St Philip's Catholic Primary School

"Let Your Light Shine"









School Prospectus 2026-2027

Welcome Letter

Dear Prospective Families,



Welcome to St Philip's Catholic Primary School and thank you for your interest in our school. I hope this prospectus will act as a guide to the way St Philip's strives to live out our Mission.

Our school is very much a family and creates a welcoming, caring and safe environment for our children. In an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect, each member is valued. We recognise that all children are unique and so we offer appropriate support and challenge. All our children are encouraged to reach their potential, to celebrate their successes, while becoming confident and independent individuals. We want all members of our school community to "Let their Light Shine."

Our school is proud of its strong community. We value our partnership with parents and the wider community. Parents play a crucial role as an integral part of our school community and we appreciate their involvement in the life and the work of the school.

At St Philip's, children are encouraged to be respectful and sensitive to the needs of others. Children are given opportunities within the classroom to develop their nurturing skills; we also have a team of children who are 'Wellbeing Champions'. Each year the children have the opportunity to be elected to the School Council, Arts Council, Online Safety Cadets, Forest Friends or to become Spiritual Leaders. In addition, our school supports many charities including the Uckfield Food Bank, Mission Together and CAFOD.

At St Philip's, we foster a love of learning in our children and to allow every child to work to the best of their ability, striving for excellence in all we do. Our curriculum is exciting and engaging, so that it is enjoyable and relevant for children, while at the same time maintaining rigour and high expectations. We recognise that you will expect the very best education for your child. At St Philip's you will find excellent opportunities for your child to achieve their potential; we nurture the individual child's strengths and interests. We have a very successful music programme and we also compete regularly against local schools in sporting events and are proud of our achievements and positive sporting behaviour.

By the time children leave St Philip's we hope they will have embraced all the opportunities available to them, enjoyed their time at St Philip's and developed their confidence and independence. We hope we will have helped them to learn the skills and attitudes necessary to take on the new and exciting challenges of secondary school and to become responsible aware citizens in 21st Century Britain.

I look forward to meeting you and to answering any questions that you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sarah McCurdy
Headteacher

St Philip's Catholic Primary School

Our Mission Statement

We are all unique, created by God with our own talents and potential.

We love learning, we explore our interests and never give up when things get hard.

We are kind and care for others and ourselves, we smile and do good in the world.

We are a community of faith, living as Jesus taught us.

Let your light shine!



St Philip's Catholic Primary School

St Philip's is a Voluntary Aided Catholic Church School, in the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, but operates as part of the maintained (state) school system administered by East Sussex County Council.

Headteacher:
Mrs Sarah McCurdy

Assistant Headteachers:
Mrs Ellie Taylor and Mr Michael McCurdy

Inclusion Lead:
Mrs Angela Squizzoni

Chair of Governors:
Mrs Julia Webb (please contact via the school office)

Postal Address:
St Philip's Catholic Primary School
New Town, High Street, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5DJ

Telephone: 01825 762032
Fax: 01825 748706
School Office Email: office@stphilips.e-sussex.sch.uk

Web Site Address: www.stphilips.e-sussex.sch.uk

All visitors to the school are requested to come to the front entrance and report to the school office.

To safeguard our children, all visitors to the school will be asked to sign in and wear a visitor's badge. Regular volunteers/ visitors will be subject to a DBS check.

To apply for a place at the school, please contact the School Office, alternatively you can download forms from our website.

10 Good Reasons for Choosing Our School

Written by the School Council

- There is good quality learning and the teachers are always there to help you.
- The teachers are kind and funny.
- We have a massive field with football goals and oak trees.
- You will make loads of friends here!
- There is play equipment you can climb on.
- We go on exciting school trips.
- Our teachers are really nice.
- We have lots of fun activities in PE.
- We have staff who can help you with anything!
- The food is really yummy!



Our History

St Philip's Catholic Primary School has a long and proud history. There has been a St Philip's School in Uckfield for over 140 years.

It was first established in 1885 by Lady Philippa Howard and then re-formed in 1896 by the Sisters of Mercy. The sisters were involved in the running of the school for over 100 years. The school has log books dating right back to 1885 and these are a rich historical resource. We celebrated our centenary in 1985.

St Philip's School previously occupied a site at the other end of town in Church Street, but moved into the present building just after World War II. We have now celebrated over 80 years in our present school building, but it has gone through many changes and a series of building projects has given us virtually a new school. An extensive St Philip's Building Project was completed in 1998 and the new buildings were opened officially by Bishop Cormac Murphy O'Connor (later Cardinal Archbishop Emeritus of Westminster) in April 1999.

In 2014, the playground project was completed after the sale of the convent, providing a new KS1 playground. In 2015 we completed our all-weather play area on the field, thanks to contributions from the Friends' and the Governors' Fund. More recently, we completed a new office, entrance area, nurture room and remodelled infant classrooms thanks to funding obtained from the DFE and the Governors' Fund. We have also created an outside classroom.

St. Philip's Catholic Primary School has close links with the Catholic Church of Our Lady Immaculate and St Philip Neri in Uckfield, and is part of the Lewis Parish provision for Catholic education.





Our Location and Facilities

The school is situated on the main road through Uckfield, next to Our Lady Immaculate and St Philip Neri Church. It is built on a large open site with pleasant rural views.

St Philip's provides education for boys and girls aged between 3 and 11. We currently have approximately 205 children on roll.

The pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 (KS1) are accommodated in three classrooms built on the ground floor within the historic building. Pupils in Key Stage 2 (KS2) occupy classrooms on the first floor upstairs.

We have seven classrooms, together with a hall, three group rooms, a computer suite, staffroom, offices and an outside classroom.

We have dedicated outdoor play spaces for the youngest children, along with a Forest Area and an all-weather play equipment area to enhance their development and learning.

The school has a large playing field with two football pitches and an all-weather play area, in addition to two playground areas. Our facilities for encouraging sport and games are excellent. We have built an exciting outdoor play area, which can be used by children during playtimes and PE lessons.

Our infant playground area was opened and blessed by the Bishop in 2011; it incorporates an outside area for our Year 2 class. The School Council were instrumental in designing and choosing new playground equipment, including our pirate ship HMS St Philip's, which was funded by our Friends' Association.





The Staff of St Philip's Catholic Primary School

The Senior Leadership Team:

Headteacher:
Mrs Sarah McCurdy

Assistant Headteachers:
Mr Michael McCurdy and Mrs Ellie Taylor

Inclusion Lead:
Mrs Angela Squizzoni

Teaching Staff

Mr Michael McCurdy	Miss Mia Hailstone	Mr Josh Davis
Mrs Ellie Taylor	Mrs Ruth Burman	Mrs Coretha Collins
Mrs Natalie Brown	Mrs Grace Britton	Mrs Anna Thompson
Mrs Naomi Hayward	Mrs Becky Skilton *(on maternity leave)*	

Support Staff

Mrs Nicola Gregory (Higher Level)	Mrs Jeanette Neill
Mrs Poppy Smith (Higher Level)	Mrs Andrea Everest
Miss April Pescott (Higher Level)	Mrs Lorraine Crees
Mrs Naomi Hayward	Mrs Laura Duarte
Mrs Sue Masrani	Mrs Afia Begum
Mr Lewis Heffer	Mrs Kim Smith
Miss Jennifer Egeland	Mrs Lucy Marchant *(on maternity leave)*

Office Staff
Business Manager: Mrs Siobhan Foden
Secretary: Mrs Pauline Carless

Site Management Staff
Caretaker: Mr Jason Marsh
Cleaners: Mr Steve Layton
Ms Shirley Fuller

Lunchtime Teaching Assistants

Mrs Crees	Miss Pescott
Mrs K Smith	Mrs Hayward
Mrs Neill	Mrs Everest
Mrs Schofield	Mrs Begum
Mr Heffer	Mrs Masrani
Mrs Duarte	Mrs Foxley-Tuvey

Breakfast Club Staff
Mrs Naomi Hayward
Miss April Pescott
Mrs Andrea Everest
Mrs Jeanette Neill

In addition to the people listed above, who are employed directly by the school governors, we also have people working in the school but employed by East Sussex County Council and its contractors.

The Governing Body of St. Philip's Catholic Primary School

Governors work with the Headteacher to make decisions about how the school is run. School Governors have legal duties, powers and responsibilities. They meet as a body at least once a term and conduct detailed business through a series of committees.

St Philip's Governors are a dedicated team who share a real concern and interest in the life and work of the school.

Parent governors are elected by the parent body, Foundation Governors are appointed by the Bishop and the LA Governor by the Local Authority. Governors visit our school to monitor progress on the School Improvement Plan.

Foundation Governors, appointed by the Bishop to represent the Catholic Church:
Chair of Governors: Mrs Julia Webb
Vice-Chair of Governors: Mr Michael Evans

Mrs Veronica Jones
Mrs Teresa Horan
Mrs Elizabeth Lewis
Mrs Cherilyn Meredith

Parent Governors, elected by the parent body:
Mrs Amy Clark

Staff Governor, elected by school staff:
Vacancy

Local Authority Governor (nominated by East Sussex County Council):
Mr Hugh Jones

Co-opted Governor
Vacancy

Headteacher
Mrs Sarah McCurdy

Associate Governors
Mrs Siobhan Foden (School Business Manager)
Mrs Jackie Nolan

Clerk to Governors
Mrs Janet Schofield

Our Pupils

We have approximately 205 pupils enrolled at St Philip's. They are arranged into seven classes. These are all single-age classes from Years 1-6, with Nursery and Reception operating as an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Unit. The school offers a Catholic education. The governors expect that parents applying for places for their children will accept and uphold the Catholic character and ethos of the school. The school was set up primarily to serve the Catholic community in the parishes of Uckfield, Herons Ghyll and Heathfield. Although Catholic children have priority of admission, the Governing Body also welcomes applications from those of other faiths, along with applications from non-religious children.



Starting School at Age 4+

Although children are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday, schools must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday.

Inclusion

Inclusion is an ongoing process that celebrates diversity and involves the identification and minimising of barriers to learning and participation that might be experienced by any pupils, irrespective of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, language and social background, and the maximising of resources to reduce these barriers. At St Philip's we believe that every pupil has an entitlement to develop their talents. Educational experiences are provided which develop pupils' achievements and recognise their individuality. Diversity is valued as a rich resource, which supports the learning of all. In this school, inclusion recognises a child's right to a broad, balanced, relevant and challenging curriculum, which is appropriate to their individual abilities, talents, and personal qualities. We take account of the Disability Discrimination Act 2006 and the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Equal Opportunities

We regard the cultural diversity of our school community as a valuable resource in our curriculum planning and in the creation of our school environment. We aim for

children to have a positive self-image and respect for each other's cultural background. We are committed to ensuring that every individual at every stage of learning, regardless of sex, ethnic origin, religion or class, has access to and participates in the full curriculum in a way which takes proper account of their needs and abilities. We adhere to the Equality Act 2010.

Accessibility
In line with the SEN and Disability Act 2001, St Philip's has an Accessibility Action Plan to ensure equal access to the curriculum and to enhance the school's ability to respond positively to children with a range of disabilities. Ramps and a lift ensure full access to all areas of the school. There are two disabled toilets, one on each floor.

Higher attaining children
Since relative ability changes over time, learners may be regarded as higher attaining at different points in their school life. Tracking is used to identify under-achievement and exceptional achievement and to ensure all children are making good progress.

Teachers provide for these children in a variety of ways including differentiated activities, groups working with teaching assistants or other adults, providing extension activities and specialised challenges.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
St Philip's has a whole school approach to provision for children with Special Educational Needs. As a Catholic school, we are committed to the integration of all children as part of our community. At St Philips's, children are assessed regularly against clear criteria. In academic subjects such as reading, writing and maths, pupils who are not expected to achieve age related expectations for their year group, are given targeted support.

Whatever the child's ability, the school will aim to identify learning needs, make appropriate provision and monitor an individual's progress. The school staff will liaise closely with parents in seeking to provide the best for the children. We ensure that every child gets what they need not that every child gets the same.

Pupil Premium
Pupil Premium, which is additional to main school funding, must be used to address current underlying inequalities, by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most. Eligibility for the Pupil Premium has been extended to pupils who have been eligible for free school meals (FSM) at any point in the last 6 years and children adopted from care. Please let us know if your child falls into this category so that we can access additional funding. At St Philip's we ensure that teaching and learning opportunities meet the needs of all of the pupils. More details on the use of this funding, and how it will be used in school can be found on our school website.

The School Day

The school day starts at 8:45am
The door is opened at 8:35am. Registration is at 8:45am. We need to make a prompt start to lessons and would encourage all children and parents to be punctual. There is an assembly every morning, which is a collective act of worship.

Morning break:
Morning break is from 10:15 – 10:30am.

Lunchtime:
Lunch break is from 12:00 – 1:00pm.

Afternoon break (EYFS and KS1 only)
Afternoon break is 15 mins at a time to suit the class

The school day ends at 3:15pm

Lunchtime
During lunchtime children may either have a school lunch or bring a packed lunch. We encourage parents to provide a packed lunch that is healthy and sensible. Children are asked to take home any uneaten food so that parents will know if their child is eating their lunch. Any food containing nuts is not allowed as we do have members of our community with nut allergies.

Good quality, mid-day meals are prepared in our school kitchen by the company Chartwells. Children are generally offered a choice of three main courses with vegetables and there is a choice of desserts. The emphasis is on healthy eating. Parents will use ParentPay to pay for and choose their child's school lunch online.

If you think that your child may be entitled to a free school lunch please ask at the school office. We are happy to advise parents of their entitlement. All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to free school meals.

Snack time
We encourage healthy eating in the school. EYFS and KS1 children are provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable for break time. No sweets, crisps or biscuits please. All pupils are encouraged to bring a bottle of water into school every day.

The School Curriculum

Education at St Philip's School is exciting, stimulating and challenging. All children are provided with a wide range of learning opportunities based upon the local environment, first hand experience, observation and problem solving. The teaching and the work set is matched against the ability, needs, interest and experience of the children. We teach the **National Curriculum** throughout the school. **English, Maths and RE** are at the heart of what we teach and the central core skills that we develop in every child, in order to enable them to fulfil their potential; to make a valuable contribution to the community; and to prepare them for secondary schools and the world of work. Our Ofsted Report (April 2025) stated that, “Pupils flourish at this small and welcoming school. They develop a deep enthusiasm for learning and the world around them.”





Each term children have an overarching focus that holds this work together. Themed days, visitors and trips are used to enhance the children’s experience and develop their enthusiasm and a love of learning. We want our children to develop into life-long learners with a passion for learning.

Religious Education and Worship

St Philip’s is a Catholic school within Our Lady Immaculate & St Philip Neri Parish and we maintain strong links with the Church, which is next door to the school. Acts of Worship take place each day with the whole school or each Key Stage or in a class. We hold regular Liturgies and Masses, in the school and the church and families are encouraged to join us.

Parents have the legal right to withdraw their child from Religious Education and Worship. As this is a Catholic school, it is not expected that parents would request the withdrawal of their child from assemblies or Religious Education.

Our School motto, "Let your Light Shine"



Supporting the development of faith

We work closely with the Parish, Diocese and other Catholic schools to promote the development of faith through Religious Education, catechesis and evangelisation. Children are prepared for First Communion usually during Year 4. This is a parish-based programme but it is run with the full support of the school.

Personal Social and Health Education is a very important subject in a Catholic school. Again, like R.E. this permeates every aspect of the curriculum and our ways of working. Children meet weekly in Pastoral Care Groups. These are groups from across the school year groups led by a teacher and a teaching assistant. Family groups are kept together and the groups remain constant throughout the child's time at St Philip's. Children therefore have an opportunity to develop long lasting friendships with children outside of their own year group. PSHE includes health and sex education**.** As with all our school curriculum subjects, there are policies and schemes of work, which all parents can access.

Music and Drama

There are many opportunities for pupils to take part in musical and dramatic events. Each class takes responsibility for assemblies, Liturgies and Masses, which parents are invited to come and see. At Christmas time we put on an EYFS/Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Nativity play. Year Six pupils put on a musical drama production to celebrate the end of their time at St Philip's in the Summer term.

We currently offer the children the opportunity to learn the keyboard, violin, guitar and ukulele during school time, or become part of a "rock band" with Rocksteady group music lessons.

Sport

Sport is a great strength of the school. We encourage sport for all children in order to experience the enjoyment of sports and games and to help children to take responsibility for developing their fitness. We currently employ the company Active Education Sussex to lead some of our PE lessons and after school extra-curricular clubs.

We are part of the Uckfield Sports Partnership which is run by Uckfield College. They organise a number of inter-school sports events for our children to take part in during and after the school day.





All children also take part in our annual Sports' Day which provides the children with the opportunity to participate in a variety of fun but competitive activities.

Finally, our annual *Sponsored Walk* gives an opportunity for adults and children to work as a community to raise money for the school in a fun and healthy way.





Educational Visits

Pupils learn a tremendous amount from first-hand experiences and so we try to organise many visits to our local area. We are very fortunate in having such superb school grounds that provide a fabulous resource for learning. We also have easy access to the church next door, which is a resource for learning as well as a place of worship.

Children are regularly taken on visits within the local community e.g. to the fire station and local woodlands.

During the school year, the children can enjoy a wide range of educational visits. Some of the places we have visited in the past include: Herstmonceux Science Centre, Bodiam Castle, Preston Manor in Brighton, Drusillas and the Smugglers' Caves in Hastings.









Year 6 take part in a residential trip undertaking outdoor adventurous activities such as abseiling and sailing. Year 6 also have the opportunity to go on a spiritual retreat as part of their Leaving celebrations.







Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Children's work in Nursery and Reception focuses on their direct explorations with their environment where they learn to question and make discoveries about the world for themselves, in order to further their learning.

Play is used as a vehicle for children's learning at this stage as through play they develop their social skills and discover what things can do which will therefore lay the foundations upon which all future learning will be based.

There are also strong links with the outdoor environment being used as a teaching tool to enhance children's learning, with children having direct access to the outdoor environment throughout the day.

Most of the children's learning will take place through play based exploratory activities, alongside which they will participate in focused group activities for focused teaching.

The main focus in the Early Years will be on gaining understanding about the world around them, as well as supporting them in their social understanding to provide them with the necessary skills to support them in later life.

There is also a strong focus on supporting early reading. We use the Twinkl Phonics government accredited programme and each child will receive reading books and sounds to share at home in order to support and build upon the learning they do in school.







Wraparound Care

Our Breakfast Club is available five mornings a week from 7:45am – 8:35am and is run by the school staff members. Children can have a healthy breakfast, play games and enjoy craft activities before the start of the school day. The charge, currently £5 per day, covers the cost of care and a simple breakfast including toast, bagels, cereal, fruit and a drink. Booking and payment must be made in advance using ParentPay.

Our After School Club is run by Active Education Sussex and operates five days a week from 3:15 to 5:30. They offer a range of fun, creative activities both inside and outside and also provide the children with a light tea.

We also offer a range of extracurricular after school clubs, including: drama, street dance, karate, football and tennis.

Starting School – Children and Parents

In April, you will receive a letter informing you of the Governors' decision and, if you are offered a place at the school, there will be an acceptance form for you to fill in confirming that you accept the place being offered. Parents who are offered places at St Philip's will be given further opportunities to visit again throughout June and July in order for us to give you more information about starting school and to enable you to start to become part of our school community.

Before the children start school, the Reception teacher will visit local nurseries and preschools. The children will also be invited to attend two settling in sessions during July so that they get used to the classroom and meet their new teacher. We also hold a Teddy Bears' Picnic, where new and existing Reception families can start to get to know each other.

Admissions in September are staggered over a period of several days. This allows children to enter school part-time, in smaller groups, and helps ensure a happy and stable beginning to their school career. It may take a few days of gentle induction before your child is attending according to what will become their normal pattern.

Additional Information

The Role of Parents

Children make the most progress when parents are fully involved in their children's learning and we actively encourage parental involvement. We aim to work in partnership with parents in the education of their children. It is important that children are happy and at ease with the education process. The more aware parents are of the work of the school, the easier it is to develop this.

We hold Parent Consultation evenings and pupils' reports to give parents information and create the opportunity to discuss pupils' development and progress. Our Open Day gives parents and other interested persons the opportunity to view the school as a working environment.

Parents are encouraged to join with us in the various celebrations, activities and events that occur throughout the year. Many of these are held in conjunction with our Parish community and this strengthens our spirit of community and shared beliefs.

Charging Policies
In line with the East Sussex policy on charging, parents are not obliged to pay for activities which are National Curriculum entitlement, however, we will tell you the cost of each activity and ask you to make a contribution towards this cost. Obviously, we rely on the goodwill of parents or we would have difficulty funding these activities. Full payment for activities not within the National Curriculum must be made by parents. A detailed policy is available on the school website.

Voluntary Aided Status
St Philip's voluntary aided status means that Governors have certain responsibilities. These include:

- Ensuring Catholic teaching is part of the curriculum and liaising with the Parish Priest to help the school achieve this.
- Determining Admission Policy
- Employer of school staff
- Managing finances
- Owning and managing the school buildings including paying for maintenance and structural improvements

Being voluntary aided helps St Philip's achieve its mission to provide a Catholic education promoting the academic, physical, spiritual and social development of each child in a stimulating environment and with a broad and balanced curriculum.

As a voluntary aided school, we need to fund 10% towards all capital costs within the school such as building maintenance and projects. To meet its obligations, Governors are heavily dependent on donations from parents. All parents are asked to make a donation subject to personal circumstances in recognition of the fact that they are selecting a voluntary aided school to provide an education experience for their child that is consistent with their faith and beliefs. The School is able to claim Gift Aid on contributions made by tax payers who have completed a Gift Aid declaration. Details will be sent to you prior to your child starting school.

School Uniform

From the beginning of the Autumn term, pupils may be in summer or winter uniform. From the beginning of Term 2 (end of Oct/beginning of Nov) pupils must be in winter uniform.

WINTER UNIFORM from October half term.

BOYS – grey tailored trousers, bottle green V-neck jumper with school logo, bottle green polo shirt with school logo or plain bottle green polo shirt, grey or black socks.
GIRLS – grey skirt, grey pinafore dress or grey tailored trousers, green cardigan or jumper with the school logo, bottle green polo shirt with school logo or plain bottle green polo shirt, white socks or grey tights.

Footwear: Black shoes (not boots) that fit firmly to the feet.

SUMMER UNIFORM after Easter until October half term (weather permitting).

BOYS – grey shorts or trousers, bottle green polo shirt with school logo or plain bottle green polo shirt, grey or black socks.

GIRLS – bottle green and white checked summer dress, white socks. Girls may wear grey shorts or skirt and bottle green polo shirt if they prefer.

Shoes: please note that during warmer weather children's feet need to be enclosed within sandals (not open or strappy).

Jewellery: One pair of stud earrings and a watch only are allowed to be worn. Children must be able to remove their own earrings and watches for PE lessons. If they are unable to do this they must be removed at home before coming to school each day. We do not advise that children have their ears pierced at all but if you must do this, please do so at the beginning of the school summer holiday so that your child will not have to miss PE lessons if they are unable to remove earrings for 6 weeks.

Hair: All children with hair longer than shoulder length must have their hair fully tied back. Bands and clips in hair should be small and match school colours i.e. black, white or green. Shaved designs/images in hair are not allowed.

SPORTS WEAR FOR P.E. LESSONS:
For both boys and girls – bottle green shorts, P.E. shirts with the school logo (or plain white T-shirts), bottle green tracksuit bottoms and fleece.
Footwear: black or white trainers.

Uniform that includes the school logo can be purchased online from Signosaurus Lewes:
https://www.signosaurus.co.uk/stphilips-uniform

The Friends' committee also organise second hand uniform sales throughout the school year.







