

Welcome to



*A School Family Growing Together in
Love, Friendship and Faith.*



Mission Statement

A School Family, growing together in Love Friendship and Faith

At St Wilfrid's, we understand that we are partners in the care and education of our children, alongside our families. We endeavour to work with parents, grandparents and carers, welcoming them into our school family with an 'open door' policy, so that we can all best support and nurture our precious children as they grow and learn.

Love

Our children feel loved within our school family. This is at the centre of all that we do at St Wilfrid's. We work hard to let our children know that they have important, God given talents, that are valuable to our school family and beyond. Each child is made to feel special for who they are, and are encouraged to value the thoughts and ideas of others.

Friendship

We are good friends to one another, recognising and celebrating our similarities and differences, as a community, both in school and the wider world. We aim to be a good neighbour to all. We care for one another in our school and encourage our children to think about how they can show concern and compassion for the wider world community.

Faith

We strive to develop in our children, a Faith that will grow with them, and sustain them into adult life. We gather together and invite our families and community into prayerful worship, sharing in the Good News Jesus gave to us. We ensure that our children know that they are - and always will be - part of a special Faith family, within school, as part of our Parish and the wider church community, all of whom are there to love and support them throughout their lives.

Welcome from the Head Teacher



Thank you for considering St. Wilfrid's First Steps as a possible provider to your child's Early Years Education.

At St. Wilfrid's we are guided by the principles of ***A School Family Growing Together In Love, Friendship and Faith***, and strive hard to make this a place where children feel happy, secure and nurtured.

We are pleased to present some basic information on how our First Steps department is organised and the philosophy which underlines how we care for the children.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information.

J.Sands



First Steps Staff



Mrs Shaw
Foundation Stage Lead
Foundation Stage Teacher



Mrs Lee
Foundation Stage Teacher

We have other adults who support children's learning within the foundation stage.

General Information

St. Wilfrid's First Steps
Murphy Crescent
Bishop Auckland
Co. Durham
DL14 6QH

Telephone: **01388 603451**

Email Address: **stwilfrids@durhamlearning.net**

Local Education Authority
County Hall
Durham
Telephone: **0300 026 5896**

Communication

We are always available to speak to by phone or in person. You may receive letters in your child's book bag to inform you of any events in school. We also have a text service to send messages to parents which we use regularly. Therefore please ensure we have up to date mobile numbers. Within First Steps we also use an app called Dojo, as your child starts our setting you will be given a code to enter into the app, this allows you to see activities that your child and us as a setting have been doing. This is a closed group and can only be seen if you have been given an access code. We often use this service to communicate with parents, with a private message system available.

Opening Times

Nursery age children:

Morning session: 8.45am – 11.45am

Afternoon session: 12.15pm – 3.15pm

30 hours provision: 8.45am – 3pm



Rolling Drop off: - all parents can drop children off at First Steps any time between 8.45 and 9.00am. This allows us not to have congestion in the cloakroom as we have 50 children coming to First Steps every morning.

Please ensure that children arrive to the sessions promptly as late arrivals interrupt our working day and unsettle the other children. Children arriving late regularly may be investigated by the Education Welfare Officer Department.

Rolling Pick up: Children can be collected from First Steps between 3 – 3.15pm.

Uniform

Children attending First Steps are expected to wear the stated uniform:

- School sweatshirt / cardigan
- White polo t-shirt
- **Black** Joggers/Leggings
- Sensible shoes with **Velcro** fastenings

We do not allow the girls to wear skirts/dresses within nursery and reception, this uniform has been chosen after careful consideration for comfort and practicality.

Warm Weather Uniform

- Black sport / cycling shorts / leggings
- White polo shirt
- School cardigan / sweatshirt

Please mark **ALL** clothing with your child's name.



Jewellery

Please follow school policy regarding jewellery. It is not allowed to be worn during the school day. Please ensure all earrings are taken out as plasters are not allowed to be worn over earrings. Following new guidance if your child comes to school wearing earring and cannot take them out themselves, you will be called to come to school to remove them. If you would like to have your child's ears pierced we advise to have them done at the beginning of the 6 week summer holiday. This allows the time for your child to remove the safely when returning to school in September.

Fund Money

First Steps fund is £1.00 per week, to be paid on the first day of attendance each week. This money is used to buy snacks, baking materials, play-dough and all the little extras that make First Steps fun.

Book Shop

We have a **First Steps bookshop** from which you can buy books at special prices. Each child is given a savings card; any amount can be saved whenever you want to bring it in. The book selection will be displayed the first Wednesday of each month. All profits go back into First Step funds to buy / replace toys and equipment.

Library

Library is open every day. To join the library parents can purchase a library folder from staff which can later be used in school as their reading folder. Children put their folder under the book trolley as they come in, staff will then help them to select a new book to take home. Reception children follow the Sounds Write phonics scheme and will be given a reading book that matches the learning that has been taking place in class. Reception children should read their reading book from the scheme to adults each night and parents are asked to write a comment in the reading record book.

Illness

If your child is ill please ring and let us know. If we do not hear from you as to why your child is not at First Steps we will send a message to you for the reason. Children who are off school without a reason provided to school will be given an unauthorised absence mark and be monitored for further absence.

Please note First Steps have a No – smoking policy. We also ask that pets are not brought onto the premises.

A Day in the Life

Children often learn more effectively if they choose their own activities. We organise our environment into working areas, each promoting development of specific skills. We do monitor the choices being made to ensure that your child will have a varied experience and, if necessary, will guide him / her to where s/he needs to go. Adult led activities are ongoing in each session and are planned around themes and children's interests.



Each day your child can choose from the following activities:

- Painting
- Sand / Water
- Malleable / play dough
- Mark making
- Cutting
- Fine motor
- Small / large construction
- Reading corner
- Maths
- Role Play
- Small world
- ICT



- Outdoors

Snack

Snack is available to the children during a whole class snack session. Due to COVID we are not able to offer the children a rolling snack as we have previously. This means Children will need to bring a water bottle to school with them for drinks outside of snack time.

30 hours provision for Nursery age children

We currently offer 30 hours provision for nursery age children of working families. These children attend Nursery for the full day, Monday to Friday during term time. These children are required to bring a packed lunch for lunch. The children remain in the Nursery setting and are supervised by staff from the unit so that they are familiar with the adults. Nursery children who still require a nap will be given the opportunity to have a nap after lunch. Information about applying for 30 hours provision can be acquired from staff or online at www.gov.uk/sign-in-childcare-account

Free School Meals and Pupil Premium Primary

Our school receives funding from the Government to cover the costs of providing education. This includes all school running costs, such as employing teachers and support staff, books and equipment, school building expenses and free school meals.

The school also receives additional funding known as pupil premium for pupils whose families receive certain benefits. All KS1 children (Reception, year 1 and year 2) currently receive a free meal via the Universal Infant Free School Meal scheme. We can only claim the pupil premium if we are aware of parents receiving one of the eligible benefits. Even if your child is on a packed lunch the school will still be able to claim the premium if you are eligible.

It is in **all** our interests that we bring in as much money as we can to support our school and ensure all of our children get the best possible education. To help your child and your school, we can do a very quick

eligibility check for this additional funding via Durham County Council. Forms will be given out in your welcome pack, please complete and sign as appropriate.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

Your child is starting the Foundation Stage of their education, which at St. Wilfrid's runs from age 3 and continues until the end of the Reception year. Our aim is to provide your child with a broad and balanced curriculum which encourages the intellectual, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, moral and cultural development of all the children in First Steps.

There are 7 Areas of learning:

- Personal, social, emotional development
- Physical Development
- Communication and Language
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

The Foundation Stage will be both formal and informal. We assess the children by stage not age so that every child can fulfil his / her potential. This is done through observations and daily activities. These assessments inform the child's next steps. Once next steps have been identified your child will be given targets to work towards. You will receive these termly.

Religious Education

As a Catholic school Religious Education is an integral part of our curriculum. The children learn prayers and say them daily and are taught to make the sign of the cross. We hope to provide opportunities for the children to learn and develop skills, attitudes and understanding in preparation not only for continuing education but for Catholic Christian life.

Special Educational Needs

First Steps welcomes all children as individuals. Children reach different stages of developments at different times. Early identification of special need is important to ensure the child receives an appropriate education. We may seek advice from professional agencies (Speech and language service, health, Social Services etc.) to ensure the child receives all the help and support they need.

How you can help at home

1. Talk to your children...as much as possible, about anything at all. The more they are involved in conversation, the more and the quicker they learn.
2. Listen to them...Hear what they have to say. It is important to them and, if they feel it is important to you, it will build their confidence and self-esteem.
3. Provide experiences...sand-play, water-play (bath-time), shopping, tidying-up, setting the table, etc...
4. Read to them... books, comics, cereal boxes, signs, anything... once ready, listen to your child read each night
5. Sing songs and rhymes together.
6. Provide a variety of materials...scissors, paper, glue,
7. Encourage independence.

For further information on all First Steps Policies please see the website.