

Sacred Heart
Catholic Primary School

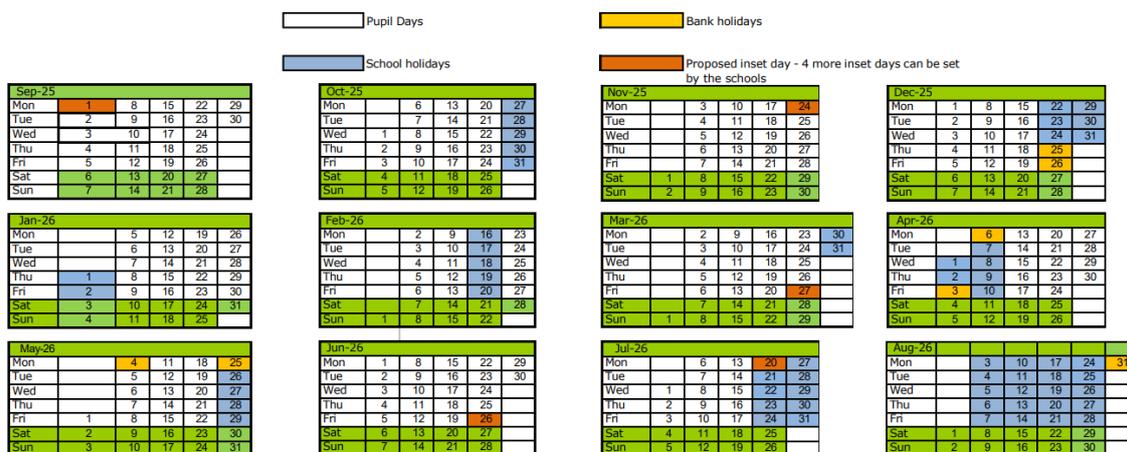


Reception Class
Welcome Pack

Key Information

The start date for all pupils is Wednesday 4th September 2024. The school day for children in Reception is from 08.40am to 3.10pm. **INSET Days are when the school is closed to pupils.** The dates set out below are the school's confirmed term and holiday dates. These are also available [here](#) on the school website.

Oxfordshire 2025/26 Academic Calendar



Students 190 days
Teachers 195 days

Pupil days shown include four to be selected by schools as additional INSET days
Teacher working days include five INSET days

Autumn Term : 74 Days
Spring Term : 55 Days

Class Teachers

Miss Avery Penna and Mrs Jenny McQuillan will be your child's class teachers. Miss Penna teaches on Mondays - Wednesday and Mrs McQuillan teachers Thursday and Friday. You can contact them directly using their school email addresses: penna.a@sacredheart-henley.co.uk and mcquillan.j@sacredheart-henley.co.uk

Uniform

Branded school uniform can be bought from the following website: www.schooluniformdirect.co.uk or from the regular second-hand uniform sales held at school. Make sure you search for Sacred Heart School in Henley!

Red and white gingham dresses are not officially part of our school uniform but you may choose to send your child in one of these dresses during hot weather if you wish



Please can we request that shoes do not have laces unless your child is confident tying the laces independently.



Reception Class Routine

Preparing your child for school

There are two really important things you can do to help your child to prepare for joining Reception. The first is to be able to recognise and write their own name (using a capital letter for the first letter only). Also it is important that your child is able to manage their own toileting and hygiene needs.

School starts at: 08.40am

Lunch break: 12.00 - 1.00pm

School ends at: 3.10pm

Morning drop-off

Children enter the school through the Reception classroom door which will open at 8.40am. We encourage the children to enter the classroom unaccompanied. The classroom door will close at 8.45am. If you arrive after this time, please see *what to do if you are late* below.

Afternoon pick up

Children are to be picked up at 3.10pm from the classroom door. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up your child you should inform the class teacher in the morning or ring the school office if there has been a last minute change. The teacher will not release your child into anyone's care without prior notification.

What to do if you are late

If you are late dropping your child to school, please bring them to the office where they will be signed in. If you are late picking your child up, please phone the school office and notify them as soon as you can.

What to bring to school

Please equip your child with a filled water bottle labelled with your child's name. Your child is allowed to bring small toys to school if they wish. Toys that are brought to school are the responsibility of your child and should be small. No electrical or precious items please.

Dropping things off

If you need to drop something off for your child during the day, please bring it to the school office and the office staff will make sure it is delivered to your child's classroom.

Keeping in Contact

There are lots of different ways in which we aim to develop clear and open communication between home and school:

ParentMail

ParentMail is sent by email to parents. This is sometimes to the whole school or individual classes. This is our preferred method of sending information to parents although we do often send paper copies. Please ensure that the office staff have your up to date, primary contact details.



ParentPay

ParentPay is our online payment service for lunches, trips, and all activities and events. A form will have been sent out with your application pack - **once your child has started at school you will be issued with an activation code and password.** This will enable you to book their school lunches - this needs to be done even though you will not pay for your child's lunch until they are in Year 3.



The School Facebook site.

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School with SHiP



This is a closed page for parents only and is for sharing and celebrating the achievements of our pupils as well as offering helpful tips and advice for our parents about school events. Our Facebook page exists in order to keep parents and families informed of activities and events taking place, as well as possible ways to support these. Our intention is to build a community which supports the school through a medium which is preferred by many. We expect that our families' online behaviour reflects the same standards of respect. It is not the forum in which to air concerns or grievances. Any issues that have caused you concern should be addressed in the first instance to your child's class teacher if it is a teaching and learning query or via the school office for all other matters. It is also NOT a selling site.

Newsletters

Regular school newsletters are sent out via email to all parents/carers. The newsletter contains information about current school events and plans for the weeks ahead.

Weekly Assemblies

Our special 'Celebration Assembly' is held on a Friday morning after drop off, all parents are welcome to attend. Children are able to bring any certificates or awards that they may receive out of school. Each class teacher also selects weekly 'Celebrating You' award. Classes take turns to lead these assemblies - they use this as an opportunity to share some of the work that they have been doing. The dates for these are on the school newsletter as well as the app.

Stay and Play Sessions

We have regular stay and play sessions where you are invited into the classroom to look at what your child has been learning and see the classroom and outdoor environment. This is a great opportunity for you to see your child at work. We try to show you some of the activities that your child is engaged with at school and give ideas and advice as to how you can best support them at home.



Food at School

Sacred Heart is acknowledged as a Healthy School. This is reflected in our Healthy Eating and Packed Lunch Policies, which we ask parents/carers to support. Details of these can be found on the school website.

Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)

Non-means tested free school meals have been available to children in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 since September 2014. This came into place under the Children and Families Act.

In England and Scotland, every child is entitled to free school meals for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 if they go to a state school. This applies regardless of household income, allowing all children in these years to receive a meal at school without charge.

Children in KS2 (Year 3 and above) may be entitled to free school meals if they are from a low-income family and/or their parents are entitled to certain benefits. For eligible children, the government contributes £2.50/day to schools in order to cover the expenses of their meals. This is part of the **Pupil Premium Grant** - further details of this can be found below.

You may of course still choose to provide your child with a packed lunch from home.

If you do elect for your child to have a school lunch, you will need to book these lunches using parent pay. We ask that you go through the menu options with your child to ensure that you are selecting something that you know they will eat and enjoy.

For the first week whilst you are waiting for your activation codes, we will issue you with a paper copy of the school menu for you to make your selections. The menu for each term can be found in the parent zone of the school website.

Free fruit is provided for every child up until the age of 7. All children are entitled to a **free school lunch until the end of Year 2**. A menu covering each term is available on the School App and Website.

Dietary sheets have already been sent out in your offer packs. Please can **all** parents complete this form stating whether your child has any special dietary requirements or allergies.

Pupil Premium Grant

The pupil premium is a government scheme that was introduced in 2011 to improve the education of underprivileged children

It's incredibly important that parents make us aware that their child is eligible for this as it will automatically allow the school to receive extra funding that will go towards the betterment of their child's education.

A child's family circumstances are taken into account when determining whether or not they qualify for free school meals. To be eligible, they must be receiving one or more of the following benefits:

- Income support



- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Support as a result of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (if a household is earning less than £7,400 per year)

It's also worth noting that if a child receives these benefits directly, rather than a parent or guardian, they are also entitled to free school meals. This can be the case if the child is in care or some form of guardianship programme.

Who qualifies for the pupil premium?

Children can be eligible for the pupil premium for a variety of reasons. These include their family circumstances, such as their income or occupations, and whether or not they're in care. If a child is eligible, a school will receive the necessary amount of funding for each child per school year. For a school to receive funding, they must have a pupil that falls into one of these categories:

- Primary schools receive £1345 for each pupil that is currently eligible for free school meals based on their family income.
- Primary schools receive £1345 for every pupil that has previously received free school meals based on their family income. Pupils are eligible for funding for six years since they last received a free school meal.
- All schools receive £2345 for every pupil that is currently in some form of care.
- All schools receive £2345 for every pupil that has previously been in some form of care and has since been adopted or placed into a child guardianship order.
- All schools will receive £310 for every pupil that has a parent currently serving in the armed forces, or receiving a pension from the Ministry of Defence.

If you think your child might qualify for the pupil premium grant, there is a short form to complete. The office staff will then check your eligibility and contact you with the outcome. Please contact Mrs Sue Riches, the School Business Manager for further details or advice.



Helping at School

Our school is successful due to the partnership between teachers and parents. If you would like to help in the classroom, please speak to the Class Teacher. We usually encourage a settling in period for your child before we ask parents to come in.



Parking

We do ask that you give consideration to our neighbours when delivering or collecting your children from school. Parking around the school is difficult so please take care. Parents operate an unofficial one-way system down Greys Hill to ease traffic congestion outside the school.

Parking Permits for Makins/Scout hut/Headway (opposite The Saracens Head) are available from the school office. You are allowed to park there between 08.30-9.00am and 2.45-3.30pm. We ask that when parking here that you park considerately.



Things Needed for School



A small backpack



Named lunch box if not having school lunches.



Named water bottle



Spare underwear and socks in case of accidents.

RE & Catholic Life

Catholic Life

As a Catholic school we foster attitudes that encourage the children to develop as responsible people, who are sincere, conscientious and honest, and whose lives reflect the Christian virtues. Religious Education is not considered purely as a subject on the time-table. The children are encouraged to 'live' their faith. This begins in Reception.

Father Paul Fitzpatrick visits the class every Friday afternoon to get to know the children and help support their spiritual growth.



Prayer plays an important part in the life of the school. The classroom environments promote prayer and reflection by including a prayer focus with liturgical icons, artefacts, symbols and prayers. These are used for daily worship. In all classroom environments, 'stillness' is encouraged at certain points of the day for communicating with God. Whole school prayers are taught throughout the year groups.



Pupils from Reception to Year Six have the opportunity to live out the traditions of our faith. All children are given the opportunity to lead worship through acts of worship within class and assemblies. They also take the lead across the school for our liturgical celebrations. The Saints feast days are marked (each class chooses their own class Saint each year) and the prayer life of the pupils is enhanced in many ways. An example of this is our annual Feast-day in June, a Mass involving the home, school, parish tri-partnership is celebrated as one community.

Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of Birmingham ensure that as part of their Catholic teachings Virtues are a key focus. These virtues show how pupils are growing in their faith, as well as how schools help children to grow. Every half term there is a different focus. Each half term the whole school will focus on one pair of words; we will spend time reflecting on the meaning of the words; how we see these virtues in action in our lives and in the lives of others and how we can work to encapsulate these virtues in our lives.

Work on the meaning of the words is carried out in class and in assemblies. The work of the children is celebrated and at the end of every term each teacher nominates a child in their class to receive the virtues and values award. More details about this can be found on the school website.

The children are encouraged to pray individually and collectively. There are class and key stage acts of worship. There is a programme of liturgical celebrations in school which follows the Church's year.

Parents are welcome to attend our whole school, key stage and class masses which are celebrated regularly both at school and at Church. Further up the school we prepare the children for the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The schools of the Archdiocese of Birmingham use the Diocese's own curriculum strategy from Foundation (Nursery) to Year 6 called 'Learning & Growing as the People of God.' (often referred to as the Strategy). The Strategy was written using the Learning Outcomes provided in the Bishops' Conference document the Curriculum Directory as a basis. Rather than produce a lesson by lesson scheme of work the Strategy provides teachers with a range of suggested cross-curricula activities which they can use and adapt to suit the needs of the learners in their class in order that their children achieve the learning outcomes. This flexibility also allows teachers to incorporate their own ideas, creativity and imagination into the delivery of the Strategy.

The Strategy is divided into a number of units, usually 12, which cover four main areas of study. It is through the construction of a spiral curriculum that children's knowledge and understanding is developed. The children learn about the Liturgical Seasons of the Church's year. They find out about the significance of each season, its particular signs and symbols and the different liturgies celebrated in each season. The children also study both Old Testament and New Testament Scripture in order to give them familiarity and knowledge of Scripture as well as allowing them to explore and understand how our Catholic beliefs are rooted in what Scripture reveals to us.

Other faiths are explored through assembly time where we learn about tolerance, mutual respect and tolerance. During focused themed weeks, children learn about other faiths celebrated across the world as well as in Britain. This strengthens our faith through understanding how others celebrate their faith.

Further details about the wider curriculum in Reception class is given at the end of this booklet. For information about the curriculum across the rest of the school, please visit the school website.



The Foundation Stage Curriculum

The Foundation Stage Curriculum is organised into seven areas of learning:

Three Prime Areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, Social and Emotional

And four specific areas

- Literacy
- Maths
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design



What children learn is important but **how** children learn is even more important. In the Reception curriculum, the commitment to focusing on the **how** children learn is referred to as the **Characteristics of Effective Learning (CoEL)**.

CoEL advocate that in planning and guiding children's activities, teachers must reflect on the **different ways** that children learn, and then reflect these in their practice. A child's individual learning characteristic will determine the way they respond to both the teaching and learning taking place in the environment.



Three characteristics of effective teaching and learning identified by the EYFS are:

Playing & exploring - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'

Active learning - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties and enjoy achievements

Creating & thinking critically - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas and develop strategies for doing things.

The focus of the CoEL is on how children learn rather than what they learn i.e. process over outcome. Underpinning the CoEL is the understanding that during their earliest years children form attitudes about learning that will last a lifetime. Children who receive the right sort of support and encouragement during these years will be creative and adventurous learners throughout their lives. Children who do not receive this sort of support and interaction are likely to have a much different attitude about learning later on in life. Hence, the supportive practitioner and the environment they provide, need to nurture these CoELs to occur, but without forgetting that children are individuals who bring their own needs, talents and histories to the learning environment.

Baseline Assessment

A reception baseline is an assessment of children's skills as they begin their reception year. The main areas of focus for the reception baseline assessment are personal, social, emotional development (PSED), literacy, communication and language, physical development, and maths skills. The purpose of the assessment is to provide the starting point for a new measure that will help parents understand how well schools support their pupils to progress between reception and year 6. We have issued a parents guide to the baseline assessment (also available on the school website) with this welcome pack should you wish to know more.



Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)

We will focus on helping the children to develop self-confidence and self-awareness and form positive relationships with adults and other children. The children will also develop their social skills and learn how to manage their feelings and behaviour and understand the needs and feelings of others.



Taking care of each other and their environment.



Taking turns and working and playing together in harmony.



Forming good relationships and working together to solve problems.

Literacy

Children will be encouraged to learn to read and write and develop a love of books. They will listen to stories and begin to read for themselves. The children will be encouraged to discuss their experiences and listen to those of others. They will learn through a structured phonics programme. They will investigate fiction and non-fiction texts and retell stories and narratives through role play. Writing materials and media will be available for the children to use each day and we will explore and provide opportunities to write for different purposes.



Children are encouraged to practise their handwriting in lots of ways.



The children are given lots of different opportunities to write for different purposes.



Phonics will be reinforced using a variety of activities.

Communication and Language

Children will be given opportunities to speak and listen in a range of situations. They will listen, follow instructions, ask and answer questions. Most importantly they will learn to express themselves effectively.



Exploring books with friends is always encouraged.



Learning through role play is always popular!



Communicating with friends.

Maths

We will provide the children with lots of hands on experiences, allowing them to measure, compare, sort, match, sequence and count. Through such first-hand experience, children will develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems. They will learn the names and properties of 2-D and 3-D shapes and look at measures such as length, weight and capacity. Money and data handling will also be explored.



Play provides endless opportunities for developing mathematical skills.



Over the year the children will learn some of the formal symbols used in maths.



Number recognition and ordering is encouraged in the indoor and outdoor environment.



Lots of practical activities to solve maths problems are always on offer.

Understanding the World

We will focus on the children developing knowledge and understanding of their environment including their families and communities and features of the natural and made world. Children will be encouraged to recognise features of living things, objects and events and to look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change. They will talk about their observations, sometimes recording them, and be encouraged to ask questions to gain information. ICT forms an integral part of this area of learning and the children will have the opportunity to use various forms of ICT on a daily basis. We will look closely at the key events in the life of Jesus and also celebrate all the important liturgical events of the Catholic Church. The children will learn prayers and take part in daily acts of worship.



Use of computers and other forms of ICT are encouraged on a daily basis.



RE aids the children's personal, social and emotional development.



Children are encouraged to use their senses to explore their environment.



Children are encouraged to explore equipment independently.²²

Expressive Arts and Design

We will enable the children to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials, as well as providing opportunities and encouragement for sharing their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of activities in art, music, movement, dance, role-play and design and technology.



Children have the opportunity to be creative using different media.



Creative development also lends itself well to developing fine motor



Role play encourages children to use their imagination as well as build on real life personal experiences.



Music is explored through many different areas such as during PE sessions and play.

Physical Development

This will focus on children's development of mobility, awareness of space, and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Children will be encouraged to move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination.



The children will develop their physical skills through structured PE sessions, as well as through play.

We focus on developing both large and fine motor skills.



This is part of the foundation stage curriculum!