

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL SCHOOL

A Guide to Reception 2025-2026

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Introduction

St Paul's Cathedral School is a Christian, co-educational community where the values of love, justice, tolerance, respect, honesty, service and trust are encouraged and practised to promote positive relationships throughout the school community and where the safety and welfare of each child is of the utmost importance.

The school aims to instil a love of learning through a broad curriculum. It aims to give each pupil the opportunity to develop intellectually, socially, personally, physically, culturally and spiritually. All pupils are encouraged to work to the best of their ability and to achieve standards of excellence in all of their endeavours.

Through the corporate life of the school, and through good pastoral care, the school encourages the independence of the individual as well as mutual responsibility. It aims to make its pupils aware of the wider community and encourages a close working relationship with parents and guardians.

Welcome to Reception

Your child's first experiences of school have a significant impact on their future success. In the Pre-Prep, we aim to provide a solid foundation and foster a love of learning, allowing each child to fulfil their full potential.

This booklet aims to provide an overview of your child's Reception Year; outlining the curriculum and routines of the school day. We hope you will find it useful.

In Reception, we follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum (EYFS).

The prime areas of learning are: Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, Social and Emotional Development.

The specific areas of learning are: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the World and Expressive Arts and Design.

The children have weekly specialist lessons in French, Music, Drama, Art, Dance, ICT, PE and Yoga. They also visit the school library once a week.

Alongside their more formal activities, the children are observed in all areas of learning allowing us to develop planning which meets the need of each child. The cycle of observing, assessing and planning means that the teaching and learning provided are specific and relevant to each child.

Please note that you can access further information about the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/education/early-years-curriculum> .

We look forward to an exciting and busy year ahead!

Miss Sorell & Miss Trollope

Pre-prep Welcome

Pre-prep at SPCS is a joyful and purposeful place to launch your child's education journey.

Here, your child will set down foundations for happy and successful lifelong learning.

Pastoral Care in Pre-prep

At SPCS, pastoral care is at the very heart of all we do. The Good Schools Guide describes SPCS as 'pastorally superb'. Your child will be known and nurtured right through the Pre-prep years.

Relationships are at the heart of Pre-prep life. Children learn best when they are secure in their relationships and have the confidence to tackle challenge.

Sustainable wellbeing is built on learning to understand and respect yourself, others and the world around you.

Our approach places great emphasis on the skills needed for self-management, developing and nurturing friendships and working together in teams. Learning how to communicate with others is a key focus in our Pre-prep.

We make our expectations of behaviour clear and reinforce them through celebration of good behaviour at assemblies and the weekly Star of the Week ceremony.

Confidence is developed through growing competence. Regular opportunities to perform (at assemblies, concerts and events such as Sports Day) build self-belief.

Pre-prep class teachers oversee your child's pastoral care. Our pastoral team also includes the School Chaplain, a Counsellor, a Mental Health Lead and ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants).

Learning in Pre-prep

We make learning irresistible! From age 4, when your child joins Reception, to age 7 at the end of Year 2, expect to see an amazing journey in every aspect of learning and character development. Our Pre-prep approach promotes the development of problem-solving skills, independence and personal enthusiasms in each classroom. We go beyond acquiring vital skills to develop a love of reading, writing, number and a passionate curiosity about the wider world.

Reception

Play is at the core of all our learning in Reception. Expect to see Maths in action as we count down the rocket ship take off or share play food between the animals. Imaginative play is not just great fun; it shapes your child's understanding of narrative and gives opportunities to listen to and understand the perspective of others. The individual child and their interests are at the heart of Reception; during the day children have time to choose and explore their own learning avenues, supported and extended by the team. As the year goes on there is an increased focus on table work to prepare children for the more formal learning environment of Year 1.

Wider Learning

As well as their dedicated class teachers, Pre-prep work each week with subject specialists in PE, ICT, Music, Dance, Drama and French, benefiting from extraordinary expertise from the very start of their education. Our Heads of English, Maths and Science support class teachers to ensure smooth transition to prep school study.

Learning beyond the classroom is a really important part of Pre-prep life, here on site and in the local area. Your child will love regular outdoor learning in the Cathedral Gardens and visits to museums, galleries and concerts during the Pre-prep years will provide lifelong memories. Year 2 visit the swimming pool each week.

In the Pre-prep we advise against any external tutoring except in the most exceptional cases and in consultation with the school. SPCS provides an excellent curriculum, including everything your child needs for academic and personal development. SPCS has a great track record of providing children for their senior schools. This conversation begins with you in Year 4.

Meanwhile, bear in mind that the best ways that you can stimulate your child's academic curiosity are often through the most enjoyable family activities. Trips to a museum or gallery, a family volunteering project, board games, walks together, shopping trips and above all regular conversation at the family meal table: all these give your child the kind of enrichment no tutor can provide. The good news is that the rich experience of family life is the best support you can possibly provide - and is likely to be great fun into the bargain.

We rely on close communication with you and encourage you to share any joys, successes, worries or concerns so that we have the best possible picture of your child's needs and progress.

Your child's form teacher acts as your first contact for communication but do remember they are not in front of a screen during the day but working with your child: call the School Office if you have any urgent messages, questions or concerns.

Madeleine Smyth

Head of Pre-prep

The School Day

Reception will be welcomed at the front door of the school between 8:30am - 8:50am by a member of the Pre-Prep team. Children will be welcomed and registered as they arrive. Children should come straight into to their Pre-Prep classroom and hang their belongings onto their pegs, before going into their classroom for their morning activities. Parents are asked to drop off their children without entering the school building.

Children are dismissed from the front door at 3:25pm. Children are handed over to their parent or carer by their teacher.

You will find your child's timetable at the end of this document.

Organisational skills are strongly encouraged and supported at school; please do encourage your child to play an active role in getting ready for school the next day.

Resources required	Days to be brought in
PE Kit	Worn all day Monday
Nature Explorers -onesie and wellies	Brought to school at the start of term to be kept until the holidays.
Reading Book	Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Library books	Tuesday (Crotchets) Thursday (Quavers)
Musical instrument	Check timetable on parent portal

Reading Books

When everyone has settled into their new school routine and we think it appropriate for your child, we will start your child on our school reading scheme. The children will be following the SPCS Pre-Prep reading scheme which ensures all children can progress at their own pace.

Parents are asked to read with their child each evening. This could be one of our reading scheme books or a story book that you can read to your child. When you sit down to read with your child, please ensure they are relaxed and comfortable and that you spend a few minutes looking at the cover/pictures and chatting about the book, author and illustrator.

Mystery Reader

To encourage a love of reading and an appreciation of sharing a variety of books, we hold a special story time with a 'Mystery Reader' where a member of staff from across the school, or a child in Reception's family member, will share a favourite story of theirs. This could be any 'special person' from the child's life: mummy or daddy, grandma or grandad, aunty, cousin, sister or dog! It is lovely to share books in different languages, from different cultures or from a different time.

Show and Tell

Show and Tell will be held each week Tuesday-Quavers and Thursday- Crotchets. Once a term, children are asked to prepare a short presentation about a topic that interests them. This could be a hobby, craft project they have completed or a favourite animal or holiday etc. We practice important skills during

these sessions such as talking in front of a group, sharing our ideas, taking turns and asking and answering questions.

Parents' Consultation / Reports

Reception parents receive the following report feedback during the year:

Autumn Term:	Curriculum meeting and Reading meeting
Spring Term:	Book Look meeting and parent meetings
Summer Term:	Humanities and Science showcase for parents and a full written report at the end of year.
Regularly throughout the year:	Parents invited into class after Focus Child Week

In addition to scheduled communication, there may be times when parents, or staff, may feel a face-to-face discussion would be beneficial to discuss academic or pastoral issues. It is suggested that parents, in the first instance, email the staff concerned and then arrange a meeting at a mutually agreeable time.

Tapestry

'Tapestry' is an online assessment tool that we use to observe, track and assess your child's progress throughout their time in Reception. It is an app that allows both school staff and parents to add to a child's learning journey with photos, videos and typed observations. It is an incredibly valuable tool as we are able to gain an insight into your child's home life and interests that can then be worked into our school life and learning opportunities. You will be asked to sign a document at the beginning of the academic year in order to gain access to your child's online Learning Journey in line with GDPR requirements. Each week, we will "focus" on children from each Reception class. We will make specific and meaningful observations about each of the focus children during the week. At the end of your child's focus week, you will be invited into school from 8:30-8:50 on Monday mornings, to visit and spend some time in their classroom.

Nature Explorers

Reception has an Outdoor Learning session every Friday morning. The children and all the Reception staff go to the North-East end of the Cathedral Gardens. 'Nature Explorers' offers children a dynamic and immersive environment to explore, discover, and engage with the world around them. Each week, a new theme is chosen, serving as the foundation for a variety of activities designed to stimulate curiosity and creativity. While the activities are centred around the theme, children are encouraged to take ownership of their learning by selecting and creating their own games, investigations, and explorations. This freedom allows them to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills in a natural and enjoyable setting, fostering a love for learning that extends beyond the classroom.

For our outdoor learning children wear their waterproof onesie, e.g.

<https://drykids.co.uk/collections/original-all-in-ones/products/original-navy-all-in-one> and a pair of wellies.

We will change the children into these before each session and will keep them at school. We will send the onesie home every half term for washing, and you are welcome to take the wellies home any time that you need them. On Fridays the children need to wear their usual school uniform, as the onesies and wellies will be worn on top of this.

Reception - Curriculum Overview

Please note that the information given is only a general guide to the material covered in the year. The pace and order of delivery of the curriculum is constantly monitored by the teaching staff in every subject and will be adjusted to match the requirements of the pupils.

Subject	Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Phonics / literacy	Read Write Inc Set 1 Writing short words Reading short words and simple sentence Lower case letter formation Holding a pencil in a tripod grip	Read Write Inc Set 1 consolidation Begin Read Write Inc Set 2 Begin Drawing Club- simple sentence writing Reading more complex sentences	Continue Read Write Inc Set 2 Drawing Club -write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others. Reading more complex sentences and developing comprehension skills
Mathematics	Getting to know you Sorting, matching, comparing amounts, comparing size, mass & capacity, making patterns It's Me 1 2 3! Representing 1 2 3, comparing 1 2 3, composition of 1 2 3, circles and triangles, spatial awareness 1,2,3,4,5 4 and 5, finding 1 more and 1 less, shapes with 4 sides	Alive in 5! Introducing zero, comparing numbers to 5, composition of 4 and 5, comparing mass, comparing capacity Growing 6, 7 8 6, 7 and 8, making pairs, combining 2 groups, length and height, time Length, height and time Building 9 and 10 9 and 10, comparing numbers to 10, bonds to 10, 3D shapes, pattern	To 20 and beyond Consolidating key skills, building numbers beyond 10, counting patterns beyond 10, spatial reasoning First then now Consolidating key skills, adding more, taking away, spatial reasoning Sharing and grouping Consolidating key skills, doubling, sharing and grouping, even and odd, spatial reasoning Visualise, build and map Consolidating key skills, deepening understanding, patterns & relationships, spatial reasoning,
PSHE	Me and my Relationships What makes me special People close to me Getting help Valuing Difference	Keeping Safe Keeping my body safe Safe secrets and touches People who help to keep us safe Rights and Respect	Being my Best Keeping my body healthy – food, exercise, sleep Growth Mindset Growing and Changing Cycles

	Similarities and differences Celebrating difference Showing kindness	Looking after things: friends, environment, money	Life stages Girls and boys – similarities and differences
HaS (Humanities and Science)	Marvellous Me The Hustle and Bustle of the City	Animalia A Roar-some journey	My Place in Space Big Dreams Growing into Year 1
TPR	The Cathedral Christmas	Chinese New Year Easter	Birthdays Bible stories and parables
PE	Body Management Fundamental movement skills and balance Understand balance points and base Make appropriate choice of movement Partner work Speed, Agility and Travel Spatial awareness Change of speed and direction Safely control speed and direction in chasing games Efficiently start and stop in variety of ways and positions Demonstrate and differentiate between fast and slow movements	Manipulation and Coordination Coordinate limbs and carry out defined movements Hop, jump, skip Hold, roll and pat balls Manipulation of a variety of objects Hit and track balls accurately Cooperate and Solve Problems Work as individuals, pairs and groups Identify same and different Coordinate movements with partner Communicate with partners and groups to solve problems Self-organisation and team organisation Respond to visual cues as instruction	Athletics/Sports Day Practice Ready/Start position Sprint Practice Relay procedure and teamwork Jump for distance/Across the River Target/Bean Bag Throw Javelin throw
Music	Singing: Harvest Songs Instruments: learning to recognise violin, cello and sights and sounds Singing: Number songs	Instruments: learning to recognise wind instruments, and various hand percussion	Instruments: learning to recognise brass and percussion instruments. Storytime: The Gruffalo – <i>in song</i>

	Rhythm and Pulse: movement games Singing: Nativity songs and Christmas Carols	Singing: Dinosaur Songs (and other animals) Sound and movement: games and counting (singing and hand percussion) Rhythm and Pulse: hand percussion	Singing: preparing for Concert Notation: Crotchets, quavers and rests
French	Greetings and French symbols French nursery rhymes Christmas	Colours Numbers Easter and Mother's Day	Under the sea In the jungle
Drama	Introduction to Drama: Building Confidence, Creativity, and Empowerment Drama is telling stories. Students begin their journey into drama by exploring this simple yet powerful concept. Through engaging activities, they will develop both their voice and body, building confidence and creativity. Activities Fun drama games and warm-up techniques that activate both the voice and body. Development of spatial awareness, listening skills, and turn-taking. Fostering appreciation and celebration of each other's work in a supportive environment.	Stagecraft and Imagination: Exploring Creativity and Spatial Awareness This module builds on spatial awareness and encourages students to further explore their imaginative thinking. Through drama, students will learn how to use their creativity to transform ideas into dynamic performances. Activities Students will be encouraged to share and showcase their imaginative ideas, both individually and in small groups, fostering collaboration and creative expression. Drama activities linked to class topics or books will help deepen understanding and engage students actively in the learning process. By exploring a class subject or book through drama, students will connect with the	Continued Exploration: Deepening Drama Through Story and Play Drama continues with a focus on physical and imaginative activities that build on students' progress throughout the year. Lessons are closely linked to class themes or books, allowing students to take their dramatic work to new levels of creativity and expression. Activities Explore settings and locations using maps as inspiration for creating original stories. Participate in drama games, vocal activities, movement work, class discussions, and imaginative play to develop storytelling and performance skills.

	Prepare for the Nativity Performance in the Crypt Students will prepare for an upbeat Nativity performance with traditional roles and songs, focusing on the Christmas message. This performance will emphasize confidence, teamwork, and the excitement of performing for a large audience. The aim is to empower students, helping them to express themselves confidently, work together as a team, and celebrate the art of storytelling.	material in a hands-on, creative way. Through these activities, students will expand their creative thinking, enhance their spatial awareness, and gain confidence in using drama to express their ideas in both individual and group settings.	
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Contacts

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Crotchets Timetable 25/26

		8:40	9:20	9:30	9:40	9:50	10:00	10:10	10:20	10:40	10:50	11:00	11:10	11:20	11:30	11:40	12:30	12:40	12:50	13:00	13:10	13:20	13:30	13:40	13:50	14:00	14:10	14:20	14:40	14:50	15:00	15:10	15:20	15:25						
Monday	Registration and Assembly	PE				Playtime				Maths		HaS			Lunchtime	Phonics				CIL					Playtime	PSHE				Story		Dismissal								
Tuesday		Dance								Library		Maths				TPR				Handwriting	CIL																			
Wednesday		Phonics								Music		Maths				Art				People from the past																				
Thursday		Maths								Phonics		CIL				Drama				Funky fingers																				
Friday		Funky Fingers								CIL mixing																														

Quavers Timetable 25/26

		8:40	9:20	9:30	9:40	9:50	10:00	10:10	10:20	10:40	10:50	11:00	11:10	11:20	11:30	11:40	12:30	12:40	12:50	13:00	13:10	13:20	13:30	13:40	13:50	14:00	14:10	14:20	14:40	14:50	15:00	15:10	15:20	15:25					
Monday	Registration and Assembly	Maths					Playtime					PE		Handwriting		Lunchtime					Phonics		CIL			Playtime					<u>HaS</u>		Story						
Tuesday																																			Maths				
Wednesday												Phonics									Story	ICT			Maths						PSHE		Art	Art					
Thursday																																				Music		Story	Phonics
Friday												Funky Fingers									CIL mixing										<u>HaS</u>			Playtime					

Early Learning Goals

Communication and Language

Listening, Attention and Understanding

- Listen attentively and respond to what they hear with relevant questions, comments and actions when being read to and during whole class discussions and small group interactions.
- Make comments about what they have heard and ask questions to clarify their understanding.
- Hold conversation when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges with their teacher and peers.

Speaking

- Participate in small group, class and one-to-one discussions, offering their own ideas, using recently introduced vocabulary.
- Offer explanations for why things might happen, making use of recently introduced vocabulary from stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems when appropriate.
- Express their ideas and feelings about their experiences using full sentences, including use of past, present and future tenses and making use of conjunctions, with modelling and support from their teacher.

Understanding the World

Past and Present

- Talk about the lives of the people around them and their roles in society.
- Know some similarities and differences between things in the past and now, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand the past through settings, characters and events encountered in books read in class and storytelling.

People, Culture and Communities

- Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps.
- Know some similarities and differences between different religious and cultural communities in this country, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps.

The Natural World

- Explore the natural world around them, making observations and drawing pictures of animals and plants.
- Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class.
- Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons and changing states of matter.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Expressive Arts and Design

Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used.
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories.

Being Imaginative and Expressive

- Invent, adapt and recount narratives and stories with peers and their teacher.
- Sing a range of well-known nursery rhymes and songs.
- Perform songs, rhymes, poems and stories with others, and (when appropriate) try to move in time with music.

Mathematics

Number

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number.
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5.
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.

Numerical Patterns

- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system.
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity.
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including evens and odds, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Physical Development

Gross Motor Skills

- Negotiate space and obstacles safely, with consideration for themselves and others.
- Demonstrate strength, balance and coordination when playing.
- Move energetically, such as running, jumping, dancing, hopping, skipping and climbing.

Fine Motor Skills

- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases.
- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paintbrushes and cutlery.
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Literacy

Comprehension

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate (where appropriate) key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role play.

Word Reading

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

Writing

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters.
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.



TRUST

RESPECT

H O N E S T Y

L O V E

T O L E R A N C E

F A I R N E S S

EXCELLENCE

C O M M U N I T Y

