

SOMERSET EDUCATION AUTHORITY

Axbridge Church of England First School



Prospectus

Axbridge Church of England First School

Headteacher
Mrs G. F. Briggs Adv. Dip. Ed.



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Dear Parents and Friends

Please read this booklet which has been compiled for you. It provides valuable suggestions and information which you need to be aware of.

The booklet is in two parts: 'Information for Parents' and 'The Curriculum'. These two jointly form our School Prospectus.

You are always welcome in this school. If you need clarification on any aspect of this booklet, and on your child's education, please ask any of the Staff or myself.

Yours sincerely

G F Briggs (Mrs)
Headteacher

Safeguarding Policy

This school is committed to safeguarding & promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Our Mission Statement.

LEARNING TOGETHER IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY'

'Building on our Christian Foundation, we aim to provide a happy, secure and exciting environment, encouraging all children to grow in every way'

Our School Aims

The children, themselves, have compiled the following aims for our school. These have been adopted by the whole school community and we incorporate them into everything we do here at Axbridge Church of England First School.

We want our school to be:-

- C** Caring
- H** Happy
- I** Interesting
- L** Lively
- D** a place in which we are **Determined** to always do our best
- R** a place in which everyone is **Respected**
- E** Exciting
- N** a place which is **Nurturing**, helping us to grow

AXBRIDGE CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL

Headteacher	***	Mrs G F Briggs
Deputy Headteacher	***	Mrs S Dibb
Teachers	***	Mrs C Beekman
	***	Mrs B Burnett
	***	Miss Coles
	***	Mrs H Davies
	***	Miss K Nash
	***	Mrs N Richardson
	***	Miss L Wallace

Learning Support Assistants

Mrs L Ainsworth
 Mrs J Brogden
 Mrs C Burt (Special Needs)
 Mrs C Fortune
 Mrs L Hogarth (Special Needs)
 Mrs D Chadwick
 Mrs S Ingarfill (Special Needs)
 Mrs L Maunder
 Mrs N O'Mara

Lunchtime Supervisors

Mrs J Cook
 Mrs S Harris
 Mrs L Maunder
 Mrs C Newman
 Miss S Hughes

Governors

Mr R Peebles-Brown (Chairman)	Reverend Tim Hawkings
Mrs P Barrett	Mrs D MacManus
Mr A Bates	Miss K Nash
Mrs J Bridgwater	Mrs J Letchford
Mrs G Briggs (Headteacher)	Mrs C Pinnington
Mrs K Browne (Vice Chair)	Mr S Shah
Mrs C Burt	Mr D Shepherd
Mrs S Gall	

Clerk to Governors:	***	Ms A Goley
Office Manager	***	Ms A Goley
Clerical Assistant	***	Mrs S Crompton
Caretaker	***	Mr D Hogarth
Cleaners	***	Miss S Hughes Mrs P Moger
Catering	***	Mrs K Jones
Catering (Clerical)	***	Mrs K Randall

Main School

Pupils are admitted to school the September before their 5th birthday.

The LEA is the admissions Authority for this school and places are allocated according to the County over subscription criteria. A copy of this can be obtained by contacting the Parent Enquiry Line on (0845) 6045555

Children from 4 to 9 years of age are admitted and taught in six classes.

At the age of 9 children move to the local Fairlands Middle School in Cheddar, or Hugh Sexey's Middle School at Blackford if you live in those catchment areas. Children from both these Middle Schools then progress at the age of 13 to Kings of Wessex Upper School in Cheddar. Kings of Wessex commands an excellent reputation and has a thriving 6th Form.

Nursery Class - situated on the school site.

The Busy Bees Nursery opened in November 1992 for children of 3 years of age from all the areas of the Cheddar Valley. There are places for 20 part-time children each morning and 20 part-time children each afternoon. The Nursery is staffed by a qualified Nursery Teacher and a Nursery Nurse.

The children will progress onto the First School in their area at the appropriate age.

There is a great demand for a Nursery place and parents are advised to put their child's name down once they have reached their second birthday. Admissions occur three times through the year instead of just once. At the start of each term, following their third birthdays, children may start coming to Nursery. Places are allocated carefully over each academic year to ensure sufficient spaces are available for those children starting at different points during the year.

SCHOOL HOURS

On arrival at School, children go directly to classrooms via their cloakrooms.

Morning school is from	9 am to 12 noon.
Afternoon school is from	1.00pm to 3.20pm

The Nursery Unit: Morning session 9.00 am to 11.30 am
Afternoon session 1.00 pm to 3.30 pm

It is important that your child arrives at school on time every day, as repeated lateness can cause disruption to the class routine and often produces anxiety and stress in your child. Everyone can be late occasionally and we understand this, but punctuality is an important quality to foster at this stage in the child's education.

Staff are responsible for your child during school hours, which includes ten minutes before the start of school and ten minutes after school closes. Consequently, **your child should not arrive in school before 8.50 am.**

In the event of severe weather it is school policy to remain open if at all possible. If you are in any doubt, please telephone one of the following people: -

- Mrs Burt 732724
- Lynn Hogarth 732501
- Sue Zanker 733349

Information can also be accessed from local radio stations.
A decision to close will be made on a day to day basis.

SECRETARY

The school secretary is in school Monday to Friday from 8.50am to 3.30pm.
If you wish to telephone the school or visit on some routine matter (i.e. non-teaching) please do so at these times.

VISITS TO SCHOOL

All new parents are welcome to visit the school in preparation for their child joining us. Please ring to make a suitable appointment when I or my staff will be able to talk with you and show you round.

DOMESTIC INFORMATION

Rules and Requirements

The School has a successful **Behaviour Policy**, drawn up in consultation with the Governing Body, Staff, Parents and Pupils. A full copy of this is available in School, for you to read should you wish to do so.

It is of the greatest importance that we have your complete support in the efforts we are making to create acceptable standards of behaviour throughout the school. Children are encouraged to exercise self-discipline, self-control and good manners at all times. We see these as just as much a part of the child's education as the basic subjects.

Children must see school as being purposeful and feel that there is a need to make every effort to do their best both in their work and at play. Only with your full co-operation as parents can an atmosphere be created in which children can make the best academic progress and enjoy doing so.

Sweets are not permitted in school. Children should avoid bringing toys to school and certainly should not bring expensive or delicate items. The School provides a variety of play equipment at play times and lunch times. Jewellery should not be worn to school.

Teachers are not empowered to administer medicine to children. Parents may make arrangements to come into school and administer medicine themselves. **The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher will only give medicine once a medical, consent form is filled in by the parent.** These are available from the school office.

The School encourages pupils with asthma to play a full and active part in all aspects of school life. The school recognises that asthma is an important condition affecting many children. On entering school, every child should receive a form to be completed by parents giving details of medications etc., if the child suffers from asthma, so that details can be entered on the school's asthma register. At this time parents will be given a copy of the School's Asthma Policy.

Uniform Maroon sweatshirts / cardigans with school logo (available from office)
 Grey trousers or skirts
 White shirts/blouses/polo shirts with school logo (available from office)
 Girls' summer uniform is a dress in any pattern of red and white fabric
 Dark coloured shoes

All clothes must be named

P.E. Kit Plimsolls, shorts and tee-shirt in a labelled bag which can be hung up. Tracksuits are also advisable for winter months.
 Shorts and tee-shirt can be purchased from the school office.

Additional Items available

 Maroon fleece with school logo.
 Maroon shower proof jackets with school logo

Bulletins

These are information sheets and will be sent home as and when necessary. Holiday dates are included in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents and at the end of this Prospectus. Important dates for your diary will usually be sent out at the beginning of each term. Please keep for future reference. All newsletters are updated onto our website.

School Meals

School meals, both a hot meal or a packed lunch, are provided by Somerset County Caterers. These are served in the dining hall from 12 noon. The cost can be paid, in advance, on a weekly or half-termly basis. Please contact the school office for further details. Children may bring sandwiches if they prefer. Drinking water is provided by the school.

If you are on Income Support and Job Seeker Allowance, and you would like your child to have Free School Meals, please apply to the School Office.

At lunchtime, the children are supervised by ancillary helpers. We expect the same standards of behaviour from the children under their supervision as we do at other times of the day.

Sick Children

Our facilities for caring for sick children are very limited. We try, wherever possible, to arrange for a sick child to go home. Please ensure the school has a telephone number to use in the event of any emergency.

Safeguarding Children

We are committed to ensuring that all children are protected from abuse at all times. The Head teacher is the 'Child Protection Officer' and attends regular training .

A Governor has a specific responsibility for monitoring our procedures in line with our Child Protection Policy, which is available in school.

Attendance

It is important that children attend school regularly. **Any absence requires a phone call to the school office before 9.30 am** followed by a parental note explaining the reason for the absence. Notes should be handed to the class teacher on the child's return to school. For extended absence, a letter is required prior to the child's return.

Children attend school for 190 days each year. Five additional days holiday are given for teachers to participate in In-Service Training.

- a. **Holidays** A form is available from school if holidays have to be taken during term time. This should be completed and returned to the office prior to going on holiday. The permitted maximum is 10 days per academic year. However, please avoid the beginning of a new school year and during the statutory testing in the Summer term. Requests for these weeks will be declined.
- b. **Medical** For visits to the doctor or dentist during school time, a note is required. No child will be allowed to leave school during school hours without explicit parental authority, which must be given in writing.

Parents Evenings

Parents evenings are held in the Autumn Term and a further one takes place in March of each academic year. This is an opportunity for parents to discuss the current progress of their child with the class teacher. An appointment system operates and ten minutes is allocated for each child in the family. We hope that all parents will make full use of these opportunities.

Open Evenings

An Open Evening is organised each Summer Term for families and friends to visit the school.

Consultations

My staff and I are always available to discuss the current progress of your child. You will appreciate, however, that they all have a teaching commitment and are not available at very short notice. Should you wish to make an appointment, please ring or call at the school and a convenient time can be found.

Governors' Meetings

Governors' meetings are held twice termly. Matters for consideration may be put on the agenda by any parent up to two weeks before the meeting. Meetings are not open to the public but minutes are available in the school office and on the Parent Notice Board facing Moorland Street entrance to school.

The Governors send out an annual report to the whole parent body, informing you of relevant school business. This can be followed by an Open Meeting for Parents if sufficient parents would like this.

P.T.A.

The PTA committee is elected in September. The Headteacher is the President. Parents take the posts of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, the rest of the committee consists of parents and staff members.

This is a very active committee raising around £5,000 annually for the benefit of all children.

The PTA's function is to promote understanding between home and school, to provide extra facilities which the school could not otherwise have and to provide enjoyable social events for children, parents, teachers and friends. There are regular committee meetings and open meetings whenever the need arises or someone requests one on a particular topic of concern or interest.

The PTA organises an Insurance Scheme to cover accidents both at home or at school. Please contact the school office for further details.

Homework

There is no regular pattern of set homework for our youngest children other than weekly spellings to practise, but children are encouraged to learn basic maths (e.g. practise tables) and new words, practise their handwriting and reading. Reading at home, as well as at school, is regarded as a high priority and Infant children are provided not only with a book to read, but also a 'home book'. The 'home book' gives the children an opportunity to comment on what they have read, they may write or draw in it. Parents are encouraged to make comments in the book and your child's teacher will also use it to pass on observations. As the children move through the school, homework becomes more formal and in Years 3 and 4 children have a small amount of set homework some evenings each week.

We ask that you encourage and support your child when undertaking this work at home.

Educational Visits

The Education Reform Act has brought changes in the method of raising money to cover the cost of Educational Visits:-

No compulsory charge may be made to parents for visits which take place during school hours, though voluntary contributions can be sought.

We have been very fortunate at Axbridge School, because in the past the PTA have helped finance visits and outings which parents might otherwise have been requested to cover. If sufficient money is raised next year, we hope that the PTA will feel able to continue to meet some of the cost of such activities.

However, the Governors feel it appropriate to point out at this time, that if this does not happen, parents will be asked for a voluntary contribution. No child will be excluded from any visit if the parent does not feel able to donate the requested voluntary contribution. However, if sufficient money to cover the cost of the outing cannot be raised in this way, the outing will have to be cancelled.

The above represents a brief summary of complex issues and the school will always guarantee that parents are fully informed of the conditions relating to requests for financial outlay in individual cases.

Year 4 usually undertake a residential visit during their final year lasting for 3 days. We have been to the Brecon Beacons and to the Forest of Dean in previous years.

Availability of Information

The Department of Education and Science regulations require the school to make certain items of information available at the school to parents and public. The school holds information on the following:-

The Local Education Authority's statement of curriculum policy and the Governing Body's statement of curriculum aims.

Any Statutory Instruments (including those for National Curriculum subjects), circulars and administrative memoranda relating to powers and duties under the 'Curriculum' Section of the Education Reform Act.

Any published HMI Reports which refer explicitly to the school.

Any schemes of work currently used by teachers in the school.

Any syllabuses followed, including those for the Standard Assessment Tasks which your child will participate in at the age of 7.

A full copy of the arrangements for the consideration of complaints about the school curriculum made by the LEA. (see the synopsis on this page)

The LEA agreed syllabus for Religious Education.

A written statement dealing with Religious Education, including the syllabus in use in the school.

The school also holds copies of this prospectus and of the Governors' Annual Report to Parents, which are available free to parents, on request, at the school. Also available is a booklet on the ethos of the school and our general aims, as well as a booklet on our curriculum.

Our Freedom of Information Policy is available in school. This identifies the full range of information and policies available for you to access

Complaints Procedure

It is hoped that parents would always discuss any complaints they might have with the teaching staff of the school and myself. Complaints can usually best be resolved in this informal and open way. However, in exceptional circumstances the matter can be taken, in writing, to the Chairman of Governors of the school, or, if this is not appropriate, to the LEA. at County Hall, Taunton. The booklet 'Primary and Secondary Education in Somerset' is produced annually by the LEA and in this you will find mention of the existence of the formal complaints procedure.

UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL ACADEMIC YEAR 2005/2006

1. Number of pupils of **compulsory** school age on roll - 140
2. Number of Pupil Sessions - 51456
3. Number of Authorised absences - 3136
4. Number of Unauthorised absences – 71

Access Plan for those with a Physical Disability

We have regularly looked at the needs and the provision we have here at the school for those with a physical disability.

Over the past 8 years the following changes have been made:-

- Disabled toilet in main school has been adapted to meet the specific needs with a bed and a frame. We also have changing facilities available. A risk assessment was conducted on adults helping those children with disability use the toilet and move onto the bed for changing.
- Movement around the site has been improved:-
 - a) Steps removed by staff room for access by wheelchair to main building.
 - b) Gap created in wall by Infant classrooms to allow access by wheelchair to adventure play area and these classrooms at top end of site (Pine, Willow, Nursery).
 - c) Gravelled approach to Furlong field tarmaced to safe movement of wheelchair used independently or pushed by adult.
- Training of staff on a regular basis to ensure they are fully qualified to support these pupils.

We now have a school site which is accessible to those with disabilities. It is reviewed on an annual basis and if another child joins the school we will look at their specific needs and make changes appropriately if possible. E.g. If a hoist is needed in the toilet.

Updated January 2007

ISSUE	COMMENT	TIME SCALE	COMPLETED
Car Parking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark out disabled bay 	There are 2 disabled bays at top end of site marked out by SCC.		✓
Routes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve general route signage 	Already have routes signed from each entrance to site. Need to cut shrubbery to ensure these are easily seen.		✓
External Ramps & Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide hand-rails on slope from car park. Paint tread nosings to more clearly identify them. Provide hand rails to stepped areas. Provide tactile markings to the top and bottom of the steps to warn of level change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All other slopes have hand rails. Paint on steps up to double unit and steps from playground. Hand rails needed on above. 	Jan 2007 Jan 2007 Jan 2007 April 2007	
Main Entrance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace main entrance door to 800mm clear opening width. 		Sept 2004	✓
Reception <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 900mm enquiry hatch to have drop down shelf for use by seated person. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hatch needs shelf 	Jan 2006	
Entrance Ramp\Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace existing steal hand rail with a wooden round section one and fit new hand rail to wall side. 			✓
Element & Attribute <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide room identification signs in a more uniform font and colour scheme and at a lower level. Provide clearer and better escape route signage. Consider use of textured surfaces to identify key routes and areas. 	All fire alarm signage renewed	May 2005	✓
Assembly Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure loose furniture appropriately arranged to create clear, safe passage ways. Ensure all areas for assembly Equipped with an induction loop. 	We are always attentive to this, particularly when we had a child in a wheelchair for 6 years.	Ongoing 2007/08	✓
Means of Escape <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Install xenon beacons to supplement the audible fire alarm system. Provide all stepped emergency exits with ramps. 	Needed on double unit.	2008 Sept' 05	

ISSUE	COMMENT	TIME SCALE	COMPLETED
<p>W.C and Bathrooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace lock and handle to one cubicle in each range of toilets easily gripped and operated. • In a standard cubicle place grab rail to assist ambulant disabled person in lowering and raising themselves. • Fit alarm to disabled toilet. • Resite sink closer to toilet in disabled toilet area. • Check all fittings comply in type and position with B.S. 8300 in disabled toilet. 		<p>Jan 2007</p> <p>Jan 2007</p> <p>Sept 2007 Sept 2007</p> <p>Jan 2007</p>	

The Curriculum

HEADTEACHER'S STATEMENT

Axbridge First School is a rural school providing children from the age of 4 -9 with a broad and well-balanced education. We have the Busy Bees Nursery on site for children aged 3. We believe that children learn best when they are happy and confident and we strive to create this conducive family environment. Pupils are taught in classes of 30 or less in the Infant years and may be in a mixed or single aged class dependant upon year group sizes.

We achieve a high standard of education with whole-school planning. All the Staff are aware of the overall aims and objectives and work as a team to draw up programmes of work for each curriculum area. They set out their aims on forecast sheets and highlight the balance between areas of discrete teaching and integrated approaches. There is an overall belief that certain topics can only be taught alone and not as part of an integrated approach. Added to this there needs to be a variety of appropriate approaches ranging from individual teaching and group teaching to the teaching of the whole class together.

Children learn differently and what works well with one child does not necessarily work with another. We, therefore, provide a range of learning techniques and materials. We use a vast array of reading schemes and maths schemes, and encourage phonic strategies as well as look/say strategies. The professionalism of the teachers is paramount in deciding the appropriate learning environment.

The school reflects the high standards set by the Staff. Displays are colourful and relevant throughout the school. Classrooms are welcoming and children's work is presented carefully. The classrooms are organised to encourage children to work independently whenever possible. Trays and areas are clearly labelled with tactile labelling in the early years, so that children can find what they need easily and quietly. An atmosphere of calm and committed purposeful learning is encouraged in every classroom.

Our 2004 OFSTED inspection of both the school and the Nursery was extremely successful. The team recommended us to HMI (Her Majesty's Inspectorate) as a 'particularly effective' school. There were no key issues to address and there were many strengths highlighted. These are as follows:-

This is an excellent school with an outstanding ethos and many strengths. It continues to provide a high quality education and excellent value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Boys and Girls achieve very well; most attain high standards in literacy and numeracy and pupils who find learning difficult make very good progress.
- Very good teaching across a range of subjects and areas of learning promotes excellent behaviour, very good work habits, very positive attitudes to school and a love of learning.
- The Nursery and Reception classes give boys and girls a very good start to their school careers.
- The school provides a high quality learning environment, a rich well planned curriculum and an excellent range of activities to enhance learning.
- Staff make excellent provision for developing pupils' social skills and attitudes, moral and cultural awareness and ability to reflect on feelings and life.
- Relationships are excellent throughout the school, and staff do all they can to ensure that pupils can succeed in a safe, caring environment.
- The school works very well with parents and the community in the best interests of the children.
- Excellent leadership by the headteacher, with outstanding support from the whole staff in their leadership roles, is maintaining the well deserved high reputation in the community.

Since its last very successful inspection, the school has continued to build on its strengths and use its very effective monitoring arrangements to identify and act on areas not up to the high standards it sets itself. Substantial improvements have been made to the school environment, the range and quality of resources, curriculum planning, the role of classroom support staff, the quality of teaching and learning, several other areas. Overall improvement is very good.

Comments made in the report specifically about the Nursery were:-

- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- Children's achievement is very good.
- Teaching is very good and support assistants make an excellent contribution to children's learning.
- The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are excellent.
- Teaching and learning are very good and by the end of the Foundation Stage many children exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning .
- Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and achievement is very good.

Discipline is unobtrusive and children are supported whenever possible with positive approaches such as praise through stars and stickers for good work rather than negative reprimands. Children understand the school rules and if these are continually being broken parents' involvement is ultimately sought. Bullying will not be tolerated in the school. If your child is involved in a particularly serious incident you will be notified of this.

The school is extremely well-resourced, helped by PTA fund-raising. Each classroom possesses at least two computers and all available hardware and software. The school hall has been equipped with appropriate P.E. equipment. Through PTA finance the older children have swimming lessons at our nearest pool, and all classes undertake an educational visit in support of their learning. Year 4 children have a residential visit in April lasting 3 days. In the past we have taken them to the Forest of Dean and the Brecon Beacons. This is a particularly enjoyable and valuable experience and 'Mendip Outdoor Pursuits' personnel accompany us.

We are a very positive Staff who put the needs of the children first. New initiatives are prioritised and reviewed carefully before any major changes are made. Hence the old well-trying methods work in conjunction with chosen new trends. The belief in structured learning and didactic teaching methods are supported by the more recent belief in greater parental involvement and the child as an active learner.

In this way we believe the children receive an excellent education, which prepares them with the firm foundation for future learning.

PRE-SCHOOL

Preparing Your Child For School

Your child's first year at school is vitally important. During this time your child will form the basis of opinions and ideas about school life that will be carried throughout his/her education. As such, the first of the objectives stated in this prospectus is of paramount importance; "To provide a happy, secure environment to encourage your child to become responsible and independent".

Pre-School Liaison

We are very aware of the importance of a positive liaison with parents. It is our aim to commence this liaison in the term prior to your child's entry to school. At the beginning of the term, you as parents are invited to a meeting where you can meet the staff of the school and be introduced to some of the activities your child will be doing in the classroom environment. Following this meeting your child is invited to come to school for a number of afternoons or mornings throughout the rest of the term. You are very welcome to join your child on these occasions and we would particularly encourage you to attend at least the first visit with your child, as this will take the form of a workshop session. At this session you and your child will work together on a variety of activities which can be undertaken at home afterwards. "Play To Learn".

All children, who have had their 4th Birthday during the previous academic year, are entitled to begin their education in the following September.

As part of the Induction Programme children attend on a part-time basis for the first 4 weeks. This will then be increased in liaison with the parents as the first half-term progresses. It is expected that all children will be full-time by November at the latest, although for those children still requiring part-time schooling this can continue. During this time each parent meets with the teacher when you may negotiate a date to begin full-time attendance for your child.

Your Contribution as a Parent

The school, liaising with yourselves, the 'Busy Bee' Nursery, the local Play Group, 'Tiny Tots' Nursery, and with Yew Trees Nursery, endeavours to provide a positive and enjoyable start to your child's education. In addition to this, there are a number of activities which both you and your child can do at home.

1. Try to make time to discuss with your child each week what has been done during the liaison workshops. Find out what they liked/did not like, who they played with/talked to, what stories they read together, etc.
2. Talk to your child about what it will be like starting school. Tell your child about the sorts of things they will be doing whilst they are in school, reassure them that you will be there to collect them or that alternative arrangements have been made. One of the greatest fears that a child has when starting school is that a parent or relative will "not be there" at the end of the day.
3. Please encourage your child to be able to dress and undress. Physical Education is an integral part of the early-years curriculum, for which appropriate clothes must be worn. If your child can undo and do up buckles, buttons and shoelaces, put on their own coat and sort out jumpers, shirts, socks, etc. that are inside out, then the child will feel confident in dealing with the complex routine involved in preparing for P.E. Simple tasks like these can be taught quickly at home, if they are repeated on a daily basis.
4. Please ensure that your child is able to cope with going to the toilet alone. Encourage your child to flush the toilet and wash hands afterwards.
5. If you would like to teach your child to write his/her own name, we suggest that you do so using a capital letter (upper case) to begin and small letters (lower case) to follow:

e.g.

A copy of upper and lower case letter formation is enclosed for your benefit.

Similarly any activity to encourage your child to have an understanding of number and counting will be of great help when starting school. If you are able to give your child the experience of painting, cutting and sticking, drawing, plasticine, etc at home, this will help to improve co-ordination and concentration. We know that your child learns through repeated experiences of the same activity and by copying friends, parents, brothers and sisters.

If you are able to provide a range of any of the above activities/experiences as described in (1) to (5) your child will come to school equipped with some of the basic skills needed to begin to learn. Your child will then already be happy and confident in dealing with many aspects of school life.

THE CURRICULUM

General Information

The Education Act 1988, with the introduction of the National Curriculum to the children of this school in September 1989, requires that all pupils are taught Core Subjects and Foundation Subjects for a reasonable time, together with Religious Education.

Core Subjects are now identified as: Mathematics

English

Science

Information, Communication Technology

Religious Education

Foundation Subjects at Primary Level are: History

Geography

Music

Art

Physical Education

Design and Technology

Personal, Social, Health Education &
Citizenship

The majority of the timetable is spent on the Core Subjects.

Programmes of study have been established for them, which reflect what a child must cover. These are always available for reading, together with the LEA curriculum policy statement. Programmes of study for all the Foundation Subjects are also available. These programmes of study relate to specific ages and set out the content which pupils are to be taught at various stages throughout their school life. These schemes of work have been decided upon to ensure each child has the opportunity to experience the prescribed content of knowledge of the National Curriculum. Attainment Targets within all subjects allow scope for the very able child, those of average ability and the less able, to show what they can do.

Children are continually assessed by internal school tests. On entry to School children are given a baseline assessment to judge their needs for future learning. The results are discussed with Parents at the beginning of the school year at arranged meetings with the class teacher. Children will take external assessments at the ages of 7, 11 and 14. The object of these assessments, both internal and external, are to enable the child's progress to be measured and to give both ourselves as teachers and yourselves as parents, a clear idea of what is expected. Records kept of your child's development will constitute a point of reference for discussion, particularly at Parents' Evenings.

All new Parents will be asked to sign a Partnership Agreement with the School which sets out the Schools commitment to your child's learning and your support of us in our aims.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our scheme follows the County Agreed Syllabus. It is not strictly Church of England doctrine, but a broadly based Christian syllabus. The work includes the life of Christ and His teachings, church seasons and festivals, the Bible and what it contains, famous Christians, knowing oneself and one's capabilities, friends and families, the wonder of the natural world and the universe. The aim is not only to impart knowledge but to inculcate attitudes of loving and caring for others and behaving in a responsible way.

We try to ensure that children respect the views of others and develop a tolerance of other religions and beliefs by including study units focusing on the beliefs, traditions and practises of some other world faiths.

Daily Worship takes place for all children together in the School Hall at the beginning of each day. On the first Friday of each month the Rector holds a service in the school hall and on the third Friday of each month there is a special service in Church to which all parents are invited.

Provision for Withdrawal from Collective Worship

Under the provisions of the Education Reform Act 1988, all parents have a right to withdraw their child from the School's daily act of Collective Worship, or from Religious Education. Any parent wishing to withdraw a child from these elements of the curriculum should make a written request through the Headteacher.

MATHEMATICS

The Cockcroft Report, Chapter 6, states:- "The primary mathematics curriculum should enrich children's aesthetic and linguistic experience, provide them with the means of exploring their environment and develop their powers of logical thought, in addition to equipping them with the numerical skills which will be a powerful tool for later work and study."

We aim to provide the children with a very sound foundation in Mathematical thinking, together with developing confidence and an ability to think for themselves. We want the children to develop an investigatory approach to learning Mathematics, which will relate very closely to the problems they will have to face in everyday life.

The children receive a thorough grounding in the foundations of mathematical competency. The calculator and other resources (100 squares, number lines) are used to extend this knowledge and understanding of the concepts, thus creating a greater awareness of numbers.

The teaching of Primary Mathematics takes full account of new technology. There is great emphasis on the teaching of decimals, selection and interpretation of data, graphical display, 3-D thinking and trial and adjustment methods. The ICT and the Calculator play an important role in the child's mathematical learning throughout the primary years, providing a wonderful, exciting environment for learning.

It is essential to cater for children of all abilities when planning mathematical experiences. Provision is made for the less able as well as the more able child. A flexible system allows children to progress individually, according to their ability, towards specific attainments, each of which is recorded as it is achieved. A wide variety of Mathematical materials are introduced to the children as part of their learning. Schemes currently in use are Rigby Mathematics, Abacus Mathematics and NNS unit plans.

A sense of achievement and success are encouraged at all stages of the child's development.

Practical work is essential throughout the primary years and opportunities are provided for the child to learn through this type of experience. Opportunities are provided for the development of mental methods of calculation, problem-solving and investigatory methods of learning. The child is seen and encouraged to be an active learner. The Numeracy Strategy, being raised this year, fully supports the development of pupils' mental calculations and emphasises the need for pupils to be numerate.

Meaningful discussion accelerates the learning process and children are encouraged to participate in group, class or individual discussions.

The most effective learning experiences are achieved if home and school work in partnership for the benefit of each individual child. Parental involvement at all stages of the child's learning is a vital prerequisite to the achievement of our aims in mathematical teaching.

In such an atmosphere of trust, security and partnership, children should progress with confidence towards mathematical competency, well equipped to play their part in the wider world of learning.

ENGLISH

Reading:

When your child starts school they will be introduced to a wide range of reading activities specifically crafted to promote literacy skills. Initially these will be designed to develop:

- 1) Oral competence and confidence.
- 2) Visual discrimination and hand/eye co-ordination.
- 3) Fine motor control.
- 4) Left to right direction for reading and writing.

Shared reading sessions during the Literacy Hour will present a wide variety of Traditional Stories and Rhymes actively involving your child. Your child will begin to recognise key words and rhyming patterns in order that they can develop these skills further during guided reading and writing sessions with the teacher. There will be a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of phonics through a structured approach, incorporating the teaching of handwriting.

As your child begins to develop early reading skills they will be introduced to the core reading schemes: 1, 2, 3 away, Oxford Reading Tree and Newway. A wide selection of other reading schemes are introduced throughout your child's learning. All books are colour coded according to the stage of reading development. The reading scheme includes a wide variety of non-fiction, fiction, poetry and plays providing the opportunity for your child to discuss and comment on a range of issues, developing an awareness of text features and writing formats.

In addition to your child's individual reading programme, he/she will be taught specific reading skills during guided reading (small group sessions reading with the teacher of selected reading material matched to your child's level).

Parental reading partnership

When your child begins to bring home reading books, we welcome your support in maintaining the Home Book. At the front of the home book are a range of suggested activities to help encourage your child in the vital reading process. Independent reading progress is carefully monitored by your child's class teacher and books are selected carefully in order that your child can make progress at the appropriate rate.

Writing

Writing is closely linked to reading and the context of your child's reading will provide structures, themes and purpose for the majority of their writing. Focused teaching of phonics and grammatical structures during the Literacy Hour will contribute to the organisation and accuracy of their writing.

Handwriting

Regular practice in handwriting is given, emphasising the importance of correct letter formation and presentation. As your child progresses through school they will learn a joined cursive script building on accuracy and speed.

Speaking and Listening

Children are encouraged to participate in a variety of situations in order to develop communication skills. This may take the form of retelling stories, reporting events, active role play, explaining, investigating ideas, discussing and debating. Children are taught to listen attentively and respond to their peer group, teachers and other adults.

SCIENCE

We believe children should have the opportunity to develop an enquiring and investigative approach to scientific issues within their immediate environment and the broader horizons of the ever changing world around them.

Many simple scientific themes are studied throughout the school, including, electricity, light, sound, forces and materials. These are developed through a structured scheme of work ensuring a progression of activities throughout the school. We also ensure that different medias are used to develop their knowledge and an example of which is a science theatre that visit the school annually.

HISTORY

Our aims are:

1. To develop an interest in the past and an appreciation of human achievements and aspiration.
2. To understand how the past was different from the present and that people of other times and places may have had different values and attitudes from ours.
3. To understand that events have usually a multiplicity of causes and that historical explanation should be considered as provisional, debatable and sometimes controversial.

Younger pupils are introduced to chronology and are taught about aspects of the past through stories from different periods and cultures. They learn to identify differences between ways of life at different times. Older pupils study specific periods in depth. Key Stage 2 pupils learn about the Invaders and Settlers (Romans, Saxons, Vikings) with particular emphasis on Roman Britain. All study the life and times of Victorian Britain, as well as an in depth study of the history of the locality.

GEOGRAPHY

At Key Stage 1, geographical skills and knowledge are taught systematically using the theme of 'place'. The immediate site of the school, together with topics comparing areas around the world, are explored to develop an understanding of the physical and human environment. Map skills are introduced using a range of atlases, maps, aerial photographs and computer software. Pupils are given the opportunity to draw their own maps and develop keys and symbols.

At Key Stage 2, map work is further extended to include, co-ordinates and grid references, an in depth knowledge of the world around us including the patterns and the inter-related nature of human and physical systems. Changes to the environment over time are explained using Axbridge as a focus. Comparisons are made with other settlements in the U.K. and around the world.

ART AND DESIGN

Artwork in our School is taught through cross curricular activities and discrete areas of learning. Lessons include individual, group and class work. The children experience a wide variety of media, tools and skills. We also study a broad range of artists whose work spans different times, cultures and genre. We work with visiting artists on small and large-scale projects. This serves to enrich the children's knowledge and understanding, inspire their imaginations, and promote the development of practical skills and critical thinking.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

By teaching Design and Technology we hope to stimulate the children's intellectual and creative abilities as well as helping them to be aware of the 'made' world and the needs of others.

Children are taught a variety of design and making skills with an emphasis on the safe use of a variety of tools. They are taught to include different designs and to aim for the best possible quality of finished product.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The lessons will be of a varied nature, including teaching of skills which improve agility, balance, co-ordination of eye and limbs and confidence. Children are introduced to a range of movement and skills which can be used in later gymnastics, dance, etc. The lessons will be selected from:- Floor activities, large and small apparatus work, games skills, a wide variety of team games, music and movement and country/line dancing. During the warmer months most of the lessons will be outdoors in the playground or on the field, while at other times the hall is used. An excellent selection of equipment is available. The older children are taken swimming in the Spring term, to an indoor pool at Cheddar. These pupils take a variety of ASA awards and badges and we are always pleased with the range of success achieved at swimming.

In their final year the children go on a residential visit to take part in adventurous and outdoor activities run by a professional company.

Our annual sports day gives opportunities for pupils to participate in competitions in a caring, supportive environment.

Year 3 & 4 pupils have the opportunity to attend after school: football, hockey, rounders and tag rugby clubs and take part in competitive matches, throughout the year. We also take part in Rugby, Athletics and will be doing a swimming gala.

Year 1 & 2 pupils also have the opportunity to attend a sports club based on basic skills and playground games.

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

All pupils receive discrete teaching once a week to develop computer skills and an understanding of their everyday application. We have a computer suite of 18 workstations with an interactive whiteboard. In addition the Foundation and Key Stage 1 classrooms each have two networked computers. We have interactive whiteboards in all classrooms and the nursery. All workstations are fully networked and have Internet access including nursery. We have a wide range of programs available for the children to use. Children will have experience of art programs, word processing, music creation, database use, data handling, e-mail and use of the Internet for which parental permission is required.

MUSIC

We aim to promote understanding and enjoyment of music by developing the skills of singing, playing, listening and composing.

Throughout the school pupils participate in musical performance activities. They use a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, and sing songs from and listen to a range of music from other cultures, classic and modern. Some of this work is linked to drama and movement.

Year 3 and 4 pupils have the opportunity to learn the recorder in school. The school also participates in the Somerset music scheme which allows pupils to receive peripatetic tuition in a range of instruments. If you are interested in this opportunity, please speak to the Headteacher.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION & CITIZENSHIP

PSHEC aims to enable pupils to value others, and feel valued, respect others and be respected, be independent and behave responsibly. Children are taught to understand the consequences of their actions and to treat others the way they would like to be treated.

The programme is delivered through circle time and PSHEC lessons within the class, and through the 'Golden Rules' and assemblies as a whole school.

As a school we achieved the National Healthy School Award in 2004 and we encourage children to develop a healthy, safer lifestyle.

Preparation for Growing Up

Sex Education is not taught as a specific subject but is integrated into the normal school curriculum in Health, Science, Personal, Social and Moral Education. It is incorporated within the Science Guidelines which may be seen at the school.

All the schemes of work for each subject are available for your inspection at any time.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The School is committed to supporting pupils with particular learning difficulties. There are comprehensive arrangements in place to monitor and review pupils' progress in a carefully planned programme for the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Those pupils supported make good progress under the guidance of the Special Needs Co-ordinator and the Special Needs Assistants.

Where appropriate, the school aims to give special help to children with specific or general learning difficulties AND to very able children. Pupils will not be streamed and all children will have access to the whole of the National Curriculum. However, the work set will match the individual pupil's needs and abilities. Children with severe learning difficulties will also receive intensive personal tuition. Children with particularly severe learning and/or behavioural difficulties may, with their parents' consent, be referred to the Educational Psychologist, The Behaviour Support Teacher and other outside Professionals.

The School has adopted the procedures recommended by the 2001 Code of Practice.

Consultations

My Staff and I are always available to discuss the current progress of your child. You will appreciate, however, that we all have a teaching commitment and may not always be available at very short notice. A quick word or note to the class teacher is needed so a mutually convenient time can be arranged. Should you wish to make a more formal appointment with myself, please ring or call at the school.

Extra-curricular Activities

A variety of activities take place throughout the year depending on interest and staff availability. We have a wide range of sporting activities after school which include basket-ball, football, tag-rugby, hockey, tennis, rounders, cricket and cross-country running. Each activity lasts for a set number of weeks and then moves onto another activity, so every interest can be catered for. We compete in football and rounders with other First School teams in the Cheddar Valley, as well as taking part in Rugby & Hockey Tournaments. We also support a variety of musical activities including recorder club and a school choir. There is available a wide range of instrument tuition including keyboard, guitar, violin, brass and wind instruments. The children take part in the Cheddar Valley Music Festival each summer and compete in the Lions Club Music Festival. Each Christmas we perform a whole school concert which results in extra clubs for dance, acting and singing throughout the Autumn Term. We have a specialist music teacher who teaches in every class and who takes Key Stage singing each week and a specialist games coach to teach Key Stage Games for an hour each week.

We also offer a French Club for Year 3 / 4 pupils. This is run by Mrs Dibb, the Deputy Headteacher.

We believe children should have a say in their own schooling, and therefore we have a "School Council" representing children from Year 1 to Year 4. These children (2 from each class) represent their peers and meet with the Headteacher each fortnight.

Each year the children undertake an educational visit to a range of locations. Year 4 go to the Forest of Dean on a residential 3 day visit, where they undertake orienteering, hill-walking, abseiling and team initiatives.

The school also supports an After School Care Club for children, lasting from the end of the school day until 6.00pm. This is self - financing and is run by Mrs Lyn Maunders. A wide range of activities take place including board games, ball games, snooker and art and craft activities. The session begins with a light snack and the children thoroughly enjoy their time at the club. For further information please contact Mrs Lyn Maunders on 07708982481.

Final Statement

The information supplied in this brochure was correct at the time of publication. Changes in curricular requirements and other factors may, of course, alter arrangements in the school before your child can be admitted. The Headteacher will be happy to appraise any prospective parent on request of anything, which may have altered or is likely to change in the foreseeable future.

All parents are very welcome to visit the school prior to placing their child's name on our admissions list.

May 2006