

St. Christopher's CE Primary School

St Christopher's CE Primary School Vision Statement

'Our vision is for every child to reach their full potential within a stimulating, healthy and safe environment.

'We will ensure that every child has the skills to grow into a confident and happy adult through the guidance of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.'

St Christopher's CE Primary School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We welcome applications from all members of the community without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith, but we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school.



Parent/Adult Helpers Support Booklet

The first thing to say is how much we value and appreciate the help of parents at St Christopher's School. Parents are one of the biggest groups of people who give freely of their time to help the school deliver to the pupils an education of the highest standard.

We try to ensure that at all times you are engaged in activities that are meaningful and appropriate and that you are fully aware of the school's expectations. We would like you to feel confident about helping and we realise that you may have many questions to ask. We will be happy to give you any guidance you require.

Helpers play a vital part in our school life and enable us to provide an enriched curriculum for the children. The list below details some of the areas in which we invite parents to help: -

Reading	Swimming
Sports	Clubs
Sewing	School trips and visits
Cookery	Art, Craft and Technology

In order to ensure that adults helping in school do so in a safe environment we ask them to be aware of the following:

- We have to follow very careful guidelines on aspects of physical contact with children.
 - Please remember not to initiate contact with children - let them take the lead but discourage over-familiarity.
 - Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.
 - If a child asks to go to the toilet, refer them to the class teacher rather than take them yourself.
 - If you are asked to help supervise changing for PE or swimming, encourage the child to do as much as possible for themselves. Do not physically help unless another adult is in the room.
 - No adult in school is permitted to remove or insert earrings.
- We have well defined procedures for informing parents of what has happened whilst the children are in school and we will be the first to discuss any issues where we have concerns. Please do not be tempted to relay anything you have seen or heard in a classroom to other parents. We need to be assured that you will exercise total discretion in all respects when you are helping in school. Helping in the classroom means you are privy to "inside information", especially when staff are talking together. Please exercise the utmost discretion in all respects.

Draw the children's attention to conservation and the need to preserve our heritage for others to enjoy.

If you are finding answers to a questionnaire, read through all of the questions first with the children. Check that everyone knows what to find out.

If you are working as a group, or dividing up the questions, don't give the answers away too quickly, but point the children in the right direction if they are struggling.

How are you recording the answers – in notes, diagrams, photographs?
Let the children decide which one does the job best.

If you are looking round a museum or art gallery, make sure that each child can see the exhibits and can read the information provided. Encourage the children to stay, look carefully and find out as much as they can, before moving on to the next exhibit. In a large room of exhibits steer them towards the ones that are most likely to provide them with the learning opportunities the teacher has planned.

To Sum Up

Children learn many things from visits, and not just 'school work'. They learn how to behave in public places, how to speak to a range of adults and how to take some personal responsibility for themselves and their belongings.

We thank you for making this visit possible for these children. Have a wonderful time!

- If a child does or tells you something that causes you concern you must tell the class teacher or Headteacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.
- Arrange your time in the classroom with the teacher in advance - it is helpful if you can also agree what you feel able to help with (there are lots of ways we can use your expertise to support the children's learning). If you are unsure of what you have been asked to do, please check immediately - either with the teacher or the teaching assistant.
- You should never be left in the classroom on your own with a large group of children. If you have been DBS checked you may be asked to work with a small group or an individual child outside the classroom.
- Children will sometimes "push the boundaries" with a parent/adult helper. If a little reminder does not elicit an immediate improvement, please refer to the teacher.
- Whilst you are in the classroom you will sometimes see a child disciplined. However sorry you feel for them, please do not give them any comfort or support. You will not always be aware of what has happened previously or the warnings they have been given.
- If you have concerns at any time about the way a child has been treated or any aspect of classroom practice, please raise the issue immediately with the headteacher.
- Occasionally children become a little unsettled when their parents are working with other children in the classroom. Most children soon get used to their parent helping in class and settle down after a few weeks. If this does not happen we may ask you to help in a different class for a while. This is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. It is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all of the children and that he/she will not always be able to work with you.
- Please encourage the children to be independent - we expect children to try everything themselves before we help them.
- The welfare of the children is paramount so in the unlikely event that the policy/guidelines are not followed or that other concerns are raised and substantiated the school reserves the right, following discussions, to prevent further voluntary work at the school.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Helpers are subject to the school's Health & Safety regulations and are welcome to read the Health & Safety Policy and Emergency plan. First Aid must only be carried out by a qualified member of staff. In school there are very firm guidelines about what can be given to or done for children and who is entitled to do it.

SECURITY

For security reasons, please use the front door and sign yourself 'In' (and later, when you leave, 'Out') in the signing in folder in the office. This enables us to know who is on the premises in case of fire or other emergency. We will issue you with a 'Volunteer' badge. Please wear it where it can be seen, as it shows that you are authorised to be in the building.

FIRE PROCEDURES

The fire alarm is a continuously ringing bell. When it sounds, the teacher will lead the children from the room in silence through the designated exit. If you are working with a small group in another part of the school, make sure that all the children are there, and then take them out by the nearest fire exit and into the playground. Do not let them go back to their classroom for personal belongings. Take the children to join the rest of their class and tell the teacher that you are there.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Adult helpers are welcomed into the staff room at break times to enjoy a drink and a chance to relax, but we do ask everyone to be aware that items of a confidential nature are sometimes discussed there and to exercise discretion. We also ask that confidentiality be maintained in respect of children's:

- attainments
- attitudes
- behaviour

whilst operating in school as a helper. Any matter of concern should be discussed with the headteacher immediately in order for any misunderstandings or difficulties to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

care.

Make sure that you know if any children have medical conditions. First Aid must only be carried out by a qualified member of staff. In school there are very firm guidelines about what can be given to or done for children and who is entitled to do it. Keep to these rules or you could be put in a compromising position.

Count the children whenever you enter a new area and again as you leave it. You cannot count them too often!

On the journey, sit near the children in your group. Make sure that seat belts are secure and that the children stay in their seats for the whole of the journey. Make sure that the children's bags are stowed safely, and are not blocking the aisles. Talk to the children about what they can see on the journey. Count your group each time you get on to the coach, and again just before you leave it. Remind children to leave the coach sensibly and to stand at the side of the vehicle and wait for you. They should never cross the road or move in front of or behind the coach without your direct instruction and supervision.

During the visit, ensure that you keep to meeting times and place agreed with the teacher and other adults.

It is your responsibility to maintain discipline among your group. Make sure you know what the rules are and that the children follow them. Alert the teacher immediately if you are having difficulties with the behaviour of any child. Speak to the teacher in advance if your own child is in the class and you have any concerns about which group they are in for the trip.

Should children need the toilet then escort them, whole group if no one is around to look after those not needing the toilet, to the toilets. Stay outside the toilets counting the children as they go into the toilets and on the way out.

If you have a concern about risk in an activity raise it with the teacher immediately.

Learning opportunities

Visits provide children with exciting, first-hand experiences from which to learn. Encourage children to explore, think and ask questions and to make the most of your undivided attention. Make sure that you have any necessary equipment to carry out the activities, and that you know how to use it.

Helping on a school trip

Before the visit

The teacher leading the visit will send you some information about the place/s you will be going to and what she wants the children to learn during their visit.

Taking a group of schoolchildren on a visit is not the same as taking your own children out. There will be some things the children are not allowed to do. The leader of the visit will have assessed the risks involved in particular activities against strict guidelines and decided which things are safe and which are not. You will be shown a copy of the risk assessment to read, ask and questions and sign. Please keep to these rules.

On the day

You will need to think about

- your own belongings
- the children's belongings
- the health and safety of the group of children in your care
- supervise learning opportunities organised by the trip leader for each of the children in your group
- react to opportunities to build upon the planned learning opportunities through questioning.

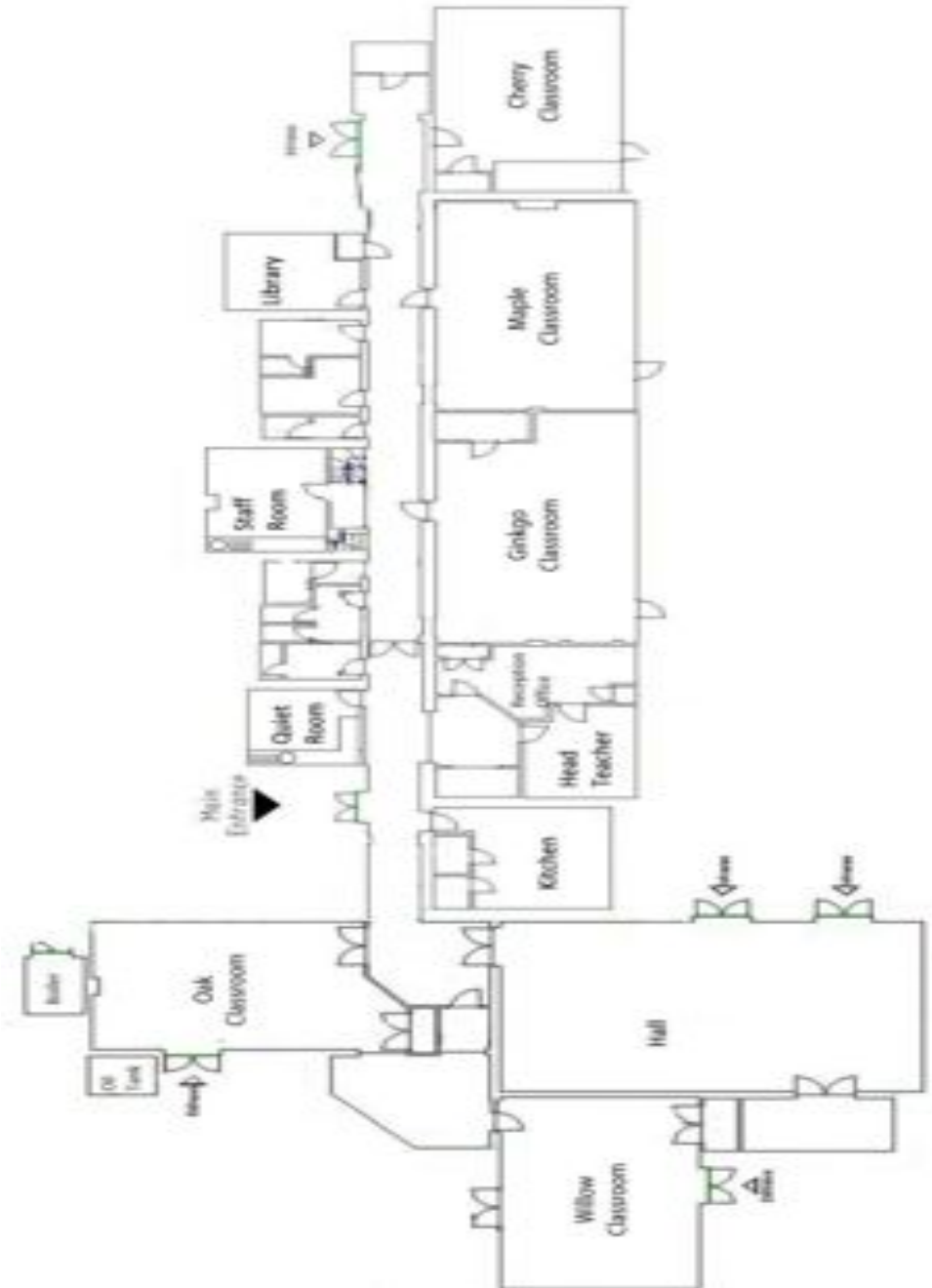
Your own belongings

Wear appropriate clothing and carry spares, if appropriate, wet weather gear. You are representing the school, so please observe any school rules such as no smoking. Wear things which will stand up to the rigours of the day – this can include dealing with accidents or looking after a child who is sick on the bus. First Aid must only be carried out by a member of staff. Something that is easily recognisable by the children in your group can also be helpful.

Health and safety

The health and safety of the whole group is the responsibility of the teacher, but you must take responsibility in the first instance for the group of children in your

Map of the School



Reading – tips when sharing a book with a child

Overview

Reading is probably the most important skill that a child will learn in primary school. It opens up a whole new world of learning and imagination. The more they are helped the easier they will find it to develop this vital skill.

What to do if a child gets stuck on a word

- Encourage the child to find clues in the pictures as to the meanings of words.
- Suggest that he reads to the end of the sentence if a word is unclear – this might help with the meaning of the word. Ask the child ‘what word would make sense there?’ And encourage guessing.
- If the child gets really stuck on a word, you could give them the first sounds to help him. Break the word down into smaller parts (syllables) if that helps.
- Read the word for them if that helps the flow.

Do

- Read along with the child if they are nervous
- Praise the child for getting a word right
- Aim to make the reading experience fun.

Guidelines for sharing a book with a younger child

- Ask the child the title of the book.
- Can the child tell you something about the story – before they begin to read?
- Ask the child to point to each word as they follow the text.
- Encourage the child to work out words for themselves – or even just the beginning sound.
- Encourage the child to use picture clues with their reading.
- If they finish the book they are reading – play a game. “Find the Word” ask them to find random words in book, eg she, went etc. or go through word cards by making it into a game (ask class teacher for ideas).

After the session

When the children have left the lesson, feed back any information to the teacher about the activity, behaviour or children who found it difficult.

To Sum Up

As you work with groups of children you will discover simple but effective ways of dealing with the exuberance of children. Think about what went well and what you did to make this happen, then you can use this method again. Children respond well when they are shown respect for their effort and their ideas, and when they know that they are valued. Ask the class teacher for ideas and help if you are concerned about anything and also if you are unsure about any school rules and routines.

It is well known that children work better and achieve more when they have the attention of an interested adult. Thank you for being there for the children.

Taking a group out of the room

If you are taking a group of children out of the classroom you must focus on good behaviour. The teacher will let you know what is expected. You should remind children of the accepted behaviour before you set off and insist on it at all times.

Using computers

Ask the teacher to make it clear which programs the children are going to be working on. If you would like to have time to learn more about these programs speak to the class teacher or ICT Leader in Learning.

There will be rules in the school about use of the Internet. If you are using it, remind the children of these rules before they begin and keep watching what they are doing and what websites they are accessing.

Working with younger children

Some important skills, which younger children need to develop are those of speaking and listening.

Some children have not had the opportunity to spend time with an adult who will

- encourage them to express their ideas
- listen to them
- respond to them in a supportive way.

There is a great need for adults who can

- help children to develop a conversation
- help children to find the best word to express what they are trying to say
- encourage reluctant speakers.

Other children need to learn how to listen, to let others have their turn, to be polite when responding and to give value to everyone's contribution.

Whenever you work with a group of young children think about these skills and try to use any opportunities to develop them.

- If a child reads a book easily ask them to tell the story in their own words or to think of a different ending.
- For children with longer texts – read part of the book and ask the child to tell the rest of the story in their own words.
- Write a constructive comment in reading diary – eg X was able to recognise words at random today, X was able to recognise initial sounds.
- Some children may only be looking at picture books – so encourage them to talk about what is happening in the pictures.
- If sharing a familiar story eg Goldilocks and the Three Bears, encourage children to join in repeated phrases.

Guidelines for sharing a book with older children

- Discuss about the book and ask the title.
- Can the child tell you the author or find the name of the author?
- If the child is well into the story can they tell you about the main character (s)?
- Can they tell you what has happened so far in the story?
- Can they predict what might happen next?
- After reading can they answer questions on what has been read?
- Do they understand the message in the story?
- Encourage child to work out new words – breaking down into phonemes (sounds).
- Have a dictionary at hand and encourage child to write down and look up maybe two new words as this will help extend vocabulary.
- If they finish the book they are reading, ask if they enjoyed it/which bit they most enjoyed. Ask them what was their favourite section? Why? If they did not enjoy it – encourage them to say why?

Working with a small group

Overview

Here are some tips to help you when you are working with a small group of children.

Before the session starts

Find out from the teacher where she wants you to work, who will be in your group, what the children will be doing and how long the session should last.

The teacher will expect you to maintain control of the group

They will let you know of any child in the group who may need a particular approach and give you advice on how to handle them. If you are struggling, ask them for help.

The teacher will expect the children to work quietly and sensibly

This will vary slightly according to the age of the children and type of activity you are doing with them. Younger children tend to make more noise simply because they still read aloud and need to talk about the work they are doing. As children mature they can work quietly for increased lengths of time. Children working in pairs need to talk to each other.

All children should be sitting on their chairs when writing so that their work is neat. Children should speak calmly and politely to each other and to you. Don't let them start chatting about things other than the task in hand. If they do, remind them of their work by asking a question or asking a child to read out his work to the group.

Introducing the activity to the children

Tell them what they are to do, think about or discuss. Tell them what it is they are expected to achieve by the end of the session. These are some examples.

- 'You should have at least three well thought-out sentences written down.'
- 'You should have finished questions 1 to 15 in this exercise.'
- 'Everyone will have suggested at least one line of this poem we are writing together.'

Make sure that everyone understands the instructions

If a child is unsure, let the others start and you can explain again to the child, and check again as they begin so that you know they are doing the right thing. Then check the others to see that they have interpreted your instructions correctly.

Support any child who is struggling

Ask the child what is causing them to struggle. It may be that they need some extra piece of equipment, or have forgotten how to use something. Help the child to find the page in the dictionary, remind them how to use a ruler by starting at the zero, or whatever else is causing the problem. This may be all it takes to get them going again. Think about the age of the children you are helping and their ability level. Doing the work for the child is not an option! You are aiming to help them learn how to help themselves by reminding them of routines and how to manage their learning.

Playing games to support learning

If you are playing a game with the children, read the instructions beforehand and make sure that all the pieces are there. If the game is new to the children explain it briefly to them before you start.

Make sure that they follow the rules. It is important that children learn to be fair, to take turns and to be losers as well as winners. You are an important role model for the children, so at all times be aware that children will be copying you.