

The Early Years  
at  
St Matthias  
Church of England  
Primary School





## Welcome to our Early Years!

### Our Aims

At St Matthias we aim to provide a safe, happy and enabling environment for learning where caring staff work alongside parents in supporting each child to develop to their full potential. We believe that children learn through play and practical exploration and we aim to provide exciting learning opportunities tailored to match the particular interests and needs of the children within the group. We aim to promote effective communication skills, positive relationships and the confidence to think creatively.

We value each child as a unique individual with their own particular collection of abilities, learning styles and interests and we hope that each child will enjoy their time in our nursery and leave feeling assured of their own self worth and with enthusiasm for learning.



### Our Early Years

We are fortunate to have a large, light and spacious Early Years unit, complete with kitchen and toilet facilities and a safely enclosed outdoor learning area complete with a garden and all weather shelter. In addition, the nursery children regularly make use of other school facilities, such as the hall for movement work, the field and the computer suite.

### **Nursery Funding**

Please note that under government rules introduced in 2011, every child is entitled to fifteen hours per week of nursery provision without any cost from the start of the term after their third birthday. Some younger children are also entitled to fifteen hours free nursery

education based on family income. If a child attends another nursery setting in addition to St Matthias, their funding will be split between both settings and parents may be asked to pay at both settings for any additional time used beyond fifteen hours per week.

In September 2017 the government introduced new 30 hours per week funding for 3 and 4 year olds. You, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £120 a week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage). If you, or your partner, are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you're unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible.

You can't get 30 hours free childcare if you, or your partner, expect to earn £100,000 or more.

### **Nursery Session Times**

Nursery sessions are held every week day during the school term time.

The morning sessions start at 9.00am each morning and end at 12.00pm.

The afternoon sessions start at 12.00pm and finish at 3.00pm.

Your child can stay for the whole day (9am-3pm) if you are entitled to 30hours childcare or if you want to pay for extra sessions.

**Nursery Lunch will be taken at 12.10pm.** Children staying over the lunch period have the option to bring their own packed lunch or to have a hot school meal for £2.30.

Our Nursery children are welcome to attend extra nursery sessions at a charge of £13.50 which must be paid in advance for a three hour session. The extra sessions required must be booked with as much notice as possible and this will be subject to availability. This is to ensure that we have the correct child:staff ratios in place.

Our Nursery children are also able to utilise our Whizz Kids After School Care from 3.00pm until 5.30pm at a cost of £4 per hour.

We would prefer that children feel settled in nursery before you start using Whizz Kids.



### Parents and Early Years Staff as Partners

Young children are constantly learning, through their experiences, their relationships and their opportunities for play, so learning of early skills takes place both at home and in nursery. Parents can share with us information about their child such as any health needs, any areas of concern, particular strengths and favourite activities.



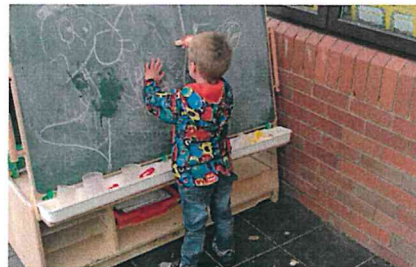
Early Years staff are normally available at the beginning or end of every nursery session and appointments can always be made for longer conversations.

Parent consultation meetings are also held twice during the year for children in the nursery class, to discuss each child's development.

We are always keen to hear from any parents who are willing to contribute to the learning experiences on offer. Details of Early Years topics and themes will be given in newsletters; please let us know if you have any particular interests or expertise.

Book boxes are available at the start and finish of nursery sessions so that staff can help their child to choose books to borrow from nursery to read at home.

During the year there are various events organised when parents are especially welcome to play alongside their child in the nursery or to join the group for story times or outings.



### Settling In

We recognise that some children will be happy to come straight into nursery and play independently. However, we realise that starting nursery may be a new experience for some children and that initially, they may find it difficult. Separating from family can be a little daunting for some children, so we offer flexible arrangements to suit individual families; but we find that our nursery children quickly grow in confidence and are soon ready to come into nursery independently.



### Our Curriculum

A key aspect of our curriculum is fostering behaviours that will help the children in all their future learning such as, being prepared to try new activities, being confident to review their learning and explore creative strategies to achieve their goals, looking and listening carefully, working with others, maintaining their concentration and persevering. In addition to these



**“Characteristics of effective learning”**, there are three prime areas and four specific areas of development.



Developing friendships, working cooperatively, sharing resources, recognising feelings and expressing them appropriately and showing respect for others are all aspects of **“Personal, social and emotional development”** which are promoted throughout all the nursery sessions.



Another prime area of development is “**Communication and language**”, the children are encouraged to develop good listening skills, to expand their vocabulary and to use talk to communicate effectively with both other children and adults within the nursery. The other prime area of development is

**“Physical**

**development”** and each child is encouraged to develop the skills needed to move confidently, safely and to use simple tools including scissors and writing materials. The children are also encouraged to develop their

Specific areas of development include **Literacy and Maths**. During their time in the nursery, the children will encounter a wide range of stories both traditional and new, sometimes read aloud supported by pictures, sometimes told using puppets and toys, sometimes acted out with masks or props and sometimes supported by videos and animations. The children are encouraged to enjoy remembering and retelling stories and to create their own stories. The children typically spend a few minutes each day developing their listening skills and learning to hear the sounds within words. They are encouraged to recognise familiar written words such as, their names and signs around the room and they have lots of opportunities to explore mark-making themselves using a variety of materials including pens, pencils, sand, foam and paint. This is the style of letter formation that nursery staff will model for the children:-

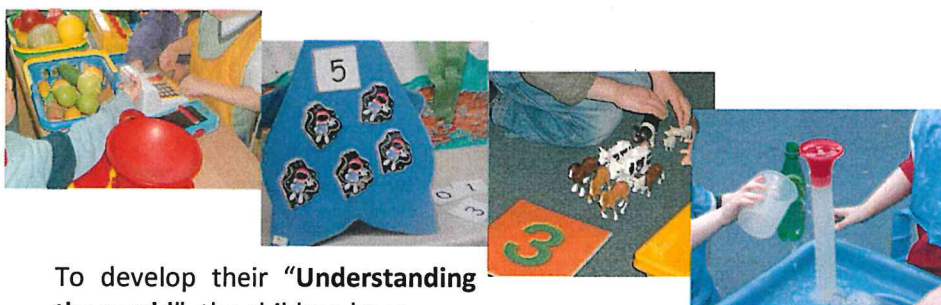


a b c d e f g h i j k l m  
n o p q r s t u v w x y z

(Our font is NTPrecursive fk)



The children in the Early Years are given encouragement to sort and group objects, to join in with counting songs, to record quantities by making marks (for example, tally marks on a scoreboard) and to use real objects to solve simple number problems such as, "How many will there be if we add one more/take one away?" all of which support the children in their development of mathematical understanding. The children are also encouraged to explore shapes, sizes and patterns through picture making and model building and to compare weight and capacity during their play with sand, water and other materials.



To develop their "**Understanding the world**", the children have

opportunities to experiment and explore resources such as, magnets and mirrors, to grow plants and to look closely and compare items such as shells and tiny creatures. The children are also encouraged to consider their own environment and other places, to develop their understanding of time and recall special events and to learn about special events for others. Children in the nursery also become familiar with age appropriate ICT resources including the operation of devices such as cameras, CD players, torches, microphones, computers, mini-robots and the interactive whiteboard.

The other specific area of our curriculum is "**Expressive arts and design**" where the children are encouraged to represent their ideas through pictures, model making, music creation, dance and imaginative play.







### Outdoor Learning

All of the children are encouraged to have some time being active playing out doors every day. Learning outside is important for all areas of our curriculum and a wide variety of activities take place outside, for example, hunting for letters, counting real things, pretend play, looking carefully at nature, messy play and group problem solving activities as well as physical activities such as throwing and catching , balancing or riding tricycles. We aim to spend some time outside during every session (unless the weather conditions are actually dangerous) so appropriate clothing and footwear are very important. A wide variety of open ended resources are provided to support the children in developing creative and problem solving skills.



### Snack Time

Part way through the session, the children stop and talk about what they have been doing and then sit together at the tables for a brief rest and a light snack. (Fresh drinking water is always available throughout the day). All the nursery children are entitled to a drink of milk and a piece of fruit each day free of charge. We also like to offer every child a piece of toast when they come into school in the morning. Please let us know of any foods that your child should not be offered because of allergies etc.

### What should my child bring into school?

We accept that occasionally children may want to bring something to show to their friends and that some children are reassured by bringing a familiar item from home in with them. If things are brought in to nursery we aim to find a safe place to put them until home time. During nursery sessions the children only play with nursery resources which are shared equally by all the children.



### What if my child is ill?

If your child starts to feel poorly at nursery we will contact you.

It is always helpful if you are able to let us know if your child is unwell and will not be at nursery. Please consider other families and keep children who have an illness that could be contagious at home until they are well again.

After any episode of sickness or diarrhoea a child must remain at home until they have eaten and remained well for 48 hours.

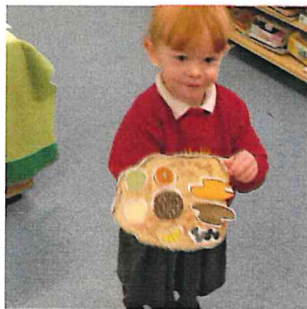
If antibiotics are given for any illness we ask that children rest at home for the first 48 hours to allow the medicine to take effect.



### What should children wear to nursery?

Children should wear comfortable play clothes that are easy for them to manage on their own when getting ready to go outside or when using the toilet. Although aprons are provided for “messy” activities, such as painting, accidents can happen so clothes that are easily washed and fairly robust for active play are best.

Some parents may find school uniform to be a smart, practical and economical choice and an optional St Matthias Nursery sweatshirt is available from School Togs in Church Street, Great Malvern. They can wear our sweat shirt with their own jeans or skirts.



Children should wear sensible, well fitting shoes suitable for outdoor activities. Ideally, children should bring “wellies” to wear for outdoor play when the grass is wet or muddy. Open toe sandals should NOT be worn in case of injury to their toes.

We are happy to store a spare set of clothes for each child in case of over enthusiastic water play, muddy puddles or similar.

For safety reasons we ask that children do NOT wear any jewellery.

As we play outside for part of every session, all children will need a suitable coat and warm clothing in winter and during the summer months, a sun hat. The children are able to wear nursery waterproof trousers and coats during outdoor play.

Every child has a named peg where they can safely put coats etc.. Please label ALL clothing children are likely to remove, such as; jumpers, coats, shoes, wellies, gloves and hats.

Although the nursery children do have PE lessons in the school hall, separate PE kit is not needed as the children will take off jumpers or cardigans and will work in bare feet.





### **The Early Years Sessions**

Children should come in to nursery through the door to our outside area (next to the Key Stage 1 playground) where there will be a member of staff waiting to greet them. Once the children have hung up their coats and put their name on the "Who is here today?" board, they are able to choose from a variety of play activities or choose to have some toast.

Next, the children sit together in a circle to greet one another and to take part in a brief group learning activity that may involve a story, songs, counting, recognising sounds or a discussion. There are some mornings when all of the children move to the school hall or the field in order to engage in particular activities.

The children then have time to explore a wide variety of indoor and outdoor learning activities and during this time the doors will be open to the Reception side of the Early Years Unit so that more learning opportunities are accessible. For example imaginative role play, model making, sand and water play, messy play and investigative play. Staff are on hand to guide and support the children as they play and learn.



### The Nursery Lunchtime

The nursery lunch time will run from 12.20pm to 1.00pm. If your child is in school for the whole day then hot or packed lunches are available- from Black Pepper are £2.30 per day. If they prefer you can send your child in with a healthy packed lunch and drink. No fizzy drinks or glass bottles are permitted. After eating lunch in the classroom there will be a short playtime.



### Home Times

After our story or a song time we encourage the children to gather their coats and other belongings. We ask parents to use the second gate from the Malvern Link to St Matthias Church footpath when returning to collect children at the end of the nursery morning session. The gate will be unlocked by a member of staff at the end of the morning to allow parents and carers to come into the Foundation Stage outdoor area. At 12.00pm or 3.00pm, after our "Goodbye" song, we will escort children out individually as we see the person collecting them.

At the start of the year we will ask parents who is authorised to collect their child. **We will only release your child to those people you have named unless you notify us of any change or exceptions.**

Please ensure that you arrive promptly to collect your child at 12.00pm or 3.00pm as the gate to the footpath will be locked again shortly afterwards to ensure the safety of older children playing outside at lunch time and in after school clubs.



### After Nursery

During the autumn term we will supply you with a leaflet from Worcestershire County Council which informs you how to apply online for a primary school place for your child. Most families who attend our nursery decide to choose St Matthias as their child's first school. It is Worcestershire County Council who decide which children are allocated to our school. Please read our admission policy if you are unsure how children are selected for school. The nursery and reception children share the outdoor learning area and classroom space during our free-flow learning time and staff and children from both classes regularly work together making the transition from one room to the next a very natural and easy "next step".





### **Early Years Staff**

Mr Salmon - Early Years Manager, Teacher & Early  
Years Designated Safeguarding Lead

Mrs Taylor - HLTA

Mrs Lester - Teaching Assistant

Mrs Allen - Teaching Assistant

### **To contact us**

If you have any further queries please ask.

Our school telephone number is 01684 574984

(Office staff will take messages for the Early Years)

Our email address is:- [admin@stmatthias.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stmatthias.worcs.sch.uk)

Our postal address is:-

The Nursery  
St. Matthias C of E Primary School  
Cromwell Road  
Malvern Link  
Worcestershire  
WR14 1NA.



We look forward to working with you to share in the exciting task of nurturing your child's development. We are committed to providing a safe, happy and stimulating learning environment for your child.

