04.05.20

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you in my role as EYFS lead at St. Michael in the Hamlet Community Primary School. Firstly, **a very warm welcome to you all**.

Twenty-two years ago my daughter started Reception at St. Michael in the Hamlet. I can still remember the enormity of my child starting full time school. Add in a worldwide epidemic and I can imagine that you have many concerns and questions. I wanted to share some of my thoughts with you and I hope they answer some of your questions, relating to **Covid 19**. I have already met many of you at the meeting in the autumn term when I showed you around our school, and also at the tour of the juniors that some of you requested. So, I have a good idea of what you were looking for in your choice of school.

Firstly, our Reception **classroom** is a large space with two sets of French windows to allow maximum amounts of fresh air and light into the classroom. It is set up with areas for children to access. The space allows ease of movement and there are **seven sinks for handwashing** **in** **the classroom**.

**Our outdoor space is enormous**, with a yard and garden for just Reception and Nursery; a side garden for Reception; a wild garden with an outdoor classroom and a school field. Research shows the virus does not transmit as easily outdoors. Previously we have taught outdoors 2 days a week, **this can be applied to the whole school week**. We have an **outside sink** and toilets.

Thirdly, in Reception we teach the children in a way that **meets their individual needs**. Our curriculum is **play based** and we deliver activities and resources to support each child’s needs. Our three main (prime) areas of teaching are Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Communication and Language and Physical Development. In relation to Covid 19, our extensive outdoor space will allow your child the freedom to **move and develop physically**. Their time with you at home will have improved their communication and language skills. In terms of their personal, social and emotional development, we are an experienced staff who **follow the children’s interests**, to extend their learning. This in turn promotes **wellbeing** as children learn best through play and their own **individual interests**. The style of teaching in Reception allows this freedom and we can meet individual needs. We **work closely with parents** to ensure that their child has the best school experience. I have been phoning the children in my current class and their parents have told me that it is their young children who have coped best in this current situation of Lockdown. This is extremely heart-warming to hear. I am confident that your children will be the same.

Take care of yourselves and your little ones. Looking forward to meeting you all as soon as we can.

Best wishes, Mrs Jane Sayer, Early Years Foundation Stage Lead