

**Northumberland County Council**

**Slaley First School**



**Information for Parents**

**2017**



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We hope you find this brochure answers most of your questions, but do not hesitate to contact us if there is anything else you wish to know.

We look forward to you joining us.



Welcome to Slaley First School

## School Brochure 2017

Hello and welcome. We understand that starting school is a new and exciting, sometimes daunting, experience for your child and, in many cases, for you as parents. We want to make this transition as easy as possible for both you and your child.

Each year we admit up to 10 children from our local area. As you read through our handbook I hope you will get a feel for the high quality of care and education we provide for our children.

Our latest OFSTED inspection in 2015 described us as 'A very caring and inclusive school where all the pupils are cherished and enabled to access all the school has to offer. Good relations are fostered well and there are no signs of discrimination; staff work hard to ensure that all groups of pupils, no matter how small, do as well as they can.' Our high standards are a credit to the hard work of the children, staff and parental support.

The children are at the centre of everything we do and our aim is to give them the best opportunities that we possibly can. We see Slaley First School as a community made up of the children, staff and parents. We all have an important contribution to make and we value the support of parents and families. Please get in touch if you have anything to discuss.

You will soon see that life at Slaley First School is never dull: we are always looking for new and innovative ways to make learning enjoyable and challenging. We do not stand still as we are constantly aiming to improve everything we do.

### Our Vision

We work together as a team to care for those in our school and the surrounding environment. In doing this we develop relationships and actively seek to communicate with our wider school community. Our school ethos, 'Cherishing Childhood, Nurturing Individuals' is built around these ideals that children will:

- Explore their intellects and develop their imaginations
- Pose questions as often as they devise solutions
- Speak individually, yet work collaboratively
- Discover the best within themselves and others

- Respect all people and value their differences
- Act responsibly in our community and our world
- Challenge themselves in a cherishing and nurturing environment

We place great emphasis on helping our children to grow into thoughtful, responsible adults with a strong sense of right and wrong.

We educate every child to the best of his or her ability. Equality of opportunity is fundamental to our school ethos. We have a skilled and dedicated team who are committed to providing the best education for your child.

We expect excellent behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour of any description is regarded as serious and dealt with promptly and effectively.

Your involvement in the education of your child and the life of the school is positively welcomed and encouraged.

### **About our School**

Pupils benefit from our rural first school organisation. School staff plan and work closely together and offer teaching expertise and strengths across different year groups. Teaching assistants provide support in both key stages and where necessary, assist with individual and small group intervention. Small year groups and changes to pupil numbers sometimes require adjustments to overall class organisation.

The classes are currently arranged as follows:-

#### **Foundation Unit - taught by: Mrs Julie Hay**

Children start their full-time education at the beginning of the school year in which they are 5. The year group they start in is called Reception. The Unit includes Nursery pupils with Reception pupils in the mornings and Reception pupils in the afternoons. This is open to children from the age of three. They may start Foundation Unit at the beginning of the term following their third birthday. If they are to start after the Easter holiday, then their birthday must be before 1st April.

#### **Year 1/2 - based in the Foundation and Key Stage 1 classroom, taught by: Mrs Rachel O'Neill and Mrs Julie Stevenson.**

They then move into Year 1, Year 2. Years 1 and 2 are sometimes referred to as 'Key Stage 1'.

#### **Years 3 and 4 - based in the Key Stage 2 classroom, taught by: Mrs. Debbie Brett, Ms Sue Roff & Mrs Julie Stevenson**

Years 3 and 4, together with Years 5 and 6, are referred to as 'Key Stage 2'. Years 5 and 6 are taught at Corbridge Middle School.

## **The Curriculum**

Within the guidelines of the National Curriculum, we offer your child a curriculum to suit his/her age and ability. We teach the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics, because we believe these are the tools that your child will need in the world outside school. In addition we include scientific, creative, environmental, social, physical and ethical education because we also believe in giving your child a broad, balanced and relevant education.

Through the Early Years curriculum, children are encouraged to develop active, enquiring minds, together with skills such as observing, questioning, experimenting, recording and concentrating. We also emphasise the development of communication and social skills in order to promote an easy integration into school life.

Children in Years one to four follow the National Curriculum, which includes the core subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, R.E. and Computing. The foundation subjects of History, Geography, D.T., P.E., Music, Art, Mfl and Citizenship are also taught according to the National Curriculum (2014).

Much of your child's work in school will be practical, investigative and problem solving related to real situations.

However, each National Curriculum area has several essential skills that children will need to develop in order to progress. At Slaley First School these skills will be specifically taught as part of a continuous and planned programme of work in each Key Stage.

## **Special Educational Needs**

Some children in school are identified as having a particular Special Educational Need. These children receive extra help from the staff according to their level of need. In this way we are able to help them make the best possible progress, to the best of our ability and available resources. The school has a Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) who liaises with the parents of children who have specific needs.

## **School Worship**

A daily act of collective worship is provided for all children, some acts of worship are held in class and these are special times for children to reflect and explore their thoughts and feelings.

We are fortunate that we are supported by St Mary's Church and the Methodist Church in the village. If you wish to withdraw your child from either worship or religious education please contact the head teacher, Mrs D Brett.

### **We are most Proud of**

**Our links** with the local community and taking part in local events.

**Our School Council.** The council meet and discuss items decided upon by their classmates or requested by staff. Issues are discussed, debated and voted on. The council has a small budget to finance projects agreed upon.

**Our sportsmanship.** All our children are motivated to improve their performance in all areas and are very committed to doing this. It's great when we win but we know how to lose gracefully, congratulate our opponents and try harder next time.

**Our children.** Wherever we go, people praise the behaviour, manners and attitude of our children. They are a pleasure to take out.

**Our ethos.** This is what makes us different; this is what makes us special. Visitors often comment on how they feel comfortable and at home when they enter our school.

**Our outdoor space.** We are so lucky to have lots of space for children to play. The children enjoy our wooden play equipment and the field gets a lot of use. We have playtime buddies to make sure that no-one is ever lonely at playtime.

**School meals.** Our school meals are prepared and cooked in our own kitchen. Our desire is to encourage children to eat healthily and experience new foods by offering them fresh, home cooked meals. We have enclosed a sample menu for you.

### **Contacting the School**

#### **Sickness absence**

Please telephone the school by 9:30 on the first morning of absence.

#### **Parents Evenings**

We hold parents evenings and information events throughout the year. We will tell you about how your child has settled and the progress that they are making.

#### **Informal Chat**

If you have a concern, please feel free to speak with the teacher or teaching assistant about your child. You will see them when you drop off and pick up your child. If the teacher is unable to speak with you at that time you can arrange an appointment by contacting the school office.

## **School Office**

Mrs Wilson is in the school office and can deal with most issues, however she does work part time and therefore there may be times when she is unable to take your call.

## **Supporting your child at home**

Your child will be getting used to reading, writing and maths at school. It really helps if you could encourage them to practise these skills at home as well.

### **Reading**

**Reading at home is the most important thing that you can do to help your child succeed.**

Aim to spend about 10 to 15 minutes per day sharing a book with your child. If this is too long then break it down into shorter sessions.

In Early Years and Key Stage 1, your child will be bringing a book home to share with you. They should be able to talk about the pictures in the book and tell the story in their own words. It is helpful for young children to read the same book more than once, but if you are worried about this please speak to your child's teacher.

The books provided will be appropriate to your child's reading abilities, remember everyone will learn at a slightly different pace.

### **Writing**

At Slaley, we encourage the use of cursive letter formation from the start, unless a child finds it particularly difficult and their progress is hindered. Wherever possible please encourage your child to write at home.

### **Number Work**

Mathematics consists of a number of areas including, counting, recognising numbers, adding, taking away, 2-D and 3-D shape, measuring in simple ways, time and money. All these skills you can reinforce at home, in a practical, fun way. For instance, making reference to these in your child's day to day experiences will help immensely. Children feel much happier when learning, using their own experiences: a trip to the shops, looking at the number on houses, finding shapes around the house, reading the clock on the wall, sorting their toys are just a few of these examples. As your child gets older, times tables are really important and should be practised at home as regularly as possible.

We appreciate the help of our parents in these areas and it really can make a big difference.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Will my child have homework?**

Slaley First School values parental involvement and has drawn up homework activities which encourage parents to share with their children what they are learning in the curriculum at school.

It is expected that children will read with their parents daily and other homework is planned depending on the needs of individual children and curriculum topic themes.

At Key Stage 1 & 2, homework is set on a Wednesday and is due in on a Monday.

In Class 2, the children record their homework in a homework diary. This helps parents to know exactly what the children are being asked to do and helps the children to remember what was said to them in class. These diaries are also handed in on a Monday and provide an additional home school communication tool.

### **Are the children allowed a healthy snack during the school day?**

Yes, we have a healthy snack every morning; this is usually a piece of fruit.

Also, your child is eligible for free milk until the term in which they turn five. When your child is five, you will be given the option to pay for them to continue to receive milk.

We also encourage children to bring a bottle of water (no juice) to school with them each day. It is important for children to be hydrated as this has been shown to help their learning.

### **Are there any after school clubs?**

Yes, we have several: these include football, tennis, multi-skills, zumba, craft, choir, etc. These can vary so please check the website for up-to-date information.

### **Do the children go on any visits?**

Yes, the children may have an educational visit or a visiting speaker in, each term, which supports their learning and relates to their current topic.

### **Can I help the school?**

In many ways! You could come and hear children read, help in the classroom with art work, help at fund-raising events by supporting our FoSS (Friends of Slaley First School)

Your support, in whatever way, large or small, is very much appreciated.

## **School Uniform**

At Slaley First School there is a standard uniform for children which we encourage them to wear.

### **Girls**

- Grey/black trousers/skirt/pinafore
- Yellow polo shirt
- Royal blue sweatshirt/cardigan
- White, Blue , Black or Grey socks or tights
- A blue & white or yellow & white gingham dress may be worn in the summer
- Plain black school shoes or boots (no sandals or trainers)

### **Boys**

- Grey/black trousers/shorts
- Yellow polo shirt
- Royal blue sweatshirt
- Plain black school shoes or boots (no trainers)

### **P.E. Kit**

- Royal blue shorts
- Yellow, round neck t-shirt (no buttons or fastenings)
- Royal blue sweatshirt & track-suit bottoms (for outdoor P.E.)
- Socks & Trainers (rather than plimsolls, as they do not afford enough support)
- Drawstring P.E. bag (clearly named)

*All uniform, PE kits, bags, coats, shoes and wellies need to be clearly labelled with the child's name.*

### **Jewellery and Hairstyles**

The wearing of jewellery, especially earrings, is not allowed because of the possible danger to the wearer and to other pupils. NCC has a policy of not allowing earrings to be worn during PE, for reasons of safety (this includes swimming). The school accepts no responsibility for the safekeeping or removal of any jewellery or watches. Children should have long hair tied back at all times during the school day and hair should not be dyed or styled in extreme fashions, including rats tails and tramlines, during term time.

### **How To Order**

Sweatshirts, cardigans, polo shirts, EYFS book bags, KS1/2 back packs, PE kits, PE bags (all with school logo) can be purchased from School Trends via their website [www.schooltrends.co.uk](http://www.schooltrends.co.uk).