to us and we have not been informed we will be unable allow your child to leave with them. There is provision on our forms to put the names of those people who have this permission.

### **Transition arrangements**

St Michaels have signed up to the Transition Policy in place for Early Years settings within the Alnwick area. We believe that this will enable children and parents to be confident in the transition process that is seamless and effective, meeting the needs of all children and enhancing their learning and development through the transfer of information and the settling of children into their new early years setting. We will ask parents or carers for permission to visit children in the setting they are in prior to starting in Early Years and also to do a home visit. We also arrange visits for parents and children to our school prior to their starting date.

Children starting Reception will have experienced a 'bump up day' within school at the end of their time in Nursery to meet their new teacher and experience some time in their future class. Those children who are not coming into Reception from our Nursery will take part in 'bump up day', but also have other transition days offered and arranged prior to their starting in Reception.

### **Worship**

Worship at St. Michael's C of E Primary School is an important part of the life of our school, and in being so placed supports children in developing spiritually, intellectually, emotionally and socially to their fullest potential, helping to prepare children for the opportunities, responsibilities and challenges of the 21st Century.

Our Collective Worship is a shared experience by the whole school or in Key Stage groups. We aim to consider the needs of the individual as well as the collective group.

As a Church of England School, we endeavour to develop in children Christian values by showing that we care for every child. We work as a family and base our behaviour management on forgiveness and love. The children visit the parish church at least once each half term, for whole school or Eucharist services.

However, parents who wish to withdraw their child from daily worship or from religious education lessons are able to do so and are requested to inform the Headteacher.

### **Religious Education**

The school follows the Diocesan Agreed syllabus for Religious Education. RE is taught as a separate subject, however clear links to topic webs and the Church Year are developed. Much value is placed on the preparation, inspirational delivery and continual assessment of Religious Education from Early Years to Year 6!

We are blessed by continuous support, both spiritually and financially, from St. Michael's Parish Church - this enables a whole community to contribute towards the religious and spiritual development of our children in school.

### **School Governors**

The school has its own Board of Governors on which parents and their views are represented. Members of the Governing body are appointed to serve for a period of up to four years. They are responsible to the LA and Diocese for the delivery of the curriculum and a vast range of matters relating to the conduct and smooth running of the school. They are also available to parents for advice or support.

**Chair of Governors:** Jacqui Chevaugeron

**Vice Chair of Governors:** Katja Purvis

**We aim to ensure that during your child's time at our school they are happy and successful learners.**

Gavin Johnston  
Headteacher

Cate Mackay  
Assistant Head/Early Years lead

