



Welcome to St Thomas CE Primary School



Parents Guide to EYFS

We would like to give you and your child a warm welcome to **St Thomas CE Primary School.**

We are very much looking forward to sharing your child's learning journey and delighting in their achievements and successes with you.





Your child is in the Early Years Foundation Stage of their education, this is the stage that they are in from birth until they are five years old. We teach Reception children in accordance with the statutory framework of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

At St Thomas Primary School, our Foundation Stage consists of two thirty place Reception classes. Our Early Years team consists of two teachers and support staff who work together to create a fantastic learning environment, indoors and outdoors, where your children can learn through play and exploration. The children have a class base where they receive daily group teaching sessions with their class teacher, including Maths, Phonics and writing, and they also have the opportunity to mix and play together during the day.

- Mrs Littlewood - Early Years Leader/Reception Teacher
- Mrs Dalby - Reception Teacher
- Mrs Wilson - EYFS Support / HLTA
- Mrs Hayes - EYFS Support
- Miss Harrison - EYFS Support





Our School Curriculum

At St Thomas Primary School we are committed to providing a broad, balanced, inclusive and challenging curriculum which promotes and develops a love of learning. Our curriculum is designed to be relevant and to match the abilities, interests and aspirations of our pupils, which in turn, gives every pupil the opportunity to flourish and learn. We teach children through well planned half-termly topics, which include; Me and My Community, Once Upon a Time, Starry Night, Dangerous Dinosaurs, Sunshine and Sunflowers and Big Wide World You can find further information about these topics by visiting our school website.

Our St Thomas vision of, '**From Tiny Seeds, Grow Mighty Trees**' is the foundation of our belief that our pupils can strive for excellence and be ready for their next stage of learning.





What will my child learn in the Foundation Stage?

There are seven areas within the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. These consist of **three prime areas** and **four specific areas**.

Prime Areas of Learning

These are fundamental and essential for children to move forward in the Specific Areas of Learning.

- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**– *Self Regulation, Managing Self and Building Relationships*
- **Communication and Language**– *Listening, Attention and Understanding, Speaking*
- **Physical Development**– *Gross and Fine Motor Skills*

Specific Areas of Learning

These areas teach essential skills children will need in life.

- **Literacy** - *Word Reading, Writing, Comprehension*
- **Mathematics** - *Numbers and Numerical Patterns*
- **Understanding of the World** - *Past and Present, People, Culture and Communities, The Natural World*
- **Expressive Arts and Design** - *Creating with Materials, Being Imaginative and Expressive.*



At St Thomas Primary School, we very much believe that children learn through play and to ensure this we organise the Reception classes and outdoor learning space into areas of provision.. These areas consist of:

- Sand Play
- Water Play
- Writing Area
- Maths Area
- Small/Large Construction
- Role Play e.g. Home Corner, Hospital
- Creative Area
- Fine Motor Area/ busy board
- Malleable Area
- Curiosity / Investigation Area
- Book Corner
- Junk Modelling
- Physical Play e.g. tricycles, bikes, bats and balls, climbing, crates, wooden planks etc.
- Music Station
- Growing Area for flowers/ vegetables.

Areas of provision are then enhanced on a regular basis dependent upon children's needs or interests.



Children can move freely between the indoor and the outdoor areas and can access all of these areas of provision. Some children naturally prefer to learn in the outdoors and therefore we ensure that children have opportunities both indoors and outdoors.

Children are encouraged to find out and explore, be willing to have a go, keep trying, have their own ideas and choose ways to do things. These are called the characteristics of effective learning. Children are then supported by adults who interact and observe their play. All adults in the setting are aware of each individual child's next steps.

Practitioners teach children by ensuring challenging, playful opportunities across the prime and specific areas of learning and development. Play is an essential part of their learning and development and we ensure that the environment enables and supports their play.

We use an online platform called Seesaw. We record your child's learning on here in the form of photos or videos. You will be given your own personal login so that you can see what your child has done and make your own comments. You can also upload your own photographs and observations at home which can contribute to your child's learning journey. Children will also have homework activities posted to Seesaw. We also use Class Dojo to record our weekly news so you can see what we have done each week. Please keep an eye out on both platforms.





Absence Procedure

It is compulsory for children to attend school every day. The school day begins at 8:40am and children are expected to arrive promptly. The gate to the playground and the classroom doors are closed at 8:50am. If your child arrives after this time, you will need to sign them in at the main school reception and they will receive a late mark. In the event of illness, please contact the school office by 9:30am at the latest by telephoning **01484 226557** or by emailing **parents@stthomas.org.uk**. We will try to contact you by 10:00am if you have not informed us of the reason for your child's absence. If there is no reply, a member of staff will carry out a home visit. Any absences for which we do not receive a satisfactory explanation are marked as unauthorised. Holidays should not be taken during school term time.

We ask that appointments for doctors, dentists etc are made before or after school or during school holidays. We do understand that, on some occasions, you might need to attend an emergency appointment and that hospital appointments are pre booked. Please inform the school office of any appointments at the earliest opportunity and provide a copy of any letter/text/email so that we can authorise the absence. If your child has a morning appointment and is returning for their lunch, please remember that school meals need to be pre-ordered by 9:30am.

Sometimes children feel unwell when they wake up but after a spoonful of Calpol or similar, they will quickly feel well enough to come into school. Please endeavour to bring your child in, inform a member of staff and we will keep an eye on them over the day and if necessary we will contact you to arrange for them to be collected.



What should my child wear to Reception?

Children will be actively encouraged to learn indoors and outdoors and will need appropriate clothing at different times of year. Your children will no doubt get dirty - this is the sign of a good, productive day! Please ensure your child has a warm, waterproof coat all year round. All children will need to be in full school uniform daily, except on PE days where they come to school in the PE uniform (pictures in the children's guide). They will wear a t-shirt of their house colour - please don't buy a t-shirt until you have been advised which house your child is in. We will let you know PE days in September.

Children are taught to be independent and therefore need to practice dressing and undressing at home; this includes things like zipping and unzipping coats, putting on socks, shoes, gloves etc.

Please make sure that your child's name is clearly labelled on all of their clothing (especially coats and jumpers) and in their footwear. Each year we have lots of uniform that goes missing and we cannot reunite lost property with its owner unless it is named. We do not advise using pen as even permanent marker washes off in time but if you do use this please check clothing after every wash to make sure your child's name is still visible.





Lunchtime

EYFS lunchtime is 11:30-12:15pm. Children are supervised by staff but we do encourage them to become independent. Practice at home to use a knife and fork will really help them when they start school. Each day children choose their meal on the smart board. We will send home a copy of the school menu and we encourage you to talk to your child about their meal choices. If your child prefers to bring a packed lunch from home, that is fine, we just ask that it is a healthy, balanced lunch and please note that we are a nut free school.

School Milk & Daily Snack

Milk is provided free of charge for under-5s (until the end of the week before their fifth birthday) after this parents can order and pay for milk from our provider Cool Milk (<https://www.coolmilk.com/>). We recommend all parents register with Cool Milk at the beginning of the year and they will then receive a reminder when their child's free milk entitlement is coming to an end and details of how to pay if they wish to do so.

A fruit snack is provided daily free of charge. We ask for a voluntary contribution of £1 a week to help us provide enhanced resources.

Free School Meals & Milk to Year 6 - Statutory FSM (means-tested)

If you are on a low income and in receipt of certain benefits, your child may be entitled to Statutory Free School Meals, which also includes free school milk. Schools receive extra funding (pupil premium) for every child who is entitled to Statutory Free School Meals so please support us by registering even if your child will be having packed lunches. For further details, or for help with applications, please contact the school office.

Free School Meals to Year 2 - Universal Infant FSM

Children in Reception (and Years 1&2) who are not eligible for Statutory FSM receive free meals under a different scheme called Universal Infant FSM, no application is required but this does not include free milk.



School Library

We actively encourage and foster children's interest in books. Listening to and joining in with stories is an essential part of developing children's listening and reading skills. Children can find out about the world around them through books.

Each child will visit the school library every week and choose their own book to share at home. These books will be changed every Friday. We ask that you take care of our library books as they are used by the whole school. We do have to ask for a contribution towards the cost of replacing any books that are lost or damaged.

Home-time Procedure

We have a strict home-time procedure that is designed to keep your child safe.

Children are collected from their classroom door at 3:10pm.

We ask that if you are running late you contact school so that we can reassure your child.

If you cannot collect your child, you must inform us who will be collecting them instead. We will not let your child go home with a relative or friend if we have not met them before or if we haven't been informed. This can often cause a lot of distress to the relative or friend collecting and the child who is waiting to go home. Therefore, we ask that you inform us when your child arrives so that we can allow your child to go home safely.



Tips before my child starts school

- Look through the child's welcome booklet and photographs of your child's new classroom and teachers.
- Talk with your child and discuss how they are feeling about starting school. You could make a worry box and write down their feelings to help overcome feelings of anxiety or uncertainty.
- Look at the school website.
- Attend our Stay & Play sessions. Your child's class teacher will also visit them in their nursery or home setting.
- Encourage increasing independence when getting dressed and undressed such as putting on their coat, socks and shoes by themselves. Support them to put their uniform on with growing independence.
- Support your child getting used to bedtime and morning routines towards the end of the summer holidays so that they get used to going to bed early and waking up early ready for school. It is really important that children get lots of sleep as you will notice a difference when they begin school - they will be tired at the end of their day
- Support and prepare your child for eating their lunch at school by encouraging them to try different foods at home. Teach them how to use a knife and fork as this is what is expected at school.
- If you need any early help or to self refer, please visit this website: https://homestart-kirklees.org.uk/get-support/#support_about



We hope that this booklet provides you with all of the answers to your questions that will enable your child to have a smooth and successful transition into our Reception Classes. We also value the importance of building positive relationships with parents and carers and we operate an open-door policy where staff are available, friendly and approachable. You will receive a weekly update and a half-termly newsletter on class dojo and we also have our own class page on the school website. If you have any further questions that we have been unable to answer, please feel free to contact the school office by email or phone.

01484 226557

www.stthomas.org.uk

reception@stthomas.org.uk (*classroom & curriculum queries*)

parents@stthomas.org.uk (*absence, milk, dinners, other enquiries*)

