



St. Benedict's Catholic Primary School

'Growing together through Christ'

Head Teacher: Mr Tony Nicholas

Charlton Lane,
Midsomer Norton,
Radstock, BA3 4BD

MISSION STATEMENT

'Growing Together Through Christ'

1. The school seeks to be a place where all individuals are valued and where we can Grow together through God.
2. Members of our community are expected to treat each person they meet with respect
3. We must all work hard to help each other grow in confidence and love.
4. St. Benedicts is a place where we can demonstrate our love for God through following this call to Love our neighbour as we love ourselves.

This Mission statement is for everyone of St. Benedict's community. We have been put together in this place as a body and in the words of St. Paul,

My Dear Friends,

Look at yourselves.
Can you see how you have a body?
With lots of different parts!

Each part has a special job to do, hasn't it?
If we are working with Jesus,
Then we are all like the parts of one body,
for we are all joined together
and we all have a special job to do.

We will play our part in this Mission if we: -

- Respect ourselves, other people and property.
- Try hard in our work to show our love for God and attempt to develop the abilities he has given us, to the full.
- Show high standards of good behaviour to each other.

Catholic Schooling

Joint Pastoral Letter on Catholic Schools (September 2007)

“We, the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, want to re-affirm our vision of Catholic education and our commitment to providing Catholic schools. We also want to highlight how successful our schools are and the contribution they make to society in general.

For a very long time now, the Catholic Church has been an important partner with public authorities in the provision of education for the children and young people of England and Wales. Schools with a religious character (which make up over a third of schools) are a sector of public education with proven success; they are diverse and they are much sought after each year by hundreds of thousands of parents.

Recent and current calls from some for the abolition of faith schools, or their curtailment, fail to take account of this rich history of co-operation between Church and State which has been to the mutual benefit of both. They also fail to take account of the current achievements of our schools. Independent research and inspection conducted by the Government’s own offices demonstrate how well our schools perform, academically and in moral and social education; that they are catering for as wide a range of pupils as any other group of schools, whether the measure be ability, poverty or ethnic identity. They also welcome pupils from the wider community, beyond the Catholic Church, whenever there are places available.

Underlying these indications of the success of our schools is their distinctiveness. Catholic schools are guided in all they do by an important and coherent vision of education. This vision is based on the truth revealed by God about ourselves, our life together in community and our ultimate destiny with God. This gives rise to an educational endeavour centred on the person of Jesus Christ, who is our Way, Truth and Life. Over a long period of time, this approach to education has proved to be one that prepares children and young people well for whatever roles they take on in society or public life, as well as for their personal and family lives. The commitment of the Catholic Church to inter-faith dialogue and to working with other Christians provides a further basis for young peoples’ contribution to peaceful social cohesion.

At times, this vision of education stands in contrast to a secular model of education, based on the values of the prevailing culture, which are often far from clear and not always shared.

Those who choose Catholic schools for their children are, in effect, seeking an alternative model of education. Despite the claims of those who propose a purely secular model for all schools, there is no such thing as a “value-free” education. Catholic schools are clear and robust in the principles which guide them and the moral framework within which they educate.

Schooling has been, and remains, an important part of the mission of the Church. The aims of our schools are to help everyone within the school community to grow in faith; to make the most of every ability they have been given; to achieve academic excellence and to prepare well for adult life in a modern and diverse society. These tasks are, of course, carried out in a close cooperation with local and national government.

From time to time, bishops and diocesan authorities need to review school provision within specific areas, usually in response to population changes. This will bring about changes in the provision with occasional closures as well as the expansion or re-building of schools. Any such changes are always made after careful consideration of all the factors involved, including the impact on both the local Church community and the neighbourhood.

We urge all members of the Catholic community to value our schools. So we encourage Catholic parents to send their children to the local Catholic school and to be actively involved in its life. We encourage people to work in our schools as Catholic head teachers, teachers, classroom assistants or in other roles. We encourage people to serve as foundation governors to continue supporting and promoting the vision of education on which our schools are founded. We encourage teachers, at their union meetings, and parents or parishioners, in their dealings with politicians, to speak up positively, on the basis of evidence, about the achievements and nature of our schools. Funding our alternative model of education is a costly, but worthwhile, exercise and we thank all those who contribute to this.

We invite everyone in the Catholic community to join us in praying for all those who are involved in the life of our schools. May God bless our educational enterprise for the good of our society.”

Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O’Connor

President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales
Archbishop of Westminster

Archbishop Patrick Kelly

Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales
Archbishop of Liverpool

Catholic Education in B&NES and Somerset

The Diocese of Clifton, in conjunction with the LEA for B&NES and the County of Somerset provides for Catholic parents, a fully Catholic education for their children in three stages.

1 Catholic Primary Schools

The local Catholic Primary Schools cover the age range of approximately 4 - 11 years.

2 Catholic Comprehensive Schools

At the end of Year 6, children transfer to one of the three Catholic comprehensive Schools, which cater for boys and girls aged 11 - 16.

In Bath: St Gregory's

In Bristol: St Bede's and St Bernadette's

Information booklets are available from the schools.

3 Catholic Sixth Form College

At sixteen, pupils from the three Catholic Comprehensive Schools have the right to transfer to St Brendan's Sixth Form College at Brislington. A full range of courses at all levels of ability is provided to meet the needs of young people aged 16 - 19. An information booklet is available from St Brendan's College.

History of the School

In 1825, Dom Bede Polding, a monk of Downside founded a school in a small cottage at Stratton-on-the-Fosse. This was the first school in the district for village children and was the origin of St Benedict's to note that Dom Bede Polding later went to Australia in 1835 and was to become the founder of the Catholic Hierarchy there, becoming the first Archbishop of Sydney in 1842.

The official School Log Books date back to 28 August, 1878, when the Education Department became involved, and the number on roll at this time was 31 pupils. An order of nuns came to the school in 1897 and a small convent was built near St Benedict's Church in Stratton-on-the-Fosse. Nuns ran the school until 1965 and the last nun left in July 1968 when the Convent closed.

The school continued at Stratton-on-the-Fosse until December 1974, and reopened at its present site at Charlton Lane on 7 January 1975. The school was blessed and officially opened by the Rt Rev Mervyn Alexander, Bishop of Clifton on 5 June 1975.

The school has served the Catholic population around the Stratton-on-the-Fosse area for over 175 years and many of our children's parents and grandparents were at one time pupils of the school.

We still have very strong links with Downside Abbey. Six of the Parishes in our catchment area are served by the Benedictine monks:

Dom Gervaise Murray-Bligh OSB	Norton St Philip / Holcombe/Coleford
Dom Aidan Bellenger OSB	Stratton-on-the-Fosse
Dom Michael Clothier OSB	Midsomer Norton/Paulton/Radstock
Fr. Tom Gunning (St. John's, Bath)	Peasedown St. John
Dom Boniface OSB	Chilcompton

The Parish Priests who are monks are resident at Downside Abbey and may be contacted by ringing 01761 235161.

Our school Chaplain is Dom James Hood OSB from Downside Abbey.

Voluntary Aided

St Benedict's is a voluntary aided Catholic School. A voluntary aided school is one not established by the Local Education Authority but by the voluntary body providing the school. In the case of St Benedict's the voluntary body is the Catholic Diocese of Clifton. The majority of the Governors of a VA School are appointed by the voluntary body and are called foundation governors. The others are appointed by the Major and Minor Authority, or elected by the parents and teachers.

Teachers are appointed by the Governors subject to the establishment and education qualifications prescribed by the Local Education Authority. The Governors appoint all other staff.

Governing Body

Chair:	Jon Stratford
Vice Chair:	Vacant
Foundation Governors:	Vince Schwartz Richard Jones Hettie McDermott Debbie Saffin Anne Walters Dom Alexander George OSB Marie-Louise McGarvey
Parent Governors:	Colin Gibbs Vanessa Buckton Jon Stratford
LA Governor:	Sue Harvey
Teacher Governor:	Eve Nuttall
Staff Governor:	Rosemary Colliver
Headteacher:	Tony Nicholas
Clerk to the GB:	Marnie Stratford

DIOCESE OF CLIFTON
St. Benedict's Catholic Primary School
Admissions Policy 2009/10

1. St. Benedict's is a Voluntary Aided primary school that serves the Parishes of Downside Abbey and St. Joseph's at Peasedown St. John. The governing body, acting in accordance with the Code of Practice and the Clifton Diocesan Policy Statement, is responsible for the admission of pupils.
2. The Indicated Admission Number (IAN) for the Reception Year (2009/10) is 27 pupils. Pupils are normally admitted in the September of the school year in which they reach their fifth birthday. However, they are not required to attend school until the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday. Admission at the beginning of the Spring Term for children born in the Summer Term (*i.e. 1st May to 31st August inclusive*) will be considered by the governors. Parents seeking such deferment should make this clear at the time of accepting a place.
3. Applications for a place at the school should be made on Somerset LA's common admissions form and sent to the School Admission Department, County Hall, Taunton by the published date in October 2007. Applications may also be made online to Somerset County Admissions by the same closing date. Somerset LA will then send details of those children where parents have expressed a preference for St. Benedict's to the Clerk to the Governors at the school. The Governing Body will then seek the additional information necessary to apply the over subscription criteria listed under section 5 of this policy. In the event of over subscription, the Governing Body will apply its criteria to the applicants and notify the LA of its decision. Somerset LA will then notify parents on behalf of the governors during the early part of the Spring Term 2008.
4. A waiting list of unsuccessful applicants will be held until the 30th June 2009 and then discarded. If places become available before this date then offers will be made in accordance with the order of priority in paragraph 5.
5. Places will be offered in accordance with the following order of priority:
 - 5.1. Looked After Children who are baptised Catholics who live in the parishes of Downside Abbey and Peasedown St. John.
 - 5.2. Children who are baptised Catholics and who live in the parishes of Downside Abbey and Peasedown St. John.
 - 5.3. Baptised Catholics who live outside the parishes of Downside Abbey and Peasedown St. John and who do not have a Catholic Primary School serving the parish in which they live
 - 5.4. Looked after children for whom a place is requested by the relevant person/authority.
 - 5.5. Children of Catholic parents who live within the parishes of Downside Abbey and Peasedown St. John.
 - 5.6. Children who will have a brother or a sister at the school at the time of their admission.
 - 5.7. Children of other Christian faiths who live within the parishes of Downside Abbey and Peasedown St. John and whose parents are practising members of their church and have the written support of their minister.
 - 5.8. Catholic children who live outside the parishes of Downside Abbey and who fall outside Category 3 above.
 - 5.9. Other applicants not in the above categories.

In categories 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.8 baptismal certificates should be available for inspection.
A map of the parishes of Downside Abbey and Peasedown St. John is available at the school.

Definitions

- a Brother and sister are defined as children who share one natural parent or have been legally adopted into the family.
- b Looked after children, as defined by Section 22 of the Children Act 1989.

6. When applications within Categories 1 and 3 above exceed the number of places available, priority will be given to children who have a brother or sister at the school at the time of their admission and then to children who live furthest from the nearest alternative Catholic school at which a place is available. Priority in other categories will be given to children living nearest to the school. Distance will be calculated using a digital mapping computer system by straight-line measure from the main school entrance to front door.
7. The Head teacher and the Chair of Governors will consider casual admissions, i.e. those that fall outside the normal admissions round. If they judge that a place is not available they will ask the Admissions Committee to give a final decision.
8. Late applications received after the closing date given above, but before the offer of places is made by the Governing Body, will be considered in accordance with the criteria set out above if, in the opinion of the Admissions Committee, there were good grounds (e.g. a relocation to the area) for the applicants not being able to meet the deadlines.
9. For September 2008, the Governors received 25 applications which fell into the following categories:

5.1	0	5.2	9	5.3	0
5.4	0	5.5	2	5.6	1
5.7	6	5.8	0	5.9	7

25 children were admitted from categories 5.1 - 5.9

10. Appeals Procedure

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal by the Governors to admit their child and should put their appeal in writing to the Clerk to the Governors at the school within 14 days of receiving the letter of refusal. Appeals will be arranged by the Diocesan Department for Schools and Colleges and conducted in accordance with the Code of Practice on School Appeals.

11. Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

There is a different procedure for the admission to school for children with Statements of Special Needs: it is administered by the local authority (LA) in whose area the family lives. The LA is responsible for issuing the Statement and consulting parents and the governing body of St. Benedict's, if a preference has been made for the school, before the school is named in the statement.

(Revised in January 2008)

School Objectives

St Benedict's was built for the education of Catholic children, therefore the spiritual and religious aspects of their education are of paramount importance. We aim to encourage the all round development of the child spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially and physically by providing an education based on Catholic principles in partnership with the home and the parish. These principles are incorporated in our Religious Education and all aspects of school life. We try to help each child form stable relationships with his/her peers, learn to be responsible and have concern for the feelings and property of others. We try to do this by providing a happy school atmosphere; by helping each child to use his/her talents to the full; by providing a stimulating and varied curriculum that incorporates all the areas of basic skills; by laying down standards and expectations that the children should try to maintain in and out of school, in order to develop into responsible members of the community.

School Organisation

The school is single form entry which means we have separate classes for each year group. There are seven classes in the school - one class for each year of the Primary School. We employ a number of Teaching Assistants who work with individuals and groups of children to provide extra support to the class teachers.

Class organisation varies from class to class to meet the needs of the various age groups; the individualised approach of the reception class gradually develops into the more formal class teaching in the Key Stage Two classes but certain aspects are common to all ages e.g. all pupils follow the Abacus Maths Scheme.

The teaching programme is carefully structured and each child's progress assessed and recorded. This is shared regularly with parents through parents evenings, open afternoons and annual written reports. Extra help, where required, is given to children with Special Education needs within the limits of the resources available. The school regards Special Education Needs as embracing those children who have a specific learning difficulty and those whose ability in a certain area needs to be stretched.

The school has an Accessibility Plan which is continually reviewed. The School provides toilet and wash facilities for the disabled and a wheelchair platform to ease access between the upper and lower parts of the building and has plans in place to provide wheelchair access at all entry doors.

Teaching Staff:

Headteacher Mr Tony Nicholas
Deputy Headteacher Mrs Eve Nuttall

Foundation Stage Mrs Helen Mattick

Key Stage 1 Mrs Gill Magrath (and Special Needs Co-ordinator)
Mrs Roz Serle
Mrs Jos Baker

Key Stage 2 Mrs Carmel McNally
Mrs Jean Gibbs
Miss Kelly Jay
Mr Przemek Budzinski

Support Teacher Mrs Marion Jarrett

Administration Staff:

School Secretary Mrs Mary Kuzemka

Office Assistant

Mrs Cathy Blanchard

Equality Schemes

The school has policies in place relating to Race, Disability and Gender Equality.

At St Benedict's we are committed to Racial, Disability and Gender Equality and Justice and opposed to all forms of prejudice, harassment and unfair discrimination. We will challenge discrimination and promote harmony by establishing a socially inclusive ethos and environment. This is in line with our commitment both to equality of opportunity for all, regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, religion or disability.

We respect the Christian belief that every human being is made in God's image and each person's true worth and value stem from this understanding. Jesus taught that all were included in the love of God.

We understand that the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Policies and their implementation are statutory requirements.

We believe that this commitment not only reflects our Christian basis as a Catholic school, but also prepares children for life in a richly diverse and multi ethnic society. It is taken as part of the overall strategy of our school and operated within the context of our vision, aims and values as a Catholic school.

A copy of these policies can be obtained from the School Office.

The Curriculum

As mentioned in our objectives, St Benedict's as a Catholic School aims to encourage the all round development of each individual child and their uniqueness as a human person and an individual creation of God. All our pupils, therefore, follow a broad general curriculum varying in depth and emphasis according to individual ability and need.

Children from Years 2 - 6 enjoy the opportunity to learn a variety of musical instruments via peripatetic staff from Somerset County Music Services. Parents pay for such lessons directly to Somerset Music.

Early Years Foundation Stage – EYFS (Reception Class)

The foundation stage curriculum is organised into six areas of learning:

- Personal, social and emotional development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development

Early years experience builds on what children already know and can do. We will work to ensure that all children feel included, secure and valued in an atmosphere of mutual respect, within which children can grow in confidence.

Learning for young children is a rewarding and enjoyable experience in which they explore, investigate, discover, practise, rehearse, repeat, revise and consolidate their developing knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. During the foundation stage, many of these aspects of learning are brought together effectively through playing and talking.

Key Stage One and Key Stage Two

Numeracy and Literacy hours are timetabled for all classes throughout the school.

At Key Stage One the children are taught the foundation skills necessary for their ongoing development in Literacy and Numeracy together with the full range of curriculum subjects.

Our focus is to broaden the children's knowledge and increase their confidence with as much first hand experience as possible. We aim to give the children the skills and opportunities to communicate their findings effectively through practical, creative and academic activities.

Children are encouraged to practise their reading skills at home. A Reading Diary accompanies each child's reading book so that parents and teachers can communicate progress, concerns and information on a regular basis.

It is our policy to further foster home school links, by encouraging any parent who feels that they can offer support to the teaching staff, to come and work with small groups of children, either by hearing readers or guiding practical activities. It is our practice for parents, where possible, to work with groups/classes other than those of which their own child is a member. At Key Stage Two the curriculum follows the areas of study identified in the National Curriculum documents.

Curriculum Subjects

Literacy is taught in line with the National Literacy Strategy in a dedicated session each day as well as through many other curriculum areas. Children are introduced to reading through the Read Write Inc scheme which has an emphasis on synthetic phonics. Many other strategies are used and reading at home is encouraged from the start. Children throughout the school are taught how to write confidently and expressively for different purposes including to inform, to persuade and to entertain.

The National **Numeracy** Strategy helps children to develop, not only the ability to do calculations, but a real understanding of how numbers work. From the start our emphasis is on practical work, problem solving and using numbers in real-life situations. We find that parents are sometimes confused by the methods their children may be trying to use in, for example, multiplication. We are happy to explain these and will hold parents' sessions so that you can see how it all fits together.

Science is taught in accordance with the National Curriculum. Children have opportunities for first hand practical experience of various topics. Scientific skills are developed as the children plan and carry out their own investigations. Science is one of three subjects, the others being English and Mathematics, that are tested in the SATs at the end of Key Stage 2.

Information Communication Technology continues to develop and the school benefits from protected access to the Internet and Somerset Education Intranet. Parents are asked to read and sign the schools Internet User Policy which accompanies this document. We have a networked, sixteen station computer suite equipped with an interactive whiteboard in the Abbot John Library. This is in addition to the classroom network of computers and interactive whiteboards in each class room. We aim to teach the necessary I.C.T. skills that children will require and give practical applications for these skills in a wide variety of curriculum areas.

Art and Design Technology are linked where possible to other subjects areas or times in the Religious or seasonal calendar for them to have real purpose.

History and Geography topics are planned across the Key Stages and develop in English skills. Geography in particular allows children to practice Data Handling skills. These topic areas are always very popular with the children and create excellent opportunities to learn about our own and contrasting localities and develop art and technology skills, whilst always providing many opportunities for language development. Often these topics are supported by a class visit to a near by museum or location and parents are asked to contribute to the cost of such trips.

Music is a timetabled subject yet is also found in other aspects of school life such as Mass and assemblies where children are encouraged to play instruments and sing hymns. There is very strong programme of peripatetic music tuition, which parents can opt to buy in to for their child. There is a choice of strings, woodwind, brass and keyboards and many K.S.2. children are learning to play an instrument.

Spanish. We have recently introduced Spanish to the curriculum at St Benedict's. From Reception class on, children will learn words and simple phrases through games, songs and other fun activities. They move on to asking and answering questions about themselves and we hope that they will eventually be able to carry on a simple conversation in Spanish. We use Spanish as part of our daily routines such as taking the register or naming colours in an art lesson. As well as the language we learn about the culture and geography of the Spanish speaking world including dance, art and music

PE and Games are as much a part of the curriculum as are the other subjects taught at school. Each child should be provided with a pair of black shorts, a school tee shirt and a pair of trainers. Boys and girls wishing to play football or tag rugby in Key Stage 2 should be provided with a pair of football boots or trainers. Children should be provided with the correct kit for these activities. Using PE apparatus without proper kit could be highly dangerous. Long hair should be tied back for practical lessons.

All children's involvement in P.E. lessons is required whenever possible. We are fortunate to have not only our hall but excellent fields and the use of the nearby Fosseyway Swimming pool which allows us to have 9 weekly sessions for each of the Key Stage 2 classes in turn. Mrs. Charlene Green, a swimming instructor from Midsomer Norton Leisure Centre, leads these lessons.

Religious Education and Worship

We use the "Here I Am" Religious Education Programme approved by the Bishops of England and Wales. These lessons are part of the curriculum for every pupil and they are carefully planned to enable the pupils to deepen their knowledge, understanding and belief in Christ and help them develop a personal relationship with God. We are also mindful of the need for children to be aware of the beliefs of other faiths and to develop a respect for these beliefs.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from religious education and collective worship. If this is their wish then they should meet with the Chair of Governors and Headteacher to discuss alternative arrangements.

The Sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion

In Year 3, before the children begin their specific preparation for these sacraments, the parents are informed and invited to a series of meetings. It is hoped that this will foster home school liaison, allow parents to support each other as they help prepare their children to receive the sacraments, and also may suggest possible inter-parish cooperation. The parish priests are also informed. It is then the responsibility of the parents to make arrangements with their Parish Priest as to whether, and at what time, their child should be admitted to these sacraments. Extra curricula classes are arranged for children who wish to prepare for the sacraments of First Confession and First Holy Communion.

School Mass

Mass is usually said at school each Wednesday 11.15. and takes the place of the School Assembly for that day, unless altered due to other services or Feast Days occurring. Parents will be notified of such changes. There is a mixture of KS1 non Eucharistic Liturgies, KS2 and whole school masses. The pupils are encouraged to take an active part in the Mass and services by reading their own bidding prayers and by choosing the hymns. Boys and girls may learn to serve at Mass if they so wish. We try to provide an atmosphere in which the religious formation provided by the home and parish is extended and enriched. Parents are always welcome to attend the School Mass and services.

Confessions

Penitential Services are held in Advent and Lent. Pupils who have made their First Confession may go to Confession at this time if they so wish.

Sex Education Policy

The policy was written in conjunction with St. Gregory's High School and its other Catholic feeder Primaries.

St Benedict's School sets the teaching of personal relationships in the context of family life. This is developed through the RE schemes used in the school. The school governors have approved the use of a new scheme "In The Beginning..." for the teaching of life education. This involves children from Reception to Year 6 working in class and at home with parents. We aim to nurture the children's realisation of the need to respect themselves and those around them. Our Sex Education Policy, therefore, is to address openly questions which children may raise. When the children reach Years 5 and 6, parents have the choice of allowing their child to participate in a series of lessons led by the School Nurse. These lessons deal with topics such as adolescence, puberty, personal hygiene, and inter-personal relationships.

Residential Visits

An adventurous residential visit at is organised for children in year 6 and has proved to be both enjoyable and an excellent learning opportunity. Parents are asked to contribute to the cost of this experience. Year 5 children have the opportunity to take part in a Retreat with four other Catholic schools from the area. This is a wonderful experience for the children – a blend of adventurous and spiritual activities.

After School Activities

Football and Netball training are held in season, after School at 3.30 pm. New Image rugby sessions also take place in preparation for the annual tournaments as do Cross Country training sessions. Tennis coaching sessions are available for a small charge throughout the year. The school arranges football and netball matches with other schools and takes part in the District Primary Schools League. The school also enjoys participating in the District Primary Swimming Gala, Rugby Tournament, Inter-School Athletics event and Cross-Country tournament. After school Art and Robotics clubs are also run at intervals through the school year.

Special Educational Needs

Consideration is given to all children with Special Education Needs including children with learning difficulties, physical disabilities and emotional problems. Detailed Individual Education Plans (I.E.P.) are written for children with additional needs. Parents are consulted about the I.E.P.s both when they are written and on the set review date.

Class Teachers work closely with the SENCO and the Special Education Needs Support Teacher Services who advise and offer additional appropriate support to ensure that all children have access to the National Curriculum. The school makes maximum use of Government initiatives to develop children's basic skills in literacy and numeracy. We operate Early Literacy Support, Additional Literacy Support groups, Springboard maths groups and Booster Classes.

The most able children are also recognised and receive appropriate work extension. We work in close liaison with St. Gregory's and have managed to develop a series of lessons for able and gifted children. This provision is reviewed annually.

Parents should note the specially designed courses for children organised by Somerset County Council which are held at Kilve Court, near Minehead throughout the year. Leaflets are available in the school foyer.

Assessment of Pupils

In the early years pupils are assessed on the experience of the teachers and at the end of Reception, through the National Foundation Stage Profile. Later they are assessed in Reading, English and Mathematics by standardised optional SATs tests in years 3, 4 and 5, which are given by the school for our own internal assessments. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are assessed at the end of Key Stage One and Two of the National Curriculum by National Standard Assessment Tests. Reports are sent out to parents at the end of the academic year in July. Open evenings are held in the Autumn and Spring Terms. Parents are encouraged to see and discuss their child's work with the Teachers.

Homework

Some homework, usually of a non-written nature is given to all classes. In the Key Stage One classes it generally takes the form of reading or learning sounds. In the Key Stage Two classes the learning of spelling and tables is required and there are occasions when pupils have written work of a research nature to complete. Maths activities from the 'Abacus Scheme' are also given out to children in both key stages as a way of helping parents to support their child's development of appropriate mathematical concepts.

It is vital that parents encourage their children when they have homework and to encourage reading every night. Children may be asked to complete unfinished class work if the teacher feels that they have not worked hard enough in class. Work which is not of an acceptable standard might also be sent home to repeat.

Discipline

Calm and order within the school is essential for learning and a high standard of behaviour is required of every pupil both in and outside the school.

As education is a partnership between home and school, we expect the full support of parents in maintaining standards of behaviour. School and home must be seen to pull in the same direction.

The rules of the school are simple and basic. The children are reminded of them as circumstances dictate and they should feel that they can redress any wrong they may have done. Punishment when necessary will depend on the seriousness of the offence, the general attitude and previous behaviour of the pupil. This will usually take the form of a restriction of privileges - non-participation in playtimes and worthwhile tasks, such as extra school work, will be given.

The Governors and staff are keen to express their abhorrence of acts of violence. Should a child be seen by an adult within the school to carry out such an act the child will be brought to the Headteacher (Deputy in his absence) and the incident will be recorded. A second such incident in the same term will be reported to the parents by letter. If a third incident occurs in the same term the parents will be invited to discuss the incidents and the Governing Body will be informed.

The School Day

Children should not be on the premises before 8.30 am when the school is opened for those who arrive by bus. Parents who may need to bring their children to school before 8.45 a.m. may do so only by prior arrangement. Parents are asked to use the Centurion Hotel car park at all times in the interest of the children's safety. The entrance car park and lay-by is for staff cars and school buses only.

08:45 – 08:55	Teacher on duty on the playground (or assembly hall, depending on weather). Parents should leave their child(ren) on the school playground before school starts.
08:55 - 09:10	Registration
09:10 – 10:15	Literacy or numeracy
10:15 – 10:30	Assembly
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 11:45	Literacy or Numeracy
11:45 – 12:05	R.E. and P.S.H.E.
(to 12:15 for KS2)	
12:05 – 13:15	K.S.1 lunch
12:15 – 13:15	K.S.2 Lunch
13:15 – 14:50	Lessons
14:50	Break for K.S.1 (A five minute break for K.S.2 at the discretion of the teacher)
15:00 – 15:25	Lessons to end of school day
15:25	School finishes. Pupils should not normally be on the premises after 3.40 pm unless they are taking part in After School Activities

Wednesday Prayer service or Mass

11.30 Key Stage Masses or Prayer Services. **11.15** Whole School Mass and Feast Days

School Meals

Parents will be able to choose whether or not they wish to buy a school meal (currently priced at £2.10 per day for Key Stage 2 and £1.95 per day for Key Stage 1), or provide children with a packed lunch. Those children who qualify for free school meals will be entitled to a hot school meal. Payments for school meals takes place on a Wednesday for the following week. Cheques should be made payable to SCS and handed into the school office in a marked envelope with the child's name, class and the date of the week for which the meals are required. Key Stage 1 children receive free fruit at morning break time and milk is available free for children under the age of 5.

The school is also working towards Healthy Schools Status.

Absence from School

All absences from school should be accounted for by parents in writing or by telephone before 9.15 a.m. on the morning of each day of absence (unless the period of absence is known on the first day). If your child is not in school and we have no explanation we will need to make enquiries to make sure that they are safe. Children should not miss school for trivial reasons, as this will affect their education in the long term. The Headteacher should be contacted if parents wish to withdraw their children from lessons for appointments or activities outside school. Children are never allowed out of school unsupervised unless parents request it.

Injury and Illness

If a child is taken ill at school the parents are contacted and asked to come and take the child home. It is important that the school has an up-to-date telephone number through which one parent can be contacted. Minor cuts and bruises are attended to at school by a member of staff. Children will be given an accident report form which will inform parents of the nature of the incident, the injury and any treatment given. If we consider that a child needs medical attention as a result of an accident at school then the parents are contacted and requested to take the child to the doctor or hospital. If the school is unable to contact either parent, a member of staff will take the child to the Casualty Department at Paulton Hospital. Parents will be informed as soon as possible. If a child has an illness such as German Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox etc., doctor's advice regarding absence from school for infectious diseases should be adhered to and the school informed.

Medicines

If a child requires medicine for a non-serious and non-infectious illness during school hours we will be sympathetic to the request to administer such medicine. A form, which is available from office, must be completed if you require us to administer any medication during school hours. However, your doctor may be able to prescribe medicines which do not require the child to receive a dosage in school hours. Please check this with your doctor. All medicines should be clearly marked with the child's name. Please do not send pupils to school with medicine unless a form has been completed. All medicine must be handed in at the School Office for safe keeping.

School Uniform

We encourage all parents to provide their children with St Benedict's School uniform. The school takes pride in the appearance of the children and a consistent approach to uniform helps our sense of community. Support from all parents and children is vital to maintain standards.

Boys

Grey or black tailored trousers
Blue polo shirt
School sweatshirt

Girls

Grey skirt or pinafore dress
Grey or black tailored trousers
Blue polo shirt
School sweatshirt/ cardigan. Blue and white checked or striped dress for summer wear.

School uniform can be purchased from the National Schoolwear Centre, 23 Broad Street, Wells, Telephone No. 01749 670000. email: wells@n-sc.co.uk or ordered via the School Office (an order form is enclosed with this prospectus).

Good quality used items of uniform are also available from the school (please contact Mrs Sue Crutchley via the School Office).

Parents are asked to make sure that all items of clothing are marked with the child's name. Shoes should be sensible "school shoes" in black. Girls may wear sensible sandals in the Summer months. High heels or trainers are not acceptable. Hair should be cut appropriately and not follow the more extreme fashions eg short hair should not be cut below 'Number 2' or have designs shaved in but a reasonable length should be maintained.

Earrings and Jewellery

Only one pair of stud earrings are permitted to be worn to school. Other types of earrings are dangerous as in the general hurly burly of school life they could be torn out. If a child appears in school with unsuitable earrings they will be asked to remove them. Earrings must be removed for all PE activities. Jewellery is not allowed to be worn in school as it can be hazardous and is easily lost or broken.

Friends of St. Benedict's

The school has an active parent body whose aim is to organise and assist in activities which support the school and advance the educational opportunities of the pupils. All parents are automatically members of the Friends of St. Benedict's and we strongly encourage you to get involved. The AGM takes place in the Autumn Term when new officers are nominated and elected. Parents will be informed of functions that are organised.

Visits and Appointments

Parents are most welcome to come and see the teachers before and after school, but to ensure staff are available it would be helpful if you make an appointment. Please enter the school by the main entrance and ask the secretary to contact the teacher for you. This will assist us in maintaining the security of your children.

The Headteacher is prepared to see parents at any time but again it would be helpful if an appointment was made as he is often otherwise occupied with teaching or administrative affairs which could involve meetings outside the school during school hours. Parents who are considering sending their children to St Benedict's will be seen by the Headteacher by prior appointment.

Transport

Local authorities are obliged to provide transport for Catholic children to attend their nearest available appropriate (i.e. Catholic) school in the following cases:

- a) Children between the ages of 4 and 8 where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles measured by the nearest available route.
- b) Children over the age of 8 years, where the distance between home and school is more than 3 miles measured by the nearest available route.

If parents think that their child is eligible for transport on distance grounds, please contact the Headteacher. Transport is provided by coach for those children who live in the Coleford, Holcombe, Stratton-on-the-Fosse areas and those children who live in the Farrington Gurney, Temple Cloud, High Littleton, Camerton, Peasedown St John and Paulton areas. These coaches drop and pick up at the main entrance to the school.

Other transport is provided by local service buses and pupils may be issued with bus passes. In cases where it is deemed impractical for the authority to provide transport a mileage allowance may be paid to the parents to subsidise the cost of providing their own transport. Despite vigorous campaigning by the Catholic community, both Local Authorities have now imposed a fixed rate charge for children attending Catholic Voluntary Aided schools, unless parents are in receipt of income support or Jobs seekers allowance, when the charges are waived. Parents will need to provide evidence of such benefit to qualify.

Current charges:

B&NES: £47.00 per term
50% reduction for second or third child, to a maximum of 3 children

Somerset County Council: £63.00 per term

Exemptions apply for families on low income, maximum tax credit and for those children receiving free school meals.

Further information is available from the school.

Parking of Cars

Parents who deliver and pick up their children by car are asked to park in the top car park of the Fosseyway/Centurion Club, who in the interest of the children's safety, kindly grant parents permission to use the car park at the owners risk. The school is very grateful for the support that the Club affords. There is a gate in the fence by the KS2 playground so that parents will have access to the school. Parents are asked not to park in front of the school as there is not enough room to accommodate the school coaches.

Charging Policy

The Governors of St Benedict's Catholic Primary School recognise the invaluable contribution that extra curricular activities, such as swimming, class visits and residential experiences that the Headteacher and staff organise, can make towards pupils personal and social education.

The Governors aim to promote and provide these activities as part of a broad and balanced curriculum for the pupils of the school and as additional optional extras.

Charges

The Governors reserve the right to make a charge in the following circumstances for activities organised by the school.

School Journeys

The board and lodging for the residential activity in Year 6.

Activities Outside School Hours

The full cost to each pupil for activities deemed to be optional extras taking place outside school hours: Weekends at any activity centre.

Charging in Kind

Peripatetic music provision is provided in school but is an agreement between Somerset Music or the tutor, and the parents.

The Governors may charge for ingredients or materials or require them to be provided if the parents have indicated in advance that they wish to own the finished product.

The Governors may amend the categories of activity for which a charge may be made.

Nothing in this policy statement precludes the Governors from inviting parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the cost of providing education for the pupils of St Benedict's.

Remissions

Where the parents of a pupil are in receipt of income support or family credit, the Governors will remit in full the cost of board and lodging for any residential activity that it organises for a pupil if the activity is deemed to take place within the school hours, or where it forms part of the syllabus for a prescribed public examination of the National Curriculum.

There may also be cases of family hardship which make it difficult for pupils to take part in particular activities for which a charge is made. When arranging a chargeable activity, the Governors will invite parents to apply in confidence for the remission of charges in part or in full. Authorisation of remission of charges will be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of Governors.

Complaints Procedure

We strive to provide a good education for all our children. The headteacher and staff work very hard to build positive relationships with all parents. However, the school is obliged to have procedures in place in case there are complaints by parents or guardians. The school follows the Somerset County Council procedure for dealing with complaints and a full copy of the Complaints

Procedure is available from the School Office.

Our school aims to be fair, open and honest when dealing with any complaint. We give careful consideration to all complaints, and deal with them as swiftly as possible. We aim to resolve any complaint through dialogue and mutual understanding. In all cases, we put the interests of the child above all else. We provide sufficient opportunity for any complaint to be fully discussed, and then resolved.

If a parent is concerned about anything to do with the education that we are providing at our school, they should, in the first instance, discuss the matter with their child's class teacher. In our experience, most matters of concern can be resolved positively in this way. All teachers work very hard to ensure that each child is happy at school, and is making good progress; they naturally want to know if there is a problem so that they can take action before it seriously affects the child's progress.

Where parents feel that a situation has not been resolved through contact with the class teacher, or that their concern is of a sufficiently serious nature, they should make an appointment to discuss it with the headteacher. The headteacher considers any such complaint very seriously, and investigates each case thoroughly. Most complaints are normally resolved by this stage.

Should any parents have a complaint about the headteacher, they should first make an informal approach to the Chair of Governors, who is obliged to investigate it. The Chair of Governors will do all s/he can to resolve the issue through a dialogue with the school, but if parents are unhappy with the outcome, they can make a formal complaint to the Governing Body.

Only if an informal complaint fails to resolve the matter should a formal complaint be made to the Governing Body. This complaint must be made in writing, stating the nature of the complaint, and how the school has handled it so far. The parent should send this written complaint to the Chair of Governors c/o the School Office.

Pupils' Personal Accident Insurance

Neither the County Council nor the Governors are responsible for, and do not provide, Personal Accident benefits for pupils. Parents who require the provision of such benefits should make their own arrangements with their Insurer or Broker. It may be of interest that a scheme has been arranged by the National Confederation of Parent Teacher Associations through Insurance Brokers, Brown Shipley Schools Ltd, which is available to parents who apply.

The school does, of course, have public liability insurance which covers the children in school and on all approved school activities.