

*Welcome to*  
**St Mark's Church of England  
Primary School**

*Growing and learning together in God's love*



**Information for Year R parents**  
**September 2020 Intake**



# Welcome!

A warm welcome to St Mark's Church of England Primary School.

In September your children will start their first year of our school in their Reception Class. This is the final year of the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. This booklet includes helpful information about what to expect as your child starts school. It also contains information about school routines and useful things you can do to support your child when they start school.

We hope that you find this booklet useful in answering any questions that you may have. However, if you would like any further information then please feel free to contact us at school.

We look forward to working in partnership as your child begins their educational journey at St Mark's.

Charles Applegate, Head Teacher

*Immanuel Church*



We enjoy close links with Immanuel Church. Not only are our buildings on the same site, but Reverend May and the Immanuel parish are closely involved with school activities as well as community events. Reverend May is also a member of the school's Governing Body.



## Our vision and Aims

At St Mark's, we are ambitious for all of our children to achieve well and believe that in order to achieve this, we must put character before qualification.

Our real hope is that in all that we do, we are able to put in firm foundations for our children, thereby making a difference to themselves, to their friends and family, and to the wider community. Only then can they positively impact our world.

Our school is rooted in our distinctively Christian values of love, forgiveness, hope and faith. We hold these values dear, and weave them into our everyday life at St Mark's. They make us who we are. We teach and live out these values from a Christian perspective and understanding. They help us to understand ourselves and our relationships with others in the context of God's love for us.

We desire our children to experience a full and rich curriculum, which is irresistible for all children to learn and irresistible for all teachers to teach. We believe that excellent learning experiences underpinned by high quality teaching set in a highly nurturing environment are essential for children to develop and achieve.

At St Mark's, we are a fully inclusive school and therefore we welcome all children. We recognise and celebrate our differences, too. This is because God loves us unconditionally and made us all unique. Therefore, every single child and adult in our community is special.

We love to work with our whole community; indeed, we were made to live in community with one another. As we help our children, so we help one another and build a better, more richly-connected world.



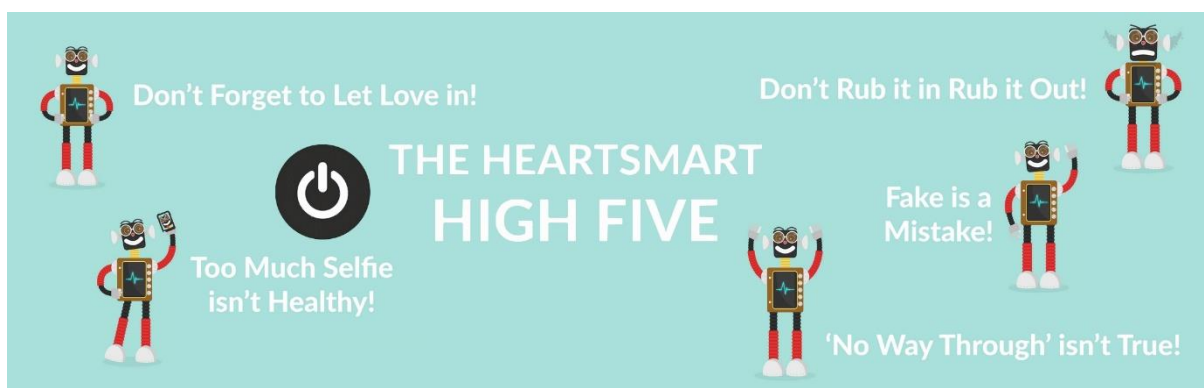
## Learning Behaviours

We want our children to be excellent learners for life, and so we have 8 learning behaviours which are underpinned by and linked to our Christian values. They help to develop the skills and character needed for life-long learning.



## HeartSmart

We are acutely aware that the emotional health of our children is paramount. We want them to be emotionally intelligent, resilient and actively empathetic. HeartSmart provides principles and practices for growing healthy hearts and minds. Boris the robot makes it fun and memorable at the same time!



# Managing Change

This is a time of many changes and new beginnings for you and your family. With the right support at home and at school, together we can help your child to succeed. We are very aware that with the current situation this leads to even more uncertainty about how your child's transition into school will look. We would like to reassure you that we will do all in our power to ensure we offer the best possible transition and start for your children.

## **Top tips for change:**

- Talk positively about them starting school and give them time to adjust – it won't happen overnight.
- Changes will affect routines at home for your child and other family members - try to pre-plan where possible.
- Introduce your child to their new environment. Keep walking past the school and encourage them to try on their new uniform before the first day.
- Establish and maintain good routines for meal times, bedtimes and other home routines so that change elsewhere is minimised.
- Change means leaving something behind including favourite teachers or best friends. Talk to your child about what will be different and what they have to look forward to.



# A Typical Day in Reception

## **Breakfast club**

The school runs a Breakfast Club from 8.00am – 8.30am each day. The cost per session is £2.50 which includes a breakfast of cereal, toast and spread, a piece of fruit and fruit juice. If you wish your child to be looked after from 8.20am and you do not want breakfast to be provided the charge is £1.00. There will be activities for the children such as drawing and colouring, jigsaws, games and books. Please see the school office for details.

## **Arrival**

The school gates open at 8.30am with the register being taken at 8.45am; during this time children will complete some early morning work. This will include fine motor exercises, name/letter writing and on set days changing their library book. If you arrive after this time then please take your child to the school office.

## **Learning that takes place throughout the day**

This is the final year of the children's Early years Foundation stage. During the day children participate in a variety of different learning opportunities, many of which will be very practical in nature, as young children tend to learn best through hands on experiences. The children will participate in both an English and Maths activity during each day; this will include both discrete Phonics and maths teaching. The practitioners in Reception will work with the whole class, small groups and with individuals. The children will also be encouraged to work independently for some parts of the day focussing on their weekly challenges and their child initiated learning.



### **Snack Time**

In our Reception classes we have rolling snack where the children help themselves to snack during the morning. At the moment fruit is provided free of charge. Milk is also available free of charge until the age of 5 when there is a small charge.

### **Lunchtimes**

All pupils in Reception, Years 1 and 2 are entitled to free school dinners. All reception children will eat their lunch in the hall. However, if your child does not want to have school dinners they are still able to bring their own packed lunch.

### **Going home**

The school day ends at 3.20pm. You will need to collect your child from outside their classroom door. If someone else is going to collect your child, it is important that the school/teacher is notified. If you telephone a change then you will be required to use an individual password which you will be given when your child starts at St Mark's (we call this the safe word).

### **After School**

Be prepared for your child to be quite tired to begin with, as starting school is different from nursery or pre-school. There will be new children around, a new teacher and new routines. Please make sure they have enough time for rest and relaxation. In addition, your child will have a reading book to read and words to learn. These are designed to be enjoyable for both you and your child.

### **SCL After School Club**

We're pleased to offer our very own after school club, run by SCL. It costs £12.00 a day and is available from 3:20pm until 6pm each school day. See our website for more information. Bookings are done directly through SCL, not through St Mark's and there is a link on our website.  
[www.stmarksprimary.net/scl](http://www.stmarksprimary.net/scl)



*The following pages give details of the learning in Reception with advice about how parents can support their children at home.*



## *In reading we are learning to...*

- Hear and say initial sounds in words
- Blend sounds together to read CVC words (consonant-vowel-consonant e.g. dog)
- Blend sounds together to read CVCC words (e.g. tent)
- Blend sounds together to read CCVC words (e.g. flag)
- Read common exception words
  - Talk about and retell events from a story we have read
- Predict what happens next in stories
- Know the difference between a fiction (story) book and a non-fiction (information) book
- Stop reading when we see a full stop
- Talk about characters, settings and plot

### **Parents can help their children by...**

- Spending time sharing and reading books for pleasure e.g. bedtime stories, going to the library
- Practising blending (sounding out)
- Practising saying and reading the sounds and key word cards
- Practising recognition of tricky words (words that cannot be sounded out e.g. was)





# In writing we are learning to...



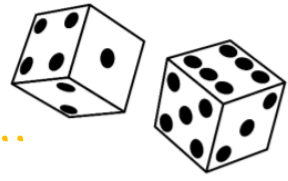
- Give meaning to marks that we draw and write
- Hold a pencil correctly
- Copy letters (start with our name)
- Use correct letter formation knowing where to start and which direction to move the pencil in
- Write our first and last names correctly with capital letters where needed
- Listen to the sounds in a word and write them in the correct order (segmenting)
- Leave a finger space between each word
- Begin to write simple sentences
- Use capital letters to start sentences and full stops to end them
- Remember how to spell common exception words
- Plan what to write before we begin - think, say, write, read, check!

## Parents can help their children by...

- Encouraging children to write for meaning in real life situations e.g. shopping lists, birthday cards
- Encouraging children to make marks and draw with different media e.g. paint, shaving foam, pencils, chalk, water and paintbrushes, felt pens
- Encouraging correct pencil grip
- Encouraging and practising correct letter formation
- Practising segmenting words into individual sounds for writing



In maths we are learning to...



- Count objects reliably to 10 then 20
- Find one more or one less from a group of up to five objects, then ten objects.
- Count forwards and backwards in 1s, 2s, and 10s
- Say the number that is one more or one less up to 10 then 20
- Read and order numbers from 0 to 20
- Add and subtract numbers up to 10 using objects
- Add and subtract by counting on or back to find the answer
- Solve everyday problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

### Correct Number formation



### Parents can help their children by...

- Playing games e.g. board games and/or cards.
- Practising counting forwards and backwards from any given number (not always starting from 1).
- Encouraging correct number formation.
- Play shops using real money – recognising coins and their values.
- Talking about different times of the day e.g. morning, afternoon, bedtime.
- Using language of time e.g. today, tomorrow, yesterday, days of the week and months of the year Correct number formation.



# Uniform

We ask that children wear school uniform which consists of:

- Sweatshirt /cardigan with school logo
- White Polo shirt
- Grey skirts/tunics
- Grey or black trousers

During the summer months many girls choose to wear dresses in green and white checks. Children should wear sensible shoes, with heels no higher than 1". Sandals can be worn with socks in the summer but must have a back or ankle strap and sensible heel.

Uniform is available from: Skoolkit, 15 Church Street, Basingstoke

PE Kit consists of a plain white round neck T shirt, navy blue shorts, a pair of tracksuit trousers and a pair of socks and plimsolls. This should be kept at school in a named PE bag (available from school office).

We would prefer children not to wear earrings at school because of Health and Safety issues. If, however, you want your child to wear them, they must be one pair of studs only and must be removed by your child or covered with tape for PE. No other form of body piercing is allowed. The wearing of any items of cultural or medical significance should first be discussed with the Headteacher. If a watch is worn at school it is the responsibility of your child.

We recommend children's book bag and PE bag has a small keyring or tag which the children can identify themselves.

Please don't shave designs into your child's hair- this isn't part of our policy. Mohawks are not allowed. Hair styles should neat and smart, and not interrupt the learning or the safety of pupils.

