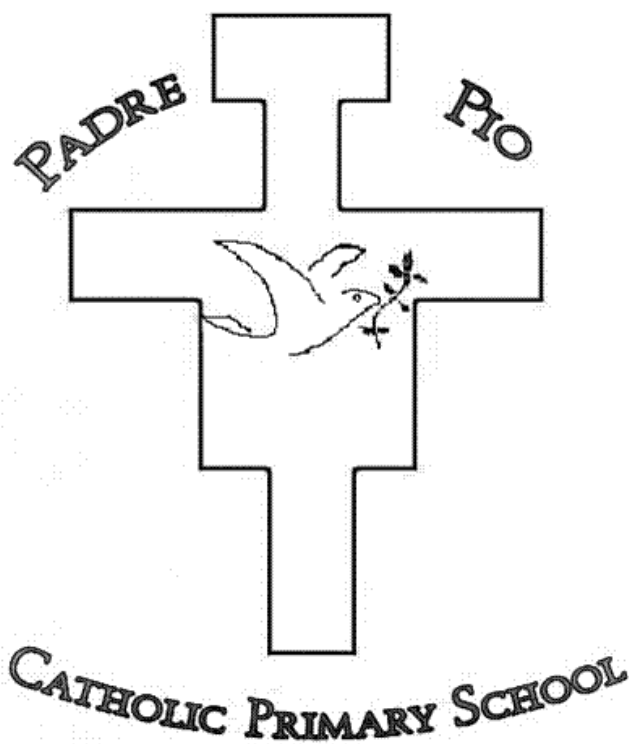


A Guide for  
Parents/Carers  
and Families



Information About Our  
Reception Classroom

## Our Mission Statement

*'A Catholic family where we pray and learn in peace with each other. Together, we take the message of Jesus to the world.'*

## INTRODUCTION

The staff and governors at Padre Pio Catholic Primary School are committed to helping all children to enjoy learning and progress to the best of their abilities. As parents we are sure you share this commitment. We know that when the school and parents work together in partnership, children will progress further and are more likely to reach their potential.

We have put the following information together to assist you and your child in preparing for school. We hope you will find it useful.

If you have any questions or worries, please do not hesitate to discuss it with us.

## Our Curriculum

Your child will follow a new curriculum that was introduced in 2022 across Wales for all learners aged between 3-16 years. This is the same curriculum that your child will be following if they currently attend a Nursery School.

The curriculum is divided into the following areas of learning experiences (namely AoLEs):

- Health and well-being
- Languages, Literacy and Communications
- Mathematics and Numeracy
- Science and Technology
- Expressive Arts
- Humanities

As a Catholic school, the teaching of R.E. lies at the heart of our curriculum.

## The importance of Play

The majority of your child's learning will be through active play-based activities that have been carefully planned and organised to stimulate and extend your child's learning. Your child will be encouraged to actively take part in first hand experiences both in the classroom and outside in the playground and outdoor classroom

Through their play, children practise and consolidate their learning, play with ideas, experiment, take risks, solve problems, and make decisions individually in small and large groups.

First hand experiences allow children to develop an understanding of themselves and the world in which they live.

## Resources

Your child will use the following resources on a regular basis both in the classroom and outside.

- Sand
- Water
- Playdough
- Role play area
- Dressing up clothes
- Construction kits (i.e. duplo and lego)
- Musical instruments
- ICT equipment (laptop, chromebook, ipad)
- Recyclable materials
- Paint
- Chalk
- PE based equipment (i.e. skipping ropes and balls)

## Learning to Read

Developing a love for books and stories is one of our main priorities when children start school. Your child will regularly hear a large variety of different types of books, rhymes, and poems. In addition to this we will teach your child to learn using a successful programme called Read, Write, Inc. A parent/carer workshop will be arranged during the Autumn term to provide more information on how we teach reading and ways in which you can support your child at home.

## A Typical school day

Although each day will be varied, the following structure may provide you with an insight into how your child will spend his/her day at school.

Time	Activity
8.45 - 8.55 a.m.	Children arrive at the classroom
8.55 - 9.20 a.m.	Register, structured play activities
9.20 - 9.30 a.m.	Sharing news, prayers
9.30 - 10.30 a.m.	Learning based activities (adult and child led activities - indoors and outside) Act of Worship/Assembly (in class or in hall)
10.30 - 10.45 a.m.	
10.45 - 11.00 a.m.	Milk/snack time (your child may bring a healthy snack and a drink to school each day)
11.00 - 12.15 p.m.	Learning based activities (adult and child led activities - indoors and outside)
12.15 p.m.	Grace before lunch
12.20 - 1.20 p.m.	Lunchtime
1.20 - 1.25 p.m.	Toothbrushing (information regarding this programme will be given to you prior to your child starting school, your consent is required)
1.25 - 2.45 p.m.	Learning based activities (adult and child led activities - indoors and outside)
2.45 - 2.55 p.m.	Carpet time and home time prayer
3.05 p.m.	Home time

### Drop off and collection times

Children are welcome to join our free breakfast club (please find an application form enclosed in this pack or request a form from the school office). Breakfast Club is managed by Torfaen Catering staff and runs every morning in the school hall (starting at 8.20am). If your child is not going to breakfast club, they can go straight to his/her classroom between 8.45-8.55am.

Children should be collected at 3.05pm; the end of the school day. If unavoidable circumstances mean that you will be late collecting your child, please contact the school office so that we're aware and can make arrangements to care for your child until you arrive. Padre Pio After School Club (a privately run childcare club) runs from 3.05pm to 5pm - details are included in this pack.

## Here are some ways to prepare your child for school

### **1. Talk to your child**

It is very important to talk with young children all day long, using short sentences. By doing so you will help your child to connect their world to language which will give them a head start when they begin to learn to read and write.

### **2. Talk with your children as you do daily activities together**

When you take your child to places, talk to them about what you are doing and ask them questions. Give them a running commentary throughout the visit, ask them questions and listen to their answers. As you get dinner ready, talk to your child about things you are doing e.g. I need the biggest saucepan and Can you find the lid for this pot ? etc.

### **3. Ask your child to describe things that have happened to them.**

Talking about their experiences makes children think about them. Question him/her and they will learn how to tell complete stories and know you are interested in what they say. Giving detailed descriptions and telling complete stories and Nursery Rhymes will also help your child learn about how stories are written and what they mean.

### **4. Ask your child "What if ..." questions**

i.e. "What would happen if we didn't go to the supermarket?"  
"What would happen if you didn't eat?" etc. etc.

### **5. Give your child writing materials**

Many children want to practice scribbling and "pretend" writing. Help them by having paper, pens, pencils and/or crayons in your home.

### **6. Say school prayers together - See Page 14**

## **7. GAMES TO PLAY TOGETHER**

- Snap
- Pairs
- Happy families
- Snakes and ladders
- Ludo
- Guess Who
- Any board game
- I Spy games (I spy something ....
  - Red
  - Under the television
  - Which rhymes with
  - Look (i.e. book)
  - Round etc. etc.

## **ACTIVITIES**

- Cutting - to improve hand eye co-ordination and enable the children to use a scissors.
- Writing on top of lines .....to improve pencil skills (you draw lines and the children write on top)
- Dressing skills
- Tidying-up
- Reading to the children - books and comics
- Jigsaws
- Going for walks and talking about what you see
- Colouring
- Playing with play dough (see recipe)
- Cook together
- Lay the table together
- Sort groceries after a shopping trip
- Use old boxes, materials etc. to make a variety of models
- Make height charts to compare the heights of all the family

## What should my child be able to do when he/she starts school?

It would be helpful if your child could do or is beginning to attempt the following :-

1. Recognise own belongs.
2. Dress and undress himself/herself.
3. Remove coat, hat, scarf, hang up each item.
4. Go to the toilet independently.
5. Wash and dry hands.
6. Cut up food using a knife and fork.
7. Tidy / clear toys away.
8. Use a handkerchief.
9. Share toys and be prepared to take turns.
10. Know where they live.
11. Be able to write their first name in lower case letter.

These are only suggestions. If your child is unable to do one or more of the above, it does not matter.

## **INITIAL ASSESSMENT**

During the first six weeks of school, we will carry out some simple activities with your child. These activities will enable us to plan and prepare activities at your child's own level and understanding.

## **LINKS WITH PARENTS**

We firmly believe that parents are the children's first and most important educators. It is our aim to establish and maintain excellent relationships with all our parents and families.

If at any time you have worries or concerns (however small) please do not hesitate to talk to us.

We are available before and after school on a daily basis to answer any questions. If you would like to discuss any queries at length we will always arrange a convenient time to meet to solve the issues.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Will my child be able to go to the toilet when required?**

Yes! We have toilets attached to the classroom. Your child can go to the toilet as often as required.

### **Is the classroom secure?**

\_Yes! All classroom doors are secured as soon as the children arrive in the morning and again after each break/lunch time.

### **What happens if my child is tired?**

Daily routines are planned in advance to provide both active and quieter activities, this will then give your child a chance for less active times if they happen to become tired.

### **What happens if my child is upset?**

It is not uncommon for children to be upset at the beginning of the day particularly after a weekend or a holiday. Staff are well trained to deal with emotional upset. If for any reason your child is upset for long periods of time we will contact you to let you know.

### **What happens if my child hurts themselves?**

Certain members of staff are qualified in First aid. If your child does need first aid attention, staff will apply treatment as required. If however your child needs further medical treatment we will contact you or an emergency contact number that you have provided. Each time first aid is applied you will be informed at the end of the day.

### **What happens if my child is hurt or upset by another child?**

It is not uncommon for squabbles to take place between children. Staff are always available to sort these disagreements out. If however we feel that any particular squabbles are ongoing we will have a chat with you to discuss this. If you feel that your child is unhappy or upset please do not hesitate to speak to staff.

### **Will I know if my child does not eat at lunch times?**

During the first few weeks, classroom staff will supervise your child during lunch times in addition to the lunchtime supervisors. If we notice a pattern that your child is not eating their lunch we will let you know straight away.

### **How will we know if there are head lice within the classroom/school?**

If we know that head lice are in our classroom/school we will place a note on the weekly newsletter. We do ask that children's hair is checked on a regular basis as this will help to prevent head lice from spreading.

### **Will my child have reading books and/or homework?**

During the first half term your child will bring home a school reading book. He/she will not be expected to read the words straight away. We will regularly send home projects for your child to complete with you.

### **How can I help my child learn to read?**

Read as many stories to your child as you can. Traditional tales, stories from other cultures, poetry, their favourite story - talk about the stories with them.

Explain the meaning of new words. Most importantly though, show the fun that can be gained by listening to stories.

What you read to your children today, they will be able to read for themselves very soon.

### **How will I know how my child is doing at school?**

During the first half term you will be invited into school to discuss how your child has settled into school life.

We operate an open-door policy which enables and encourages you to discuss your child's progress and/or any concerns you have on a daily/regular basis.

### **What if my child finds learning difficult?**

All children, whatever their age will progress at different levels. Some children undoubtedly find it easier to learn than others. Our Curriculum has been designed to help **all** children succeed, whatever their stage of development or learning ability.

## **Whole school traditional Prayers**

Here are the Prayers that we say daily at school.

### **Sign of the Cross**

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

### **Morning Prayers**

Oh my God you love me.

You're with me night and day,

I want to love you always in all I do and say.

I'll try to please you Father

Help me through the day.

Amen.

### **Grace before meals.**

Bless us O God as we sit together,

Bless the food we eat today,

Bless the hands that made the food.

Bless us O God

Amen.

### **Home time Prayers.**

God, our Father, I come to say.

Thank you for your love today.

Thank you for my family and all the friends you gave to me.

Guard me in the dark of night

And in the morning send your light.

Amen.