

# **St Vincent's Catholic Primary School**



## **School Brochure**

## Welcome to St Vincent's Catholic Primary School

It is with pleasure that I welcome you and your family to our school.

St Vincent's is a very happy and friendly school; the staff, parents and governors share high aspirations for all pupils. Our vision is to provide a Catholic education for our children and a community where they are valued, respected and where efforts are celebrated. We are committed to teaching in a happy, secure and caring environment, with the highest expectations of learning and behaviour and where there is equality of opportunity for each child to realise his or her potential irrespective of race, gender, learning difficulties or physical disabilities. There is an appreciation of the role that this school plays in the community; Gospel values are, therefore, intrinsic in every aspect of life at St Vincent's. It is the responsibility of all staff, parents and governors, in collaboration with the local parishes, to assist pupils on their faith journey, deepening their understanding and appreciation of the beliefs and traditions of the Catholic Church.

We are justly proud of our pupils' high academic achievement, conduct, courtesy, musical, sporting and cultural standards.

This brochure is intended to provide parents and prospective parents with useful information about our school and how it works. If you would like to apply for a place for your child at St Vincent's please contact the school office for details. If you would like to visit the school, please ring the office and make an appointment.

Please note that the information contained in the brochure is correct at the time of writing and is subject to change.

Juliana Gonzalez  
**Headteacher**

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Bromley Catholic Schools Trust



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

God's children are the focal point of our school community. We strive to create a happy and friendly working atmosphere based on Christ's word, where communication between home, school and parish is of paramount importance.

We aim to provide a Catholic education for our children, in which Christian values are shared and lived by all. We work to provide committed teaching, giving due regard to the requirements of the National Curriculum. Our school offers a secure and caring environment where there is equality of opportunity for each child to realise his or her potential.

We seek to enable children to grow in independence and to have respect for themselves and others. Children are encouraged to aim for the highest standards of behaviour and to foster an awareness of moral and social issues.

We aim to develop understanding citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century who recognise the need to participate in a caring and responsible way for the sustainability of our world.



## **School organisation and facilities**

### The School

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School is a standalone academy. It is a voluntary aided, one-form entry school with seven classes. The Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 classes have a maximum of 30 pupils; Key Stage 2 classes have a maximum of 34.

It was opened in 1953 to serve the parish of Our Lady Help of Christians, Mottingham. St Vincent's also serves the two Chislehurst Parishes of St Mary's and St Patrick's.



### The Local Community

We see the school as an extension of both the home and the parish. We are always conscious of the need for co-operation and real partnership in order to enrich the experience and education of our pupils.

### How the School is Organised

The teaching staff consists of the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, 3 full-time teachers, 4 part-time teachers and a part-time Special Educational Needs teacher. The support staff includes a Business Manager, a Caretaker, a Family Worker, 14 Teaching Assistants and 8 Mid-day Supervisors. All the staff are committed to the values of the school.

Children have the opportunity to learn a variety of musical instruments being taught by visiting teachers. Children in Reception to Year 6 are taught by a specialist music teacher; all children learn to play the recorder. Children in Years 3-6 are taught Spanish.

## **The Governing Body**

There are 12 Governors on the school's governing body

- Seven Foundation Governors appointed by the Diocese
- One Local Governor
- One Staff Governor (elected)
- Two Parent Governors (elected)
- The Headteacher

## **Governors' Responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for the following:

- Admissions and Appeals
- Appointing all staff
- Discipline, attendance and grievance procedures.
- The curriculum
- Deciding how Religious Education should be taught
- Special Educational Needs
- Equal Opportunities
- School buildings and site
- Finance
- Health and Safety
- Producing the School brochure

The Chair of Governors is Mr Terence Grange – he may be contacted through the school.

St Vincent's Catholic Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

## Admissions Policy

*Children will be admitted to the reception class in the September of the academic year in which their fifth birthdays fall. The governors will provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that the date their child is admitted to the school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that school year; parents may also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age.*

The Governing Body has responsibility for admissions to St Vincent's Catholic Primary School and intends to admit 30 children to the Reception Class for each school year. The published admission number is inclusive of students with a statement of special educational needs that are admitted to the school pursuant to the school being named in part 4 of their statement.

**Where there are more applications than places available, places will be offered using the following criteria in the order stated:**

1. Looked after Catholic<sup>1</sup> children (children in care<sup>3</sup>) or looked after children in the care of Catholic families (*in which case, proof of baptism in the Catholic Church of at least one of the carers will be required*), and previously looked after Catholic children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
2. Baptised Catholic<sup>1</sup> children who will have a sibling<sup>2</sup> attending St Vincent's Catholic Primary School at the beginning of their first term.
3. Other baptised Catholic<sup>1</sup> children.  
*Within categories 1-4, proof of baptism in or evidence of reception into the Catholic Church will be required. Applications will be ranked according to the frequency of attendance at Mass as shown on the Supplementary Form; with those attending most frequently being accorded priority and verified by the Parish Priest for the previous 12 month period.*
4. Other looked after children (children in care<sup>3</sup>) and other previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order.
5. Other children who will have a sibling<sup>2</sup> attending St Vincent's Catholic Primary School at the beginning of their first term.
6. Children who are members of Eastern Orthodox Churches. Proof of Baptism will be required.
7. Children of families who are members of other Christian denominations that are part of Churches Together in England. Proof of baptism (or dedication) provided by a priest or minister of a designated place of worship will be required.
8. Any other children.

*Within all the categories 1-8 and sub-categories, priority is given in order of proximity measured in a straight line from the front door of the home to the centre doors of the school, with those living the nearest being accorded priority. The distance will be supplied by the local authority derived from their computerised mapping system.*

<sup>1</sup> Catholics include members of the Ordinariate and the Latin and Oriental Rite Churches that are in union with the Bishop of Rome.

<sup>2</sup> A sibling is defined as a full/step/half brother or sister living at the same address, a child who is living as part of the family unit by reason of a Court Order or a child who has been placed with foster carers as a result of being 'looked after' by the Authority.

<sup>3</sup> Looked after child (child in care) is a child who is in care to a Local Authority or who is provided with accommodation by that authority and will still be looked after at the time when an application for their admission to a school is made, and who the Local Authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time when the child is admitted to the school. It also includes previously looked after children who have been adopted or who have become the subject of a residence or guardianship order Children placed by the Local Authority by a Kinship or residency order are NOT classed as Looked After Children.

Where incorrect information is used to unfairly gain a place then the governors will immediately withdraw any place offered.

### **Admission Procedures**

In addition to the Common Application Form (CAF) supplied by your home Local Authority, the Supplementary Information Form (available from the school), should be completed and returned to the school no later than the closing date published by the Bromley Education Authority. This should be done even if the CAF is completed online. If the Supplementary Information Form is not completed, the governing body will only be able to consider the application after all applicants who have completed and returned a Supplementary Information Form.

### **Appeals**

Parents whose applications for places are unsuccessful may appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel set up in accordance with section 85(3) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. Appeals must be made in writing and must set out the reasons on which the appeal is made. Appeals should be made to the Admissions Appeal Clerk at the school address. Parents/Carers have the right to make oral representations to the Appeal Panel.

Infant classes are restricted by the legislation to 30 children. Parents should be aware that an appeal against refusal of a place in an infant class may only succeed if it can be demonstrated that:-

- a) the admission of additional children would not breach the infant class size limit; or
- b) the admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or had not been correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- c) the panel decides that the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

### **In-year (casual) admissions**

Applications for a place at the school to start during the school year must be made using the In-Year Primary Application Form of the Local Authority (LA) where the child resides. This form must be returned to the LA. The school's Supplementary Information Form should also be completed and returned to the school to enable the governors to rank the application in the event of there being more than one application for a place. The governors will use the same criteria to rank the application as those listed above. The offer of a place at the school will be made by the LA on behalf of the governors. In the event of the governors deciding that a place cannot be offered,

there being no vacancy, parents will be offered the opportunity of placing their child's name on the waiting list. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place.

### **Waiting List**

Parents of children who have not been offered a place at the school may ask for their child's name to be placed on a waiting list. The waiting list, which will be maintained by the Bromley Admissions Department for academic year in which the application is made, will be operated using the same admissions criteria listed above. Placing a child's name on the waiting list does not guarantee that a place will become available. This does not prevent parents from exercising their right to appeal against the decision not to offer a place. It is possible that when a child is directed under the local authority's fair access protocol they will take precedence over those children already on the list.

*The admission of pupils with a **Statement of Special Educational Needs** or an **Education, Health and Care plan** is dealt with by a completely separate procedure. Details of this procedure are set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.*



## **Commitments**

If problems arise at school, parents and children should talk to the class teacher first of all. If the problem is unresolved then the matter should be referred to the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher.

If you wish to talk to class teachers please ask to see them at the end of the school day. If you require a long meeting it may be necessary to make an appointment. Mrs. Gonzalez is usually available before school. If you require a long meeting it may be necessary to make an appointment.

A copy of the formal complaints procedure is available from the school office.

The staff will:

1. Ensure that each child is given opportunity to reach his or her full potential and feels valued as a member of our school community.
2. Promote high standards of work and behaviour in a positive way to safeguard each child's self esteem.
3. Provide a balanced curriculum and endeavour to meet the individual needs of the children in our care.
4. Encourage good relationships between all members of the school community.
5. Inform the family of the broad curriculum to be covered each half term.
6. Hold regular consultation evenings to discuss each child's progress.
7. Be available by appointment to discuss progress and any concerns
8. Contact the family if there are concerns or problems that affect their child's work or behaviour
9. Contact the family if there are concerns about attendance or punctuality.
10. Set mark and monitor homework and class work in accordance with school policies.
11. Be open and welcoming, offering you opportunities to become involved in the life of the school.

The family will:

1. Send our children to school dressed in the proper uniform
2. Advise the school immediately if our child is absent for any reason
3. Ensure that my child arrives at school by 8.50am
4. Ensure that our child completes the homework set every night and acknowledge, by signature, that it has been done.
5. Support the school in maintaining good behaviour and discipline and advise the school immediately of any problems our child may have.
6. Ensure that our child behaves with consideration for others at all times.
7. Attend meetings arranged by the school to discuss our child's progress.
8. Support and abide by the school's procedures e.g. morning and afternoon procedures for delivering and collecting our child.

The child will:

1. Bring all the equipment I need everyday (including PE kit)
2. Be in the right place at the right time
3. Take care of the school's equipment and take responsibility for my own possessions.
4. Do all my class work and homework as well as I can.
5. Follow instructions given by adults in school
6. Treat others as I want them to treat me.
7. Keep my hands, feet and objects to myself. I will be kind and thoughtful in what I say and do.
8. Wear school uniform correctly and be tidy in appearance.
9. Take newsletters and other communications home promptly.

## **Parental Support**

### Parent-Teacher Association

Parents contribute significantly towards the improvement of facilities at the school by organising annual events such as the Christmas, Easter and Summer Fairs. There is also a calendar of events to incorporate many other fundraising ideas and social events. Our PTA is very active and welcomes all new parents to become active members.

## **School Events**

During the academic year, parents are invited to attend and support activities including the following events:

- Sports Day
- Christmas Plays
- Music Concerts
- Play Performances
- Liturgy Assemblies & school Masses

### Parent Helpers in school

We encourage parents to become involved in their child's education both at home and in school. Parent helpers are a valuable resource within our school. For the safety of pupils, anyone who works with children will be DBS checked.

## **School Uniform**

This has been a tradition of the school. All children are required to wear the uniform. The uniform is neither expensive nor elaborate and should be held in high esteem by all the children.

### Boys

Short or long grey trousers  
(school uniform trousers, not jean style)  
White or grey shirt  
Navy V-neck pullover  
Navy blazer (optional)  
Light blue school tie

Grey socks

Black or brown shoes  
Black or navy coat

### Summer variations:

Black or brown sandals  
Plain blue or white Polo shirts

### Girls

Grey pinafore, skirt, culottes or trousers  
(school uniform trousers, not jean style)  
White blouse  
Navy cardigan or V-neck pullover  
Navy blazer (optional)  
Light blue school tie  
(unless blouse is open-neck)

White socks or  
black, grey or navy tights  
Black, brown or navy shoes  
Black or navy coat

Blue & white check or stripe dress  
Black, brown or navy sandals

## **General**

Long hair must be tied back.

Hair accessories are to be in school colours only.

Winter & summer hats to be school colours only.

No **jewellery** may be worn (including pierced earrings).

Make-up, tattoos are not allowed, extreme hairstyles are discouraged

Watches may be worn.

**All clothes must be clearly marked with your child's name.**

## **P.E.Kit**

For all children

Plain T Shirt in house colours (no logos or patterns) Years 1-6

Plain white T Shirt (no logos or patterns)

Plain navy or black shorts (no logos or patterns)

Black plimsolls

Trainers for outdoor PE

In cold weather the older children may require a plain black or navy track suit (no logos or patterns).

**All clothes must be clearly marked with your child's name.**

P.E. kit should be kept in a suitable drawstring bag, which is clearly marked with your child's name.

## School Timetable and Routine Procedures

<u>Morning Session</u>	8.40am	-	11.00am
<u>Break</u>	11.00am	-	11.15am
	Reception and Y1 playtime may vary		
<u>Morning Session</u>	KS1 11.15am	-	12.00pm
	KS2 11.15am	-	12.15pm
<u>Lunch</u>	KS1 12.00pm	-	1.15pm
	KS2 12.15pm	-	1.15pm
<u>Afternoon Session</u>	1.15pm	-	3.15pm

Teaching time for infant children is 22hrs 45mins per week.

Teaching time for junior children is 23hrs and 30mins per week.

Please ensure that your child arrives at school on time. Late arrival is very unsettling for the child and the rest of the class who will already have taken part in Morning Prayers to ask for God's blessing on the day's work and may have started their lessons.

At 8.40am the head teacher opens the centre doors and children may come in between 8.40am and 8.50am.

Children should normally enter the building through the main entrance. Children who arrive after 8.50am should report to Mrs Webb's office.

Children should be collected promptly at the end of the school day.

### Absences

Please contact the school by 9.30am on the first day of your child's absence. All unreported absences will be followed up to ensure the safeguarding of all our children. Absences can only be authorised by the school. Authorised absences include illness, medical appointments and other special circumstances, e.g. music exams and family bereavement. Other activities may be considered in light of the individual child's attendance record and the nature of the activity. Absences which would not be authorised include the following: holidays, celebrating birthdays, shopping, minding younger brothers or sisters, illness of a parent (unless serious), days out, death of a pet or being too tired.

Two weeks' notice should be given when applying for permission to take your child out of school. Forms are available from the school office. The Headteacher may only authorise a child's absence under exceptional circumstances. Family holidays are discouraged.

### Lunchtime

Children may have either a school dinner or a packed lunch. For the 2018-19 school year, school meals will be free for **all** children in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Free meals are available to KS2 children (Years 3-6) whose parents are receiving Income Support. Applications should be made in June for the coming academic year to Education Office, London Borough of Bromley, Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley BR1 3UH. Applications are encouraged to be made on-line.

For Junior children not entitled to free meals, the current cost is currently **£2.45** per day (£**12.25** per week). We prefer payments to be made termly or half termly, and directly into the school bank account. If paying by cash or cheque, please give it to your child in a sealed envelope, marked with your child's class and full name, on Mondays for the week ahead or for longer periods. Your child should hand this envelope to their class teacher. Payment will not be accepted at the school office. If paying cash, please send in the exact amount, as change cannot be given. Cheques should be made payable to "St Vincent's Catholic Primary School".

Children who have a packed lunch should bring it in a lunch box, clearly marked with their name. Cans, fizzy drinks and glass bottles are not allowed for safety reasons. We ask you to co-operate by not encouraging sweets or chocolates at lunchtime. Food containing nuts is **not** allowed at any time.

#### Play-time

As we promote healthy eating children are allowed to eat a snack of fruit or vegetables during morning break. Children in the Reception Class and KS1 are provided with a piece of fruit or vegetable. A drink may also be brought, but again no fizzy drinks, cans or glass bottles. Please do not give crisps, sweets or chocolate.

#### Health and Welfare

It is essential for the school to be made aware of any medical conditions or problems at home that could affect your child's school life.

The School Nurse visits the school from time to time. All children are examined at least twice during their time at Primary School.

#### Nut Allergy

There are children at our school who suffer from nut allergy. They have a severe reaction if they come into contact with nuts of any kind or food containing nuts. Therefore, nuts are not permitted at school. Please do not send any food product containing nuts to the school.

#### Medicines

For legal reasons we are only allowed to administer prescribed medication. Children taking medicine three times a day can take their dosage before school, after school and at bedtime. Non-prescribed medicines are not permitted in school. Prescribed medicine brought into school must be accompanied by a form, available from the school office, for completion by parents. If your child is suffering from a long-term condition, alternative arrangements may be made.

#### Asthma inhalers

If your child needs to use an asthma inhaler in school, please give 2 inhalers to the class teacher, with your child's name on it. You will be asked to sign a consent form, which will be kept on file in the school office. Please make sure your child's inhaler is in date and is replaced when necessary. All inhalers should be taken home at the end of each term.

#### Safety

Entry to the school is restricted to ensure the safety of the children and staff. Access is possible through the main door to the reception area. Visitors are required to report to the Secretary's Office where they must sign in.

### Accidents and Illness

Minor injuries occurring during school hours are dealt with immediately by a trained First Aider. Ointments or lotions are not applied and no form of medication can be administered. It is the policy of the school to refer at once to the local hospital any accident that appears serious. Parents will be notified immediately.

All accidents requiring medical attention are recorded. All head injuries, however slight, are reported to parents either by 'phone or if the bump is not serious a 'bump note' will be sent home.

If your child becomes unwell during the day you will be contacted. Please do not send your child to school if he/she is unwell. If a child has been ill during the night he/she should be kept at home the following day to ensure that he/she has recovered and to prevent the spread of the illness to other children. Children who have experienced vomiting and/or diarrhoea should not return to school until 48hrs after the symptoms have gone.

Parents are only contacted if it is considered necessary. It is extremely important that the school has up-to-date contact numbers where the parents may be contacted during school hours. If you provide alternative numbers we will contact relatives, friends or neighbours if the situation isn't serious. Please keep the school informed of any changes.

### Protecting children from harm

The school works in partnership with parents to support children in every way possible. However, the Children Act 1989 places a clear responsibility on schools to ensure they work together with other agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

As a result, if particular concerns are raised within school, or a child or parent reports a situation giving rise to particular concern, it may be necessary for the school to contact social services without first contacting the parents. This is in line with Government guidelines and Bromley Education Authority's guidelines on Child Protection. The school's named person for Safeguarding/Child Protection is Juliana Gonzalez, Paolina Di Tunno or Jennifer Hall.

### Parking

Please park considerately and safely outside the school. Please do not block the drives or garages of the local residents, no matter how briefly.

For your child's safety please do not let your child run around parked cars or climb on the railings or walls at the front of the school.

### **Discipline**

The highest standards of behaviour are expected of our children both on and off the school premises. In keeping with the ethos of a Catholic School our children are taught by word and example to be caring and show respect for all. Our aim is to lead our children to be self-disciplined and take responsibility for their own actions.

Bullying is not tolerated. Any reported incidents are dealt with immediately. All staff are committed to a policy of justice and tolerance with regard to race, gender, class and religion.

We ask for the total support of parents when dealing with concerns regarding discipline. Maintaining high standards and good behaviour depends on a close working partnership between the home and school.



### **Special Educational Needs**

Children with special educational needs may have physical, sensory, linguistic, emotional, behavioural or learning difficulties. They will follow the National Curriculum so that they have the greatest possible educational opportunities, but changes to suit individual children are sometimes arranged.

All children may experience learning difficulties from time to time and may be given additional small group or individual support; all classes have a classroom assistant for the whole morning. Liaison with the Educational Psychological Services, Social Services and Health Service is maintained. This, along with close collaboration by school staff, enables early identification of pupils' needs. Further support may be given via Bromley's Learning Support Service. Parents are consulted and kept fully informed at all stages by the SENCO.

School recognises and caters for the needs of gifted and talented children.

### **Pupils with Disabilities**

All pupils are admitted in line with the school's admissions policy.

Some children with disabilities, for example, sensory impairments affecting sight and hearing and learning disabilities can be fully integrated into school life. The school has a wheelchair ramp, which allows access to the ground floor where there is a disabled toilet. However many of the doors in the school may be too narrow for wheelchair access. Governors have noted this and alterations may be considered in the future.

To ensure that pupils with disabilities are not treated less favourably than other pupils, arrangements are made for external support in improving pupils' perceptions of disability. Advice on support, access and inclusion can be obtained through the Local Authority. In some cases pupils with disabilities have individual support assistants. It is our aim, where possible, to ensure that all pupils have access to the building and the curriculum.

### **Equal Opportunities**

At St Vincent's Catholic Primary School we aim to ensure that each child has full access to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of gender, race or ability.

## **Curriculum and Organisation of Education and Teaching Methods**

Teachers use a variety of strategies and teaching techniques in order to meet the needs of the children in their class. Time is spent on whole class, group and individual teaching.

If you would like to see the school's policies please ask at the school office.

## **Religious Education**

As a Catholic school, religion is not just another subject in the curriculum, but it is a way of life. It permeates all relationships and activities.

The Governors have agreed that the delivery of religious education at St Vincent's will be in accordance with Diocesan Policy and is sustained through close links with the home and parish. We are following the 'Way, the Truth and the Life Religious Education Programme. This programme aims to encourage children's awareness of the presence of God and to help them respond to that presence.

Religious Education also happens through regular prayer, assemblies and Masses. Fr Mario Nycz celebrates school Masses on occasions throughout the year. Hymns and music are used to enhance all our worship.

Underlying our teaching and our relationships are the Gospel values of Honesty and Humility, Justice, Forgiveness and Mercy. Our aim within this context is that all members of our community show respect and care for one another and extend their concern to the needy by prayer and charitable service.

As a Catholic school we expect all children to attend RE lessons and assemblies. However, any parent can request permission for their child to be excused from RE lessons and religious worship, and the school will make alternative arrangements for the supervision of the child.

Parents and carers do not have to explain or give reasons for their request. This right of withdrawal complies with the 1944 Education Act, and was restated in the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The head teacher will keep a record of all children who have been withdrawn from RE lessons or collective worship.

## **Our Curriculum**

### **Foundation Stage**

Provision of an Early Years education that aims to meet the individual needs of every child in our care is of paramount importance. All our children are encouraged to be independent, to develop positive attitudes towards learning and to reach their full potential.

The Early Years Curriculum is a high quality teaching programme to promote children's learning. During a child's time in the Reception Class, he or she will work towards achieving the Early Learning Goals, which is a statutory requirement for all children in the Foundation Stage. The skills learned during this stage will give the children secure foundations on which to build future learning. We offer an educational programme that has ample opportunities for individual development, exploration, decision-making and problem solving.

## **Years 1-6**

### **Literacy**

We give literacy a high degree of priority. Speaking and listening, reading and writing, spelling and handwriting are important elements of literacy in the National Curriculum.

We aim to create an environment in which all aspects of language, reading, writing, speaking and listening are enjoyed in their own right, and in which children gain a love of the world of literature and communication

Every aspect of the children's work is influenced by the extent to which they use language with imagination and accuracy. Competence in reading, writing, speaking and listening is encouraged throughout the curriculum in order to enable the children to communicate appropriately and effectively.

### **Numeracy**

Considerable importance is attached to the children understanding mathematical processes, concepts and skills. Above all it can be a powerful means of communication. Enthusiasm for maths is encouraged by presenting it in an interesting and enjoyable way, allowing the children to actively participate in the learning process, thus creating a sense of achievement and confidence. There is a strong emphasis on the development of mental arithmetic and problem solving.

### **Science**

Through the presentation of scientific problems, the children are given the opportunity to develop a range of skills they can apply to other situations. This enables the children's natural curiosities to develop into real scientific thinking. Children learn through investigation, asking questions and planning ways in which to find answers. In this way they can build up a body of knowledge to support future scientific thinking.

### **Computing**

We have a specialist computing teacher who works with all classes. Children regularly use computers in our computer suite and in the classrooms. The school is connected to the Internet and children are taught how to use email and the Internet safely. All classrooms have an interactive whiteboard. Computer is a cross curricular resource which with specific computer skills equips children for their future careers.

### **Design and Technology**

Through Design and Technology, the children are encouraged to identify, examine and solve practical problems and to make existing situations better. The children are encouraged to be inventive, using a range of materials and tools, thus developing, modifying and evaluating their ideas through a series of cross curricular themes where possible.

### **History/Geography**

These subjects are brought to life by using artifacts, local studies and visiting speakers to help develop an understanding of how our society and culture and that of others around the world have developed. An appreciation of the influences of people, time, place, conditions and events in the past and present is developed through specific units of work.

### **Physical Education**

We endeavour to maintain our strong tradition of sporting involvement and achievement, through a range of activities providing an environment which will benefit the children's physical, emotional and moral wellbeing. Our PE provision aims to

embrace a range of games activities, gymnastics, dance, athletics, swimming and outdoor adventurous activities. Sports coaches are employed throughout the year and across the school.

### **Music**

Music is developed across all age groups from Reception to Y6. Children in all classes are taught by a music specialist and learn to play the recorder.

The children are encouraged to compose, listen, discuss and perform with a variety of audiences in mind. They learn to appreciate music of different styles, cultures and times, and to use their voices and a range of instruments as expressive media.

The standard of music throughout the school is high.

We have a number of peripatetic music teachers who provide lessons for a variety of instruments during school hours.

### **Spanish**

Children in all classes are taught Spanish. The focus is on listening to and understanding Spanish and speaking initially just words but leading onto developed and more complex sentences.

### **Art & Design**

The children are encouraged to be spontaneously creative, using a variety of media and techniques in art and craftwork. An awareness of colour, shape, balance, focus and proportion are developed alongside the use of symbols to convey ideas and feelings.

### **Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)**

PSHE involves the development of healthy attitudes, aspects of safe living and the development of good social and personal relationships. Our aim is for our children to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed active and responsible citizens.

### **Relationships and Sex Education**

There are no formal lessons on sex education, but the children in Year 5 have a discussion with the school nurse about puberty. We believe that children's questions about sex ought to be answered plainly and truthfully, where possible, whenever they are asked. The best people to answer children's questions are their parents. When the information is given in the context of a happy home by loving parents it may be more acceptable than if given by someone else, however well intentioned. In Religious Education the children will be made aware of the importance of forming loving relationships and develop an appreciation of true Christian values and an understanding of moral principles. We follow the approved diocesan scheme 'God's Loving Plan'.

*Parents are the prime educators of their children. Parents have a statutory right to withdraw their children from any sex education outside the National Curriculum requirements.*

If you would like to see a copy of the relationship and sex policy please ask at the school office.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

The school regularly enters sporting competitions and participates in inter-school competitions, athletics and swimming galas.

We offer clubs at various times during the school year.

**Breakfast club operates daily** from 7.30am to the start of the school day. Children are offered a variety of cereals, toast and fruit. Milk is also available to drink. The children play during the club time and take part in a variety of activities. Current cost is **£5.00** per day.

### **Assessment and Testing**

Assessment is a crucial part of a teacher's job. Children are assessed informally throughout the day, everyday by observation, questioning and assessment of written work. The evidence from assessment is used by the children and their teachers to decide where the children are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

Children undertake a variety of more formal assessments and tests throughout their years at St Vincent's.

### **Homework**

There is a greater realisation that education is not solely the responsibility of school but that everyone has a role to play. The majority of parents want to help their children and increasingly the partnership between home and school has a significant impact upon the raising of awareness and standards.

Homework is set by the teacher when it is needed and will support the learning in the class. All children will receive spellings and number/multiplication work relevant to their age.

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 developed at school (particularly in literacy and numeracy)
- to extend school learning through additional reading and research

The purposes and types of homework will obviously change as children get older.

Please help your child by:

- providing time and a suitable place for homework
- making it clear that you value homework and support our school in explaining how it can help children make progress
- giving praise for the completion of homework

### **Learning Outside the Classroom**

At St Vincent's through our learning outside the classroom programme our children are given opportunities to develop good communication skills, team work, independence, social skills and as a result they become motivated learners.

Learning outside the classroom aims to get children and young people out and about. These experiences can take place in the school grounds, in the local environment or further a field on day visits or residential stays.

### **Educational Visits**

All classes (except the Reception Class) may take part in one school trip per year. The Reception Class may have one school trip. The Year 6 children take part in a residential trip in June each year. Trips include local visits to local amenities.

Educational visits and visitors to the school enrich the curriculum. Visitors to the school include cookery workshops, the History Lady, Florence Nightingale, Fire of London puppet workshop, Fire safety officer, Police Community Support Officer, visiting artists, drumming workshop and many more

### **Charging for School Activities**

The school invites voluntary contributions to support specific projects such as educational visits. All educational trips are subsidised and no child is excluded from participating in an activity, which their family may not be able to afford.

