



St Michael's CE (A) Primary School

The Ark 2023-2024

An introduction to The Ark



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Welcome to The Ark

Dear Parents and Carers,

This booklet aims to answer some of the questions you may have about how The Ark is organised.



We are a welcoming, ambitious Christian school where different faiths and cultures are respected, and where everyone is valued as a precious gift of God, created in God's image. We recognise and develop the potential of each and every person and tirelessly pursue excellence, empowering all with the confidence for lifelong learning and a readiness to play a positive role in the community.

We are delighted that you have chosen for your child to join our school community.

In 2022, we were privileged to open a SEND Unit, The Ark, for primary aged pupils from across the Local Authority who have additional needs in the area of Social, Emotional and Mental Health. The Ark is part of St Michael's CE (A) Primary School.

And, in April 2023, we received our SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) Inspection which rated St Michael's as 'Excellent'. The report starts by saying, '*St Michael's is a beacon of love and hope ... Here lives are being transformed.*' We would encourage you to read our full report which can be found at the back of this prospectus. We are very proud of what we have achieved.

However, if you have any concerns relating to daily life in The Ark, please share these with us as soon as possible so problems can be resolved quickly.

We hope that your time with us is a long and happy one.

Mrs Kate Jackson B.Ed (Hons) NPQH
Headteacher



1. About the Ark

'See, I am sending an angel before you to protect you on your journey and lead you safely to the place I have prepared for you.' Exodus 23: 20

During 2021/2022, the school opened a new SEND Unit for primary age pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs, from across Wolverhampton Local Authority.

At 'The Ark' we aim to support children whose SEMH needs mean they need provision that is not routinely found within mainstream educational settings. Our service is positioned to support children whose SEMH needs present primarily through behaviours which make them vulnerable: attachment needs, anxiety, low mood, low self-esteem (etc). While sometimes these underlying difficulties may result in challenging behaviour, this should not be the pupil's primary form of communication.

To achieve this goal, we have provision which includes: therapeutic spaces, availability of sensory equipment, an enhanced PSHE curriculum focused on specific areas of need for individual young people and partnerships with supportive external agencies such as Soccer 2000 and CAMHS.

The Ark maintains academic rigour and high expectations of children's learning, whilst the therapeutic approach enables children in The Ark to feel comfortable and confident when taking part in the unit's broad and balanced curriculum.

Pupils will be considered for The Ark when it is clear that they will benefit from the provision and that they meet the following criteria:

- Aged 4-11
- The pupil has an Education Health and Care Plan. However, in exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to make an emergency placement
- The Education Health and Care Plan identifies SEMH, as the primary need

Admission to The Ark, is only by consultation through the SENSTART team and with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) naming The Ark as the named setting on the finalised EHCP. Children will be on roll at St Michael's CE (A) Primary School and attending The Ark.





'Leaders make bold, ethical decisions to ensure the needs of all are met. Their commitment to build the Ark is testament to the vision of inclusivity. This social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) unit has an exceptional impact in supporting pupils' needs. It symbolises a place of sanctuary and safety. As a result, significantly more vulnerable pupils are accessing learning and making progress. Timely intervention and dedicated specialist support are pursued tenaciously to ensure all barriers to learning are overcome. St Michael's is truly inclusive, welcoming every child into the school family.' SIAMS Report, April 2023

2. How is The Ark organised?

Governors

The Governing Body consists of the following members:

Mrs S Douglas (Chair)	Mrs L Guest (Platt)	Mrs C Budd
Mrs D McKenzie-Plummer	Rev R Reeve	Mrs A Orme
Mrs R Vann	Mrs M Grychtol	Mr P Johal
Mrs K Jackson (Headteacher)	Mr S Roberts	Mr S Hardy

The Governing Body have an important role in the smooth running of the school and are responsible for: Curriculum aims and policies, Management of the Budget, Appointment of Staff and Admissions, Religious Education and Collective Worship, Special Educational Needs, The Positive Behaviour policy and attendance, Relations between school and community, Complaints, the use of school premises, Charging and remissions arrangements, Equal Opportunities and the provision of sex education.

The Governing Body work in partnership with the Headteacher, school staff, Lichfield Diocese and the Local Authority.

The Governing Body meets each term and the Headteacher produces a termly report for them.

Meetings of the governing body's committees take place regularly during the year.

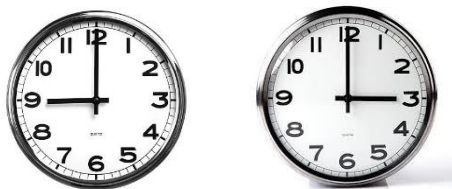
Parent Governors are elected by the parents. When a vacancy arises parents are informed and ballot papers are issued.

The Ark Staff: 2023 - 2024

Mrs K Jackson	Headteacher
Mrs HM Navratil	Acting Deputy Headteacher and KS2 Phase Leader
Miss L MacDonald	Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion
Mrs S Bhogal	Ark Teacher
Mr D Machangara	Ark Teacher
Mrs C Killeen	Therapeutic Teaching Assistant
Mrs M Todd	Therapeutic Teaching Assistant
Miss E Johnson	Therapeutic Teaching Assistant
Mrs S Harty	Business Manager
Mrs V Hallam	Senior Administrator and Attendance Officer
Mr P Lee	Caretaker/Site Manager
Mrs D Cox	Education Welfare Officer

Timings of the Day

9am to 3pm



Punctuality and attendance are monitored on a weekly basis.

Most children are transported to The Ark by taxi, however, when children are transported by their parents then children arriving after 9am should report to the school office and parents are asked to sign their children in.

Attendance

Children should attend school regularly, except in cases of illness.

Attendance figures are monitored nationally so it is important to notify us about children's absence. The school target for 2023 - 2024 continues to be 96.5%.

If your child is absent, please telephone school on the first day, email the school or send a written note of explanation so that an authorised absence can be recorded. Unauthorised absences are regarded as 'truancy'. Our school's Education Welfare Officer visits school regularly and will follow up unauthorised absences and lateness.

Mrs Hallam is responsible for monitoring attendance and lateness daily. The school informs parents on a termly basis about their child's attendance and contacts parents when attendance falls below 93%.

Holidays

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. (Amendments to the 2006 Education Regulations). This means that holidays taken in term time will not be authorised. If parents believe that they have exceptional circumstances for taking their children out of school, then they must submit a completed 'Leave of Absence' form in advance of the leave. Leave of Absence forms are available from the school office. Parents need to be aware that unauthorised absences can lead to prosecution.

School Visits

When children start at The Ark parents are requested to give consent for all local neighbourhood visits. This enables us to reduce the duplication of unnecessary paperwork. Aware of the current economic climate we try to limit the number of long-distance visits to prevent financial pressure on parents. Children will take part in local neighbourhood visits throughout the year which include walks to church. Parents and carers will be notified of all visits that are beyond the local area.



School Meals

A choice of cooked school dinners is available for children in The Ark. The multi - choice menu is available should you wish to see it. All children in KS1 (Key Stage One) and Reception are able to have a free meal at lunchtime. However, as our funding is based on eligible parents applying for Free School Meals, it is vitally important that those parents who believe they are entitled to free school meals inform us of their national insurance number and date of birth so that we can perform a check on their behalf.



For children in Key Stage Two, dinner money should be paid online using our online payment system - Schoolcomms.

You may prefer to send your child with a packed lunch. This should be brought in a plastic container which is clearly named. Water is available for the children. Please do not send sweets to school. We encourage parents to send a healthy, balanced packed lunch, which may include a fruit drink such as apple juice or orange juice (one of your five a day). We request that no nuts are sent into school. Thank you.

School Milk

Milk is available at lunchtimes for all children, if they wish.

Mid - Morning break: Free fruit is provided for Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 children whilst Key Stage 2 children may bring fruit from home. No other snacks are permitted at morning break.

Chewing gum is not allowed in school.

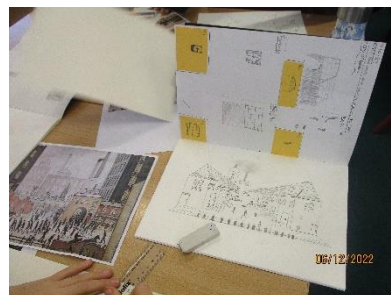
4. What happens during the School Day?

The Ark Curriculum



Our curriculum includes carefully sequenced lessons to identify next steps for teaching and learning. We are determined to ensure our pupils are successful learners who enjoy learning and are confident and resilient. Each pupils' offer is differentiated according to their needs. We believe that every single pupil is capable of making a positive contribution to society but understand this won't

happen without a carefully sequenced curriculum that supports their personal development and enables them to know more, remember more and do more. We use a nurture-based approach that integrates knowledge about adverse childhood experience, special education and the way children learn. The curriculum also includes the development of positive values and attitudes.



The curriculum is broad and balanced to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional and physical development of all pupils whilst preparing them for adult life and society. Under the 1988 Education Act parents have access to certain documents and policies relating to the curriculum. Documents related to the curriculum can be found on the school website – www.stmichaelscofeprimary.co.uk. If you require more information you are welcome to ask Mrs Jackson for this.

Religious Education

In The Ark, we want all children to enjoy R.E and take the opportunity to reflect upon various religious faiths, developing a thirst for knowledge and wisdom. We want all children to understand the core importance of RE in our curriculum and the way it helps each one of us to value and respect the diverse cultures and faiths represented by our school and wider community.

The core concepts of Christianity and other major world faiths are taught in order to build respect and tolerance of various beliefs and encourage respectful dialogue between children and children, adults and children and adults and adults. We aim for all children to learn how to disagree well and talk about their own, and other, beliefs in a respectful and appropriate way. We want children to be able to reflect on their own experiences and develop a personal response to the fundamental questions of life.



Music



All the children have the opportunity to take part in musical activities including singing and percussion.

String and brass instruments are taught to small groups of KS2 children by peripatetic staff. Children may take music exams with these instruments. Parents are requested to make a termly payment towards tuition costs of £50. This is subsidised by school. Wider musical opportunities are offered through regular drumming lessons in The Ark.



PE and School Sports

Physical education includes gymnastics, dance, games, athletics, outdoor adventurous activity and swimming. We aim for all pupils to participate in 2 hours of games and sporting activities irrespective of their ability. The school aims to encourage fair play, co-operation and self-discipline in abiding by the rules of the games. Team sporting activities include football, rounders, multi-skills, cross-country and orienteering. We aim to develop team identification by wearing our school PE kit. We look for parental support in achieving this. In addition, children in The Ark access a gross motor skills programme and calisthenics on a daily basis along with individually tailored sensory circuits.



Curriculum Newsletters

Curriculum information is uploaded termly to the school's website so you know what areas of work your child will be covering. This will enable you to support them at home by finding relevant library books, making visits and undertaking research on the internet.

5. What are the Policies that underpin what happens in The Ark?

Christian Education

As a Church of England School, we seek to place God at the heart of the life and work of our school. We hope that children will develop an awareness of God as Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and the importance of faith and trust. We want all children to discover their worth and value in the eyes of God and come to know that they are loved by Him.

Our programme of work for Religious Education takes into account the teaching and practices of other principal religions represented in Great Britain. Children are given opportunity to reflect and question.

A central part of each day is Collective Worship and prayer. At The Ark we have daily Worship where we focus on a key theme through games, share our thoughts and ideas and pray together. We hope that our children will come to see worship, prayer, thanksgiving and intercession as an important part of their lives.

The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, teachers and children lead our Worship during the term whilst members of our Spiritual Council and Chaplaincy Team also lead acts of Worship in school, on a regular basis.

We would like to encourage parents to worship with the school at church for special occasions, such as St. Michael's Day, Harvest, Christmas, Easter and Pentecost.

If parents wish to withdraw their children from RE or Collective Worship they are welcome to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Assessment

Children's work is regularly assessed in order to record what has been achieved and to plan future learning. We baseline children and keep a log of individual progress to support identifying and addressing gaps.

The Reception children are assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.

Statutory Testing

Currently statutory tests for Year 6 take place during the summer term. Results for individual children are given out to parents. During 2023/2024 parents of children in Year 6 will be given more detail about the content of tests that are to be undertaken. For the first time, statutory tests will not be conducted at the end of Year 2, although internal assessments will take place.

In addition, children in Year 1, and some Year 2 children, take a phonics screening check in June of every year. This is a short, light-touch assessment to confirm whether individual children have



learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. It will help to identify whether your child needs additional support at this stage so that they do not fall behind in these vital early reading skills.

Our results vary annually depending on the ability of the class and the number of children with special needs or who have newly arrived in the country. The most recent outcomes are available on our website.

Children in Year 4 will complete a national multiplication tables check. The multiplication tables check is designed to help ensure children in primary school know their times tables up to 12, off by heart. As well as being critical for everyday life, knowledge of multiplication tables helps children to solve problems quickly and flexibly and allows them to tackle more complex mathematics later on in school.

Overall our policy is to plan a programme of work which best suits your child's presenting needs.

We aim to meet the needs of all the children through differentiated and adapted work in the classroom. We set targets for children to work towards.

Staff might seek advice from outside agencies and support services to assist them in planning programmes of work for the children. These include staff from Wolverhampton Outreach Team and the Educational Psychologist.

In line with the Government's Code of Practice, the school keeps a special needs register which records the stages children are on. This is audited annually.

Miss Lauren MacDonald (Assistant Headteacher) is the School's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and Inclusion Leader. She is supported by Mrs Hayley Wilkes, SEND Teacher. Parents are encouraged to help their children meet set targets and to contact school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or attainment.

Charging Policy

School Visits and Activities

When educational visits and activities take place during school time, we usually request voluntary contributions from parents. If you cannot make a contribution, please see Mrs Jackson so she can ensure that no child is excluded from the activity. We are grateful for your contributions which enable visits and school activities to take place.

Music Tuition

Parents of children receiving brass or strings instrumental tuition will receive letters requesting a payment of £50 per term to help towards the cost of this tuition.

Medicines

In line with new health and safety procedures, school is able to administer both prescribed and non-prescribed medicine. However, a consent form must be completed by the parent/carer before

any medicine is given. If your child has asthma or emergency medication, please discuss this with Mrs Hallam or Mrs Harty in the School Office so arrangements can be made.

Confidentiality and Child Protection

There may be times when a child wishes to confide in an adult in school. It is the school policy that information may need to be passed on to the Headteacher if there is a risk of harm to the child. The Headteacher will then decide what action to take to protect the best interest of the child, enabling action to be taken by other professionals if deemed necessary.



There may be other occasions when the Headteacher seeks advice from other professionals in instances of Child Protection issues.

The Headteacher, Mrs Jackson is the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the School. She is assisted by Mrs Navratil, Mrs Vann and Miss MacDonald.

Complaints Procedure

From time to time there might be a need to complain to the school. In such instances we hope you will let us know. We encourage parents to contact the Headteacher at the earliest stage as we take these initial concerns seriously and aim to resolve problems before they develop into formal complaints.



The school has policies and procedures in place for all complaints.

There are separate statutory procedures for complaints about admissions, exclusions, relationships and sex education and Special Needs. In all instances the Headteacher will explain the stages involved be it at an informal level or formally to the Governing Body or Local Authority.

Complaints will be investigated fairly and carefully.

The full details of the school complaints procedure are available in school.

We are also grateful for your positive feedback when you are satisfied with school activities. Please let us know.

Further information and policies are available on the school website at www.stmichaelscofeprimary.co.uk

6. Parents and Carers in Partnership



Parental help is welcomed and parents/carers are encouraged to become involved in their children's education especially in the teaching of reading, learning spellings, encouraging homework to be completed and upholding our Positive Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies.

There are many ways you can help your child at home, for example, hearing your child read, assisting with learning spellings, encouraging the use of TT Rockstars, encouraging them to complete projects and extra work that is set by the teacher—Information is sent out to parents every year.

In addition, parents are regularly invited to school to share in their child's learning journey. Opportunities are shared with parents through letter, MarvellousMe, and on the school website.



School News

We keep you informed of school news through our newsletters. These are numbered so you can tell if you have missed one. A reference copy is displayed on the Parent Noticeboard on the outside of the building. We often put notices and reminders on the Parent Noticeboard and send MarvellousMe messages. Newsletters are also available at www.stmichaelscofeprimary.co.uk



7. Further General Information

School Clothing

School uniform is available to be purchased at 'Crested Schoolwear' in the Wolverhampton Wulfrun Centre, as well as in school. You are also able to order online via the shop's website www.crestedschoolwear.co.uk Minimal stock is held in school. More information is available from the school office including up to date prices. Nearly new uniform is often available, please ask for details.



Children are expected to look after their own school clothing. In case they misplace anything please ensure that your child's clothing is clearly named. School cannot be held responsible for lost items of clothing.

We encourage the children to wear school clothing as follows:

- White blouse, white shirt or white polo shirt
- Green pullover, cardigan or sweatshirt
- Grey pinafore dress or skirt, grey trousers
- Green tie with narrow yellow stripes (to be worn with a white shirt, only)
- Green, grey or white socks, or tights
- Dresses for summer green or yellow / white check

Please do not send your child to school wearing nail varnish.

Footwear

Sensible, flat dark shoes are most suitable for school. Trainers should not be worn all day as they are for leisure times and do not look very smart. High heeled, sling backs, fashion shoes and boots are unsafe especially on our stairs and playground. These should not be worn at school for health and safety reasons.

At The Ark children are provided with Crocs to wear whilst in the building. These stay at The Ark and children are encouraged to change their shoes at the door.

P.E. Kit

Children should wear emerald green shorts and a white t-shirt with the school logo on for PE lessons. All children joining St Michael's will be issued with one PE t-shirt free of charge from school. A small bag is useful to keep PE kit safe. PE kits and bags are available to buy from school.

Outdoor footwear for PE is:

- Black slip - on pumps for Foundation Stage and Key Stage One
- Trainers for Key Stage Two

In cold weather, children may wear tracksuit bottoms and sweatshirts if they are taking part in PE outdoors.

It is expected that children are sensibly dressed for school. Wearing St. Michael's uniform looks smart and contributes to a sense of belonging and fosters a feeling of pride. We hope you will support the school and encourage your child to wear the school colours.

Please name your child's belongings as occasionally things get lost. Our Site Manager or Office Staff will help you look for lost property. We do our best to find lost items in school, but we are not responsible for a child's personal lost or damaged property.

Jewellery

For health and safety reasons, jewellery should not be worn at school. If parents feel it necessary for their child to wear earrings, these should be studs. Consideration will be made for religious artefacts. If kara are worn during PE they will be taped safely in place. If watches are worn at school, they are the child's responsibility especially in instances of damage or loss.

Earrings **MUST** be removed for PE lessons. Staff are not allowed to take earrings out or put plasters over the ears. If your child cannot take his/her own stud ear-rings out then they should be removed at home before coming to school.

If a child has something valuable or special this needs to be left at home as the school cannot take responsibility for such items.

Schoolcomms

Parents and Carers are able to pay for school dinners, trips, uniform and other events using the online payment system. Once children are on roll, parents will be provided with a letter containing the information on how to register and will then be able to make fast and secure payments to school.

Although we are trying to reduce the number of cash payments to school, we understand that for some parents this is their preferred option and therefore we will continue to offer this facility.

MarvellousMe!

MarvellousMe is our main form of keeping parents up to date with our latest news, general messages and important information. MarvellousMe helps teachers and parents to work closely together so that parents feel included in their child's learning journey. In addition, we use MarvellousMe to communicate positive behaviour and academic achievement.

Once children are on roll, parents will be provided with a letter containing a unique access code.



SCHOOL PRAYER

God of love,
Open our hearts and minds,
to you and each other,
so that this school community may
be
a place of loving and learning.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

A PRAYER FOR PARENTS

Heavenly Father,
Give to parents, love and
understanding,
in the responsibilities of family life.
May the love and care of our homes,
show your love and care for all your
children.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



It is hoped that the information found in this booklet is of use to you. Thank you for helping us to help your child. Your support and encouragement are invaluable in assisting your child in becoming a lifelong learner. If there is anything else you would like to know or if you have suggestions to assist the efficient running of our school please let us know.

The information in this booklet is correct at time of printing but it is possible that changes may be made during the school year.

