



Welcome



Starting school is one of the most significant milestones in a child's life, and the early years are crucial for confidence building as each child begins their educational journey. Most children are excited and keen to make the transition, but it can also be a daunting experience, so it's crucial that our emphasis is on nurturing and creating familiarity during the first months. A Foundation teacher's role is to build an understanding of each child and

cherish them for who they are, guiding and supporting them through all the challenges and achievements during their first year.

St Faith's Pre Prep is set in its own building with a separate playground and wonderful 'Wild Place' to explore. The environment is similar to that of a nursery, with children taught sitting on the carpet and a mixture of teacher-directed and child-initiated lessons, which creates the perfect atmosphere for learning. At this age, we know that cross curricular learning works best, the children choose a topic of interest, and the lessons are designed to help them make links to bring the subject to life in an engaging way which captures their imagination.

Giving children responsibility for others is another wonderful way to build confidence and to develop social skills. We involve the Year 3 pupils to help the current Year 2's make the next transition from Pre

Prep to Prep school, which involves an informal but planned welcome presentation, and a showcase of what they have enjoyed since moving up.

It is this gentle and nurturing beginning to life at St Faith's, coupled with a dynamic curriculum, that equips the children with a lifelong love of learning. Pupils are taught Spanish from the second term of Foundation and the recent introduction of Engineering into the core curriculum, made us one of the first schools in the UK to do so at primary level.

The St Faith's community is a happy one, with a friendly inclusive culture. Children are encouraged to 'Be their best self' as they learn and grow, and are encouraged to develop lively, enquiring minds to equip them for the challenges of the future.

Mrs Linda Smith
Head of Pre Prep

Assemblies

Every Friday morning Pre Prep meet in Ashburton Hall for their weekly celebration assembly. In the half hour allocated slot, Linda Smith, Head of Pre Prep, discusses the good news of the week and the children's achievements both in and out of school. She also spends one-on-one time with the pupils who have celebrated their birthdays during the week. These pupils are invited to the front to speak about their festivities and gifts, before being sung to by the rest of Pre Prep and blowing out their birthday candles.

In addition to birthday celebrations, pupils can also collect friendship stickers in assembly for being



particularly kind to one another. These are awarded to them by the tutors alongside their two chosen 'Star of the Week' pupils.

Once a year pupils will take the lead in assemblies, when parents are invited along to watch their

children. The theme of these assemblies vary but they will always support their social and emotional development. Each assembly will have a Christian focus, but we also ensure that the children explore stories from other world religions.

Violins and 'Cello Performances

Children at St Faith's hugely enjoy their music making, with all classes being taught by a specialist music teacher. We are keen that children begin instrumental tuition when they are developmentally ready and currently have 15 violinists and 5 'cellists in the Pre

Prep. Each child has their own instrument, most of them are hired from the school. The children are pictured proudly with their instruments, following a performance in assembly. They will now be working toward a performance in our Summer concert.



Wicken Fen



The children loved finding little creatures whilst pond dipping, with the help of the staff at Wicken Fen. A highlight was catching a newt – this then led to frenetic pond dipping as everyone tried to catch one! They had an insight into how a fly sees things by wearing funky glasses. They also loved den building, where they worked as a team to create a straw house. A great day was had by all.



Christmas Nativity

Christmas is a time that most schools look forward to, including St Faith's. This year Pre Prep put on two productions: 'Journey to Bethlehem' for the Foundation year. This production was written by members of staff at the school. Year 2 then put on a performance of the published production of 'Are we nearly there?'. It was a fantastic Christmas musical that brings a contemporary touch to the traditional nativity story.



Charity Cards



The children were invited to take part in a fun Christmas activity, a simple treasure hunt, over the school holidays. They had to collect many festive items whilst at home, such as an overseas stamp, a cracker joke and some dried orange zest. There were also a couple of colouring activities in the card to help develop their creativity and precision. A few coins were also collected inside the card which were donated to the Children's Ward at Addenbrooke's. This is the second year running that we have raised money for this charity, and we are proud to inform parents that our money has gone towards helping to fund art materials for the children on the ward.



Play Time Play



Children seem innately programmed with the ability to play. In this day and age, they are often over stimulated with technology. Sarah Cox, one of our Pre Prep Play Supervisors, stated that 'At St Faith's they have the beautiful natural setting available to them which enables them to embrace playing and delve into their wonderful imaginations.'

In the playground there are lots of activities that meet the need of every kind of child. The play tables offer the children zones with a variety of construction toys, where their ingenious inventions can be created: from castles and villages made from jenga bricks, to machines that can make you invisible ...

The playhouse has many themes from a bistro with alfresco dining to a veterinary surgery and even a backstage emporium during the Summer. The woodland area is an enchanted place canopied with tall trees. There are moveable play blocks, which they often transform into many different crafts, anything from spaceships to boats. There is never a dull playtime.

Play is important for children's wellbeing, and learning social skills and often with prompting children can find solutions to any minor conflicts that might occur. At St Faith's the children are safe and well supervised yet free to explore their imaginations and make happy memories.

Police Visit



As part of the topic 'People Who Help Us', Foundation were lucky to receive a visit from Dave the Police Officer. He showed Foundation all his special equipment and some of the pupils even tried on handcuffs! The children looked at all the different things a Police officer carries in his car, and had great fun listening to the different types of siren.

TA's



At St Faith's we are very lucky to have wonderful support staff and teaching assistants. We spoke to them about their time at the school, and what they enjoy most about their job.

Angela Wilson (pictured first) says "We do not stop in Pre Prep and every day is packed with different



activities and most of all fun!"

Rebecca O'Hanlon (pictured in the centre) wrote: "I feel so lucky to be able to work in a place where I laugh every single day. I love to see the progress every child makes on their journey through the Pre Prep. No two days are ever the same."



Tanya Robson (pictured last) said: 'The days are full of many different learning opportunities in the classrooms, on the deck, on trips and with a wide variety of visitors. I really enjoy watching the children's smiling faces as they discover new things and broaden their experience through experimentation of their own ideas'.

Book Week

Reading is at the very heart of a good education and a joy of reading is something we hope all our children develop. Book Week culminated with a visit by Tracey Corderoy, a picture book writer, who's books the Pre Prep children simply adore. There was also a character dress-up day which was extremely popular. We had an array of costumes from *Goldilocks*, *Captain Hook* and *Little Miss Sunshine*. It was a fabulous feast of literary events, put together by our brilliant librarian, Miss Johnson and her assistant Mrs Pyke. Our pupil's imagination will certainly have been ignited by what they saw, heard and read.



Cursive Writing

Pre-Prep have recently introduced cursive handwriting, which is proving to be very successful. The Foundation children are introduced to the style and it progresses through Year 1, with the children managing a beautiful joined script by the end of Year 2.



To discuss admissions, please contact our Registrar, Anna Cornell, on (01223) 229421 or at acornell@stfaiths.co.uk



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