



St Gerard's

Catholic Primary School

Prospectus

2020-2021



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Welcome

My name is Mr Crehan and I am extremely proud to be the Headteacher of St Gerard's Catholic Primary School.

St Gerard's Catholic Primary School is a one-form entry school, located in Castle Vale, Birmingham. Our school is a very special place where we 'live, love, learn and pray together' as a family.

We have a wonderful school community, and we take enormous pride in knowing all our children well and ensuring they have the very best start to their primary education in a loving and caring environment.

As a Catholic School, our faith is central to everything we do.

All of our children are welcomed and valued as a unique member of God's family. The values taught to us through the Gospels, guide us in how we nurture the children in our care.

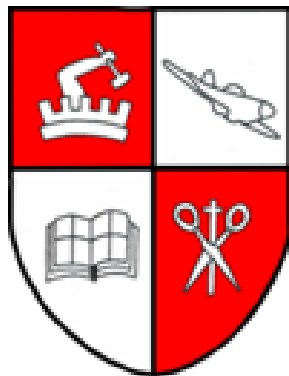
Our patron saint, Saint Gerard Majella, dedicated his life to following Jesus, working hard and helping the poor and underprivileged – he is an inspiration to us every day.

At St Gerard's, we have extremely high expectations and are proud of our traditional values. The whole staff are committed to providing a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum for all children. We aim to develop our children morally, socially and academically so that they leave our school as aspirational, responsible young people, ready to contribute positively to the world.

Having worked here for five years, I know first-hand that the strong support and commitment of our parents and parish community is something that drives the success of this school. I look forward to continuing this partnership throughout the years for the good of all the children who learn here.



Mission Statement



***“With Christ at our side,
and St Gerard as our guide,
we live, love, learn and pray together.”***



The Catholic Nature of the school and Religious Education



As a voluntary aided Catholic School St. Gerard's is based upon the values and beliefs of the Catholic Church. This religious ethos is to be found across the whole curriculum and not just within the Religious Education (RE) timetable. The fundamental aim of the school is the Christian growth of the children, not simply their growth in their own faith but their growing awareness of the world as maturing Christians. As a pupil of St. Gerard's School, all children will develop a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and traditions.

The school uses the Archdiocese of Birmingham curriculum strategy for RE 'Learning and Growing as the People of God'.

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion takes place in Year 3. All Year 3 children will learn about the Sacraments with the whole class supporting and celebrating with the children who will be receiving the Sacraments for the first time. This includes Sunday Masses of preparation, where the expectation is for all children in the class to attend and parent meetings which a parent must attend.

Opportunities are provided in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6, for children to regularly go to Confession.

Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is conducted through the normal programme in Year 6 with special Sunday Celebrations when the children make their commitment before the parish community. It is important for all children to attend these Masses. Any parents meetings must be attended so that they can give support to their children throughout their journey of faith.



Mass is celebrated regularly in the Church for the whole school community at the start and finish of each term and other special occasions. During the term there are Masses or prayer services most weeks either in the Church, occasionally the school hall or individual classrooms. All family members and parishioners are welcome at all Masses.

School Details

Contact Information

Address: St Gerard's Catholic School
Yatesbury Avenue
Castle Vale
Birmingham

Phone: 0121 464 2613
Fax: 0121 464 4542
Email: enquiry@stgerard.bham.sch.uk
Website: www.stgerard.bham.sch.uk

St. Gerard's Governing Body

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type of Governor</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
Miss Dunsford	Chair of Governors	Health & Safety, English, Pupil Premium
Mrs McConnell	Vice Chair of Governors	Religious Education
Mr Crehan	Headteacher	Assessment, Curriculum Overview, Attendance
Miss Peel	Foundation Governor	Science
Mrs Sellman	Foundation Governor	Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
Mrs M Martin	Foundation Governor	Art/DT/PSHCE
Vacancy	Foundation Governor	History/Geography
Miss Macilwraith	Foundation Governor	Safeguarding/Online Safety
Vacancy	Foundation Governor	
Mrs Gondolne-Mantler	Parent Governor	SEND/Inclusion
Mrs J Agbajama	Parent Governor	PE/Extra Curricular Activities
Mrs A Martin	Staff Governor	Music
Mrs Nicholls	Co-opted/Link Governor	Maths, Computing, Health & Safety
Mrs James	LA Governor	PE/Extra Curricular Activities
Mrs Kissun	Clerk to Governors	

Staff & Organisation

The Junior and Infant Departments of the school were built in 1968 and the Nursery unit was added in 1976. St. Gerard's therefore, caters for children of all levels of ability from ages 3 to 11.

Headteacher: Mr A Crehan

Deputy Headteacher: Vacancy

Teaching Staff

Mrs A Guiney

Mrs B Gordon

Mrs J Cartwright

Miss F Bluck

Miss E. Crane

Mrs M Davies

Mrs L Jones

Mrs S Nye

Senora Dormi (Spanish Teacher/Lead)

Mrs M Powis (SENCo/PPA)

Mrs Hydzik (Instrumentalist)

Teaching Assistants

Mrs A Breen

Miss B Creamer

Miss J Blenkiron

Mrs A Martin

Mrs J O'Loughlin

Mrs J Smith

Mrs P Sprigg

Mrs C Yelland

Support Staff

School Business Manager

School Secretary

School Admin Assistant

Building Services Manager

Cleaning Assistants

Lunch Time Supervisors

Mrs A Nicholls

Mrs E Kissun

Mrs S Perkins

Mrs D Johnson

Mrs S O'Regan

Ms S Flynn

Mrs D Johnson

Mrs L Grant

Mrs L Talbot

Miss S O'Regan

Miss B Creamer

Mrs K Fearn

Mrs Campbell, Mrs Mann, Ms Dookie

Kitchen Staff

Criteria for Admissions

The Admission Policy of the Governors of St. Gerard's School is as follows:

The School's Admission Number is 30 and your child must turn 5 years old within the academic year (1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021).

The admissions process is part of the Birmingham LA co-ordinated scheme.

The Admission Policy of the Governors of St Gerard's School is as follows:



1. Baptised Catholic children who are in the care of a local authority (looked-after children) or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents) (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989).
2. Baptised Catholic children living within the Parish of St Gerard who have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.
3. Baptised Catholic children living within the Parish of St Gerard.
4. Other Baptised Catholic children who have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.
5. Other Baptised Catholic children.
6. Non-Catholic children who are in the care of a local authority (looked after children) or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents) (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989).
7. Non-Catholic children who have a brother or sister in the school at the time of admission.
8. Non-Catholic children.

The full Policy is available from the school office.

School Dates & Timings

The school dates for 2020-2021 are as follows:

Autumn Term 2020	Spring Term 2021	Summer Term 2021
Wednesday 2nd September	Monday 4th January	Monday 19th April
to	to	to
Friday 23rd October	Friday 12th February	Friday 28th May
HALF TERM	HALF TERM	HALF TERM
Monday 2nd November	Monday 22nd February	Monday 7th June
to	to	to
Friday 18th December	Thursday 1st April	Wednesday 21st July

Tuesday 1st September is an INSET day.

Further INSET days are to be confirmed.

Session Times

The gates to the school open at 08:35. There is no supervision on the playground at this time.

Children all line up in the playground and are led into school by their Class Teacher at 08:45.

Registration is at **08:55** after which time children will need to enter the school via the main entrance and will be marked late (L). After 09:10, a 'U' code will be issued, which is late after the register has closed and is classed as an unauthorised absence.

The School day ends at **15.05**.

A typical day's timetable would look like the ones below.

Foundation Stage & Key Stage 1

08:55 Registration
09:00 Lessons
10:25 Break
10:40 Lesson
11.50 Lunch
1:00 Lessons
3:05 Close of day

Key Stage 2

08:55 Registration
09:00 Lessons
11:00 Break
11:15 Lesson
12:30 Lunch
1:15 Lessons
3:05 Close of day

The start of the day is very important, so please ensure that your child is **on time**. It is also important that your child is picked up **promptly** at the end of the day. If you are going to be late, you will need to phone the school office. Please leave a message if there is no answer—all messages are picked up.

School Uniform

Boys Uniform

Winter Uniform:

Shirts	White
V-Neck Jumper	Red
Trousers/Shorts	Grey
Tie	Red with gold stripe (Available from school)
Shoes	Black school shoes

Summer Uniform (after Easter Holiday):

Polo Shirt	Red
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Girls Uniform

Winter Uniform:

Blouse	White
V-Neck Cardigan	Red
V-Neck Jumper	Red
Kilt	Royal Stuart Tartan (Available from school)
Tie	Red (Available from school)
Tights/Socks	Plain (Red, grey, black or white)
Shoes	Black school shoes

Summer Uniform (after Easter Holiday):

Dress	Gingham Red (dress only)
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School Uniform (PE)

Physical Education

This is part of the curriculum and all children are required to take part and be suitably clothed. Children are **not allowed to wear any form of jewellery** for PE lessons.

Children wear:

- Black or navy shorts
- A WHITE polo shirt
- Black pumps
- Plain black tracksuit bottoms (During colder weather)

Trainers are permitted for outside games/lessons or clubs. Trainers are not suitable for gymnastics, these lessons are normally carried out in bare feet.

No clothing with logos are acceptable to wear for PE lessons.

The children have regular PE lessons and therefore **kit should be kept in school at all times** in a small suitable bag. PE bags are available from the school office.

Swimming

Children in Years 2 & 3 will go swimming for the year.

Swimming sessions take place on a Wednesday morning, therefore, children will need their swimming kit. The swimming baths have certain rules which schools must observe:

1. **All earrings have to be removed**
2. **No Bermuda style shorts are allowed**
3. **Girls must wear a one piece swimming costume**



The Curriculum

The school aims to provide a curriculum for every child which is broad and balanced. This curriculum is suited to the different abilities of children and provides for their progress throughout the school. It is delivered through a variety of approaches and these will depend upon the topic being taught, the needs of the child and the aim of the lesson.

Nursery and Reception children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum which prepares them for the National Curriculum in Year 1. The children follow a common course consisting principally of the National Curriculum and Religious Education.



The subjects include; English, Maths, Science, Computing, History, Geography, Art, Music, Design Technology and Physical Education. Spanish is also taught from Year 2 to Year 6.

In addition to these subjects, the school curriculum also covers cross curricular issues such as Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHCE) including equal opportunities, multicultural education, British Values and education for sustainable development.



There is a weekly programme of 'Outdoor Learning' for all Year 2 children throughout the year, where children must bring in suitable clothing. A list goes home at the start of the year to provide guidance to parents.

Assessment & Reporting

The school has developed a policy whereby the recording of informal assessments is an ongoing process to assist in the planning of future learning for each child.

Assessing Pupil Progress is ongoing for subjects such as Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening, Spelling & Grammar and Maths. Formal assessments to monitor progress in English, Maths and Science take place in each year group. Assessment takes place in the form of School Tracking and Assessment Tools (STAT) Sheffield grids and is supported by our STATonline monitoring system.



At present, records of achievement are compiled for all pupils and form the basis of discussion at Parents Evenings which take place in the Autumn and Spring Term or when concern is expressed about progress.



End of Key Stage Assessments for the children in Years 2 & 6 are required by law and combines the results of both our own teacher assessment and Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs), with statutory phonics screening taking place in Year 1.

The results of these assessments are made available to parents. A written

report is provided for parents about their child in July and parents will be given the opportunity to make an appointment with their child's Class Teacher to discuss the report if they wish.

Special Educational Needs

Support will be given, as required, throughout the pupils' years in school. This help may take the form of individual support and guidance, withdrawal from the main class to work in smaller groups or support in the classroom when taking part in the mainstream curriculum. The children also have support in small groups with their Literacy and Maths

lessons. The provision will depend on the needs of the pupil. Parents will be informed at the outset of any concerns the school has regarding their child and the child will be placed on the Special Needs List.

If we feel that their needs are greater than the school is able to meet then we will request the help of outside agencies such as Pupil Support, Speech Therapy, Educational

Psychologist, Family Support workers and Emotional Health and Well Being support

workers. If a child needs daily help above and beyond that which school can provide, we will assess them for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. This assessment will be

carried out by school in conjunction with the school based agencies who have been working with the child. Health and Social Care workers will be involved where appropriate. Once again, parents will be informed of all the various stages via school and from the Local Authority. For further information please see our school website www.stgerard.bham.sch.uk (On the left hand side click on Parents information and then SEND information).

We aim to identify children requiring extra support early so that the problems do not become major. The SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) works with groups of pupils to focus on Literacy skills, which usually takes place out of the classroom. The Teaching Assistants work in the classroom alongside the Class Teacher supporting children mainly with Literacy and Maths to enable more accurate differentiation. They also take groups of pupils out of the classroom for further intervention work.

Gifted & Talented

Gifted and Talented (G&T) pupils are identified by the Class Teachers. There is a special list to record the G&T pupils. They may excel in areas such as Maths, Writing, Art, Drama, Computing or Sports etc. These pupils are then challenged within lessons to enhance their particular talent through the differentiated curriculum.

Subjects

English

The teaching of English has a crucial role to play in equipping learners with the language skills they need to become effective members of their own community, the world of work and of society in general.

Literacy skills are developed by providing a wide range of opportunities for reading, writing and spoken language. Children are given group and/or individual literacy targets to focus their improvement in reading and writing.

Children are taught to read using phonics based texts and a wide range of literature by recognised authors. Class reading activities include the use of individual reading, large shared texts, group reading, buddy reading, on-screen texts and other visual texts (film etc.). Phonics (skills of segmentation and blending of words and letters) is taught using Letters and Sounds. The confidence children have in reading in public is clearly demonstrated at Mass and during assemblies/productions.

Throughout the school we recognise and value the importance of parents, particularly so in reading where the partnership between school and home is vital in developing keen, independent readers. **We encourage parents to support their children with reading each day.** Parents are also asked to support their children in practising and learning spellings which are usually given weekly.

Mathematic

St. Gerard's School aims to encourage enthusiasm for learning in Mathematic whilst recognising the relevance of the subject in everyday life. We aim to increase pupil confidence in Mathematic and we encourage children to talk about their work to help them to develop mathematical thinking and a 'mastery' of the key objectives. This enables children to approach problems with an open mind and to understand that some problems have more than one possibility.

We work to ensure that pupils become fluent, reason mathematically and solve problems in a variety of routine and non-routine situations. This strategy is progressive and includes clear objectives from Year 1 to Year 6 covering work under the headings of number, measurement, geometry and statistics, with Year 6 also covering algebra, ratio and proportion. Staff have had training to deliver 'mastery' lessons to ensure children can apply their skills/knowledge to problem solving questions. Children are assessed regularly, both formally and informally, which enables teachers to plan and ensures that children are challenged appropriately.

Individual Year group Maths targets are set and used regularly in lessons with the children. These enable the pupils and the teacher to assess how they are progressing throughout each term. Children are set homework regularly and are expected to learn appropriate number bonds and times tables.

Science

Science is an investigative process involving a variety of skills to answer questions about the physical, chemical and biological nature of the world around us.

Science investigative work is carried out in groups giving each child an opportunity of both hands on experience and a chance to express their own ideas. The investigations carried out initiate from a cross-curricular theme, Science mini-topic or children's own questions. We aim that through their Science work the children develop an understanding of scientific ideas; an understanding and use of scientific methods of investigation and an understanding of the contribution Science makes to society

Computing

Computer Science is held at the core of our curriculum, which is designed to facilitate understanding of information and computation, how digital systems work and the application of this knowledge through programming. The school curriculum has been designed to ensure development of core skills on a progressive scale. Crucially, children are encouraged to use an analytical approach to consider and understand the importance of adopting good e-safety practice when using digital technologies both at school and at home. An E-Safety Workshop is carried out for each year group throughout the year, helping to raise awareness with parents of the dangers of the internet. **For any instances of cyberbullying (via text, email, whatsapp, viber etc), that occur outside of school and are reported, the school can deal with these incidents internally and fixed term exclusion can be applied.** They are all recorded in an incident book.

Website

As a school, we provide children with quality internet access as part of their learning experience. Access is supervised and filtered using the Birmingham Grid for Learning. You can logon to the St Gerard's website at **www.stgerard.bham.sch.uk**

Here, you will be able to find out about school events, admission arrangements, school policies, term dates, newsletters, online safety, links to websites/activities and lots of other useful information.

We keep our website as up-to-date as possible and Twitter now enables us to upload information immediately. You can follow us on Twitter @StGerardsBham (search for St Gerard's Sch Bham).

Children can access various sites to follow up on Maths or English work, competing against others. They can also be set tasks by their teacher as part of homework or revision work on SPAG.com, which enables the children to practise punctuation and grammar work. We also subscribe to Timestables Rock Stars to help children improve their speed and accuracy for times tables. Children are given a **username** and **password** to access SPAG.com, Timestable Rock Stars and their email.

We are very fortunate to be able to provide the children with access to a range of electronic devices in school e.g. computers, laptops, and iPads. We have pupil Digital Leaders, who help children across the school with computer problems, look after the equipment and take part in regular online safety meetings with staff.

Physical Education

All children have the opportunity to engage in weekly PE lessons. Children go swimming in Years 2 & 3. The school aims to take part in as many sporting events as possible across the year including football, swimming gala, multi-skills events, athletics, netball and rounders. The School also runs after school activity clubs, which are led by external coaches. Most of these are chargeable.

History, Geography, Art, Design Technology, Music & Spanish

In each of these subjects the National Curriculum is followed throughout the school. Children are taken on educational visits which enhance their knowledge and understanding of a particular subject. Where possible, Art and Design Technology are taught as a block so that the children can become immersed in their learning. History and Geography are taught in Topic books and have strong cross curricular links. Children are taught to recognise that people in different parts of the world rely upon each other and that past events help to shape the present.

We seek to foster an understanding and enjoyment of music by composing, listening and performing. We have a specialist Music Teacher who delivers recorder instrumental lessons to some of the Key Stage Two classes each week. There is also a weekly hymn practice to prepare children for masses, productions or assemblies. Children from Years 3-6 can audition for the School Choir and there are lunchtime and after school guitar and recorder clubs.

All children take part in their class assembly which can be based upon, or involve, any of these subjects including RE, PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health/Education) and Citizenship themes. All children are involved in a Carol Concert on alternate years. The infant classes carry out a Christmas or Easter performance. Years 3 and 4 children take part in the Stations of the Cross. Year 5 and 6 take part in an end of year production (alternate years) and Year 6 present an end of year Leavers' assembly.

Spanish is taught through an online teaching strategy in Years 2-6. The children are encouraged to bless themselves and say prayers in Spanish. They also respond to the register in Spanish in addition to their lessons. Each year, the Spanish that is learnt is progressive. There is also the opportunity for links to be made between subjects across the curriculum.

PSHCE & RSE

Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)

Through PSHE and Citizenship we aim to develop confident, healthy, independent and responsible members of the School, Parish and wider community. In this way, they develop a sense of self-esteem and self-worth. They are taught about the process of democracy and experience this concept through the School's Council. They learn about choice and consequences, rights and responsibilities. They are taught about the dangers to health through the misuse of drugs/medicines and are equipped to make informed moral and social decisions in relation to drugs and society. We work in partnership with several agencies to educate the children age appropriately.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

The children's Sex Education is based on Catholic Principles. The cross-curricular nature of much of the work in the school, through topics such as Change, Growth, Families etc., presents many informal opportunities to provide knowledge of the facts concerning sexual reproduction in a non-specific way. Discussions and explanations are geared to the children's stage of development, being concerned not simply with basic facts but also encouraging a growing awareness of themselves, their place in society, relationships with others and so on.

As they grow in maturity a wider range of issues will be brought to their attention. In Upper Key Stage 2, Sex Education is much more specific. Using the Archdiocese Scheme "All that I am" (Year 5 and 6), Family Life and Sex Education as a starting point, appropriate topics such as menstruation, physical and emotional changes for both boys and girls, growth in the womb and birth are covered.

Discussions are full, frank and age appropriate. They are valuable in helping to prepare the children for the changes they will soon personally experience. Certain issues, however are considered inappropriate for a Catholic School and are not included e.g. contraception, abortion.

At the centre of this policy, is the Catholic Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage, morality, spirituality, family values and that young children need the support of a mother and a father in a family situation.

Parents are kept informed of progress and have the right to withdraw their child from discussions of a specific nature. A letter is sent to parents to make them aware that their child is about to start sex and relationship lessons. Parents are recognised in this area as the primary educators and the school's policy is designed to support you in this sensitive area of the curriculum.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Our Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of a full-time Nursery and Reception. We aim to provide a broad range of activities that are both adult and child initiated. These may take place indoors or outdoors.

Children lead their own learning through continuous provision, which is enhanced by staff for optimum learning. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children through Inspire Workshops and other special events.

The main focus of the EYFS is to learn through play. The framework is designed to expand children's knowledge in a variety of ways through seven areas of learning.



The EYFS seven areas of learning

Your child will mostly be taught through games and play. The prime areas of learning are:

- Communication and language development
- Physical development
- Personal, social and emotional development



These will be strengthened through the four specific areas, which are:

- Literacy
- Mathematic
- Understanding the world
- Expressive art and design



Ongoing assessments are an integral part of the EYFS. This is carried out through play, observations and talking to pupils.

Pastoral Care & Behaviour

Pastoral Care

Every child in school matters to us. From time to time, either they or their family, have problems which hinder their well being and happiness. We are always willing to listen and try to find solutions. Initially it is the Class Teacher who is responsible for the pastoral care of each child in their class. The Headteacher has overall responsibility for every child in the school. We have a Parents' Evening in the Autumn and Spring term when parents can discuss any concerns they may have. At any other time parents can make an appointment to ensure that there is time and privacy with the Class Teacher to discuss a problem. The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher are generally available at the beginning and end of the school day or are always willing to arrange a meeting with parents. Do not hesitate to air your concerns if there is something upsetting your child so that we have the opportunity to put it right.

Behaviour Management

The school's child-centred approach enables pupils to progress as far and as fast as they are able. Children are encouraged to give of their best and are supported in times of difficulty.

Discipline in the school is in accordance with Christian values, the purpose being to develop the character of each pupil on the basis of respect for his/her own person and their own belongings while respecting other people and their property. Great emphasis is placed on courtesy and good manners. Good work, effort, honesty, helpfulness and other desirable qualities are praised at every opportunity. We have a house point system and termly rewards are given to the winning house.

For the majority of the time our children are well-mannered, self-disciplined young people who enjoy their time in school. When, occasionally, children are selfish or inconsiderate the normal sanction is for them to be stood apart or sent to another classroom to afford time for reflection. The initial behaviour incidents will be dealt with by the Class Teacher, which progresses to the Deputy and then the Headteacher if necessary. A record is kept of children's behaviour through a Behaviour Log and should matters not be resolved, then a discipline letter is sent home expressing concerns. Parents may then be asked to visit the school to discuss a particular incident or a child's behaviour in general and they may go onto a 'Good behaviour report card'.

We expect parents' full co-operation in dealing with a child's unacceptable behaviour.

Details of St Gerard's Behaviour Policy and procedures can be found on our website.

Safeguarding & Child Protection

The Safeguarding Team: Mr Crehan, Mrs Jones, Mrs Powis, Mrs Nicholls, and Mrs Kissun

Safeguarding is defined as –

- Protecting children from maltreatment;
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.

As a school, we have the pastoral care of the children as one of our most important responsibilities. All staff familiarise themselves with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy at the beginning of each academic year. Any outward signs of abuse are

reported to the Designated Senior Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Headteacher as soon as possible. Clearly, issues such as Child Protection involve sensitivity and confidentiality. Our Policies relating to Safeguarding are updated regularly. A copy is available on the school website.

Parents and carers should be aware that everyone working with your child has a responsibility for their well being: Their role is to listen and note carefully any observations which could indicate any form of abuse. They will not attempt to investigate once the initial concern is raised and passed on to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will continue the investigation. They should involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. If the DSL is not available, another member of the Safeguarding Team should be contacted. Disclosures of abuse or harm from children may be made at any time.

Staff will always take appropriate steps to safeguard themselves by ensuring that they deal with children in accordance with school policies, in an open and transparent working environment. All staff have an up to date knowledge of the 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2016)' document and are familiar with the 'Right Service, Right Time' guidance. These documents are for everyone who works with children, young people and their families in Birmingham.

If anything worries you or concerns you, report it straight away.

Parental Involvement

As it is a basic aim to involve parents we recognise the need to provide information about the various developmental stages and to offer opportunity for discussion. During the academic year for example, we hold meetings:

- At Nursery and Reception stage to explain our approach to reading and the importance of the parental role.
- For Year 3 & 6, to discuss arrangements for Sacramental programme.
- For Year 6, to inform parents about the SATS & Secondary Transfer.

Parents and family members are invited to attend and support their children at Whole School or Class Masses, which usually take place on Friday mornings.

During the Autumn and Spring terms, Parents' Evenings are held to give you the opportunity to discuss your child's progress. If at any other times of the year concerns should arise you are welcome to discuss the matter directly with the Class Teacher. You may need to make an appointment to see the teacher as they can not speak to you when they are taking a class.

Throughout the year Class Teachers run 'Inspire' workshops. These are invaluable to the children and it is also an opportunity for you to understand different methods of teaching that are carried out in the classroom today. They offer a fantastic opportunity for you to work on a one to one basis with your child and support their learning in the classroom. Within these 'Inspire' workshops, there is also an element of online safety that is covered. We appreciate the need to make our children and families aware of the dangers when using the Internet. Each year group has a specific theme, which is relevant to their age. Additional support, guidance and information can be found on our website: www.stgerard.bham.sch.uk

Click on the website tab on the left hand side, then click on online safety.

The school's success will always be a direct reflection of your support and involvement. We cannot emphasise enough the importance of parental opinion. If you value school so will your child and therefore your child will achieve. When parents, school and children work together, then we have a success.

Homework

Homework is **not optional** and is an important part of the school and home partnership. All children will be expected to carry out homework activities related to their learning and we ask that you support and encourage them by involving yourself in this work and ensuring that it is completed at the appropriate time. If homework is not handed in, then your child will be expected to complete their work during break times.

Reading diaries are introduced in Nursery for parents to make comments and by Foundation Stage, Years 1 and 2 the reading diaries are used to make shared parent/child comments **three times a week**. This is continued for Years 3– Year 6, where they will write their own reading diary record, three times each week.

The Homework Policy states:

- Homework goes **home on Friday** for all pupils.
- Homework is **brought back to school on Wednesday** for all pupils.
- **Reading** is to take place **daily**
 - Nursery & Reception - 5 minutes
 - Year 1 & 2 - 10 minutes
 - Year 3 & 4 - 15 minutes
 - Year 5 & 6 - 20 minutes
- **Times-tables** should also be carried out **daily**
 - Year 2 (x2, x5, x10)
 - Year 3 (x2, x3, x4, x5, x10)
 - Year 4, 5 & 6 (x2 up to x12)
- There may be **English/Maths Topic** work to be carried out, which links into work being taught in lessons including use of the Internet for research.
- **Spellings** are also given weekly, which must be practised **daily and learnt**.
- **Number bonds** to 10 for infant children should be rehearsed daily e.g. $1+9=10$, $5+5=10$, $7+3=10$ etc, extending onto number bonds to 20 e.g. $10+10=20$, $15+5=20$, $1+19=20$ etc.

Homework tasks should be completed in the homework book that is provided.

It is really important to support your child/children in carrying out their homework tasks to the best of their ability. Homework reinforces learning that has been carried out in the classroom and it maintains an important link between the pupil, school and home.

Absence from School

It is a legal requirement that your child attends school for 190 days per year. Only the Headteacher can give permission for a child to be absent.

If your child is too ill to attend school then we would ask that you inform the school by telephone or in person on the first day of illness before 9:30 am.

THIS IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT.

Holidays in term time cannot be authorised. Leave from school will only be authorised in special or exceptional circumstances. Your request for any leave in term time must be applied for by using a **Leave in Term Time Request Form**, which is available from the school office.

We report weekly to the children on attendance for each class and a star goes up on a display board next to the winning class. Certificates are given for good attendance for each term and for the whole year.

An **AUTHORISED** absence is one for which permission has been obtained, or a reason for an absence provided. If your child's attendance falls below 95%, you will be automatically notified and you may be asked to a meeting to discuss the problem. This will normally be with the Headteacher.

At present attendance at St Gerard's meets national expectations. Due to the importance of children regularly attending school, we must always aim to try and improve our attendance figures.

For this purpose we set annual targets.

The attendance target for 2020-2021 is
97% or better.

Other Information

Dinner Money

Dinner money for Key Stage 2 children is £12 per week and £10.50 for Nursery children. Research shows that pupils who have school meals eat more healthily and perform better academically and that behaviour improves. Please encourage your child to have school meals. Lunchtimes are monitored closely and if you are concerned about your child not eating their lunch please talk to the office staff.

If you wish your child to change from dinners to sandwiches or sandwiches to dinners the school office requires **two weeks notice**.

Free School Meals

All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will be offered a FREE school lunch each day.

If your child is in Nursery or Key Stage 2 and you are in receipt of Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Child Tax Credit but not with Working Tax Credit you will be entitled to free school meals, please enquire at the school office. The strictest confidence will be observed and no embarrassment will be caused to the children.

Sandwiches

At St Gerard's, we encourage children to bring in healthy food options at dinner time e.g. sandwiches, fruit, yoghurt. To promote a Healthy Lifestyle please refrain from giving your child bars of chocolate, cake, crisps, biscuits or sweets as levels of concentration fall in the afternoon. Water is the best type of hydration for the children and this is something they should bring in to have with their lunch.

No fizzy drinks are allowed.

WE ARE A NUT FREE SCHOOL. NO NUT PRODUCTS OF ANY DESCRIPTION INCLUDING NUTELLA.

Water

All children are actively encouraged to bring a bottle of plain still water to school everyday for drinking in the classroom.

Flavoured water, fizzy drinks or squash are not allowed in the classroom.

School fund

Our children deserve a good education which will be provided for by the school budget but we are concerned about recent Government cuts in the budget. We therefore ask for a donation of **£5 per family each half term which is £30 per year**. This will enable us to fund resources to enrich the curriculum, plus extra treats and rewards for the children.

Before and After School Facilities

There are facilities at Kick Start Academy (KSA) who bring the children to school and pick them up at the end of the day.

For more details telephone:

Kick Start Academy: 07876 466673 or 0121 748 7977

School Clubs

There are a variety of After School Clubs at various times of the year run by teachers and outside agencies. There are charges for a School Club. Outside agencies may also run their activity and charges can be higher to cover their costs.

Charging Policy

Legally we are not allowed to prevent any child from taking part in any activity during the school day because they have not paid e.g. a school trip, visit by a puppet theatre, actors etc. It is, however, impossible for the school to pay for all of these events, which are very beneficial to children, out of school funds. At St Gerard's, all trips and activities are subsidised from school budget. We feel that educational visits, artistic visits and the like are so important that we do offer them but if parents are not willing to pay then the event may not take place. We are however, always ready to negotiate with parents who would like their children to enjoy these extra activities but feel financially stretched at the time.

Transport

The greatest threat to children's safety is congestion and poor parking in the vicinity of the school. We would ask all car drivers to be constantly vigilant near the school site. Please park considerately and obey road markings, particularly avoiding the yellow zig-zag lines and parking on pavements. They are there to safeguard your children. The **Church car park** is the best place to park so that you do not obstruct our neighbours in the properties surrounding our school and there is no road to cross to collect the children.

We encourage children to walk to school wherever possible; it is good for the environment and promotes good health. Storage for bicycles is available on site, however the school cannot take responsibility for items brought into school and are left at the school during the day. **It is very important that all bikes or scooters are clearly marked and labelled so that your child takes their own equipment home and that any items left in the bicycle shed during the day are locked securely.**

Jewellery

Children are not allowed to wear jewellery - bracelets, necklaces or rings to school. If children have pierced ears then they are only allowed to wear one pair of ear studs. On the days children go swimming all ear studs will need to be left at home.

Earrings and watches will also need to be removed for all PE lessons. If you intend to have your child's ears pierced please make sure it is done at the beginning of the Summer holidays so that the earrings may be removed when the children are back at school.

Footwear

Bearing in mind children are active people whose bones are still growing we ask parents to send them in suitable school shoes **not** trainers, high heels, platforms or backless sandals etc. Black trainers and shoes with badges, logos and other colours are not part of school uniform.

Hairstyles

We ask parents not to send their children to school with coloured or dyed hair or any extreme hairstyle such as shaved patterns or lines etc. We have a long established traditional uniform and request that hairstyles reflect our traditional approach. Girls or boys who have hair longer than shoulder length should have it tied back at all times.

Nail Varnish

We ask parents not to send their children to school with their nails painted.

Electrical equipment

It is against school policy for children to bring any electrical equipment into school including handheld electrical games and mobile phones. The school is not covered for any loss or damage caused to these items should they come into school.

Inhalers

If your child needs an inhaler, and it is prescribed by a doctor, then it is the parents responsibility to ensure an in-date inhaler is kept in school. **Your child should have their inhaler in school at all times for their own safety.**

Your child is responsible for this inhaler and should have it on them for PE lessons, trips, sporting events, break times etc. As a parent, you must update your child's medical records if they get asthma during the course of the year.

Failure to have their inhaler in school may prevent them from taking part in an activity/trip, as their safety is a priority.

Complaints

Our school wants to deal with any issues, concerns and complaints that you have as promptly and effectively as we can, and if you have any concerns we encourage you in the first instance, to go directly to the person who is most appropriate. This will usually be the Class Teacher.

Following this, if the matter is not resolved you can speak to the Headteacher.

The school is required by law to have a complaints procedure that aims to ensure that concerns and complaints are handled in a fair and non-adversarial manner. A copy of the Complaints Procedure is available from the school office. Recourse to these formal arrangements would, in fact, indicate a breakdown in normal relations and we would hope never to arrive at such a situation.

Apart from open evenings and other formal opportunities, parents are encouraged to visit the school regularly and to share with us immediately any concern that might arise to the child's well being. If you are **not a parent or guardian of a child attending the school** you should contact the Headteacher.

PLEASE HELP US BY:

1. Ensuring that your child attends school regularly and arrives punctually.
Registration takes place in the classroom by **8.55am. Pick up at 3:05pm.**
2. Keeping us informed of any changes of address, including home and work telephone numbers, if applicable. It is vital that we have a contact number in case of emergency.
3. Sending a note or telephoning if your child is absent before 9:30 am.
4. Marking clothing and belongings with your child's name. We do our best to find lost articles but it is impossible without a label.
5. Not sending your child to school with any extra money, expensive belongings or electrical devices e.g. mobile phones. We can not be responsible for the loss or damage of such items.
6. Not sending a child who requires medicine to school unless you have discussed the situation with Mrs Nicholls or Mrs Kissun in the school office.
7. Not asking us to give your child medicine unless it has been prescribed for your child by a doctor **more than three times a day**. A medical consent form must be completed by the parent, in the school office.
8. Reading newsletters which are sent from school. These always contain important information for you. They are available on our school website, which should be looked at regularly as any last minute changes will be posted on there, or via Twitter.
9. Not allowing your child to come to school wearing any jewellery except **one pair** of stud earrings and a watch. **Apple SMART Watches are not allowed.**

Inspection Reports

In December 2016 the school was inspected by Ofsted and remains 'Good'. The last Religious Education inspection was in March 2018, which was judged to be 'Outstanding' in Collective Worship and Catholic Life and 'Good' in Religious Education.

Report of OFSTED and Religious Education Inspections—Main Findings:

- All staff are excellent role models. They know the children well and exercise a high level of pastoral care to ensure that each child is fully integrated into the school community.
- You have developed a dynamic and meaningful curriculum.
- The school's values and ethos contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers plan carefully to build on children's growing skills and to help them overcome difficulties.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are happy, confident learners and are able to thrive in a secure, harmonious environment. Pupils are courteous.
- Behaviour is exemplary.
- The school fosters excellent partnerships with parents and carers. Nurture groups, counselling and additional forms of support are provided, which
- include signposting families to appropriate agencies. Consequently, the
- willingness to support and guide pupils and their families is outstanding.
- Pupils enjoy reading. The school has high expectations that pupils will read regularly at school and at home and will reflect on what they have read.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent. They respond enthusiastically to opportunities for collaboration within a whole class or group setting and are able to offer opinions and consider those of others.
- Pupils experience a positive start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and evidence of tracking progress shows a consistent improvement across each key stage.
- Through assemblies, visiting speakers and the personal, social and health education programme, pupils learn how to live safe and healthy lifestyles.
- Staff are trained to a high level in all aspects of safeguarding. Policies are implemented rigorously.

A full copy of both reports are available on the school website.

The information was correct at the time it was printed in June 2020, but it must not be assumed that there will be no change affecting the relevant arrangements or some matter referred to before the start of, or during the school year in question or in relation.