



Information Handbook
for Parents

Head Teacher's Message

Welcome to St Monica's Catholic Primary School!

We are pleased that you have chosen to send your child(ren) to our school, above other schools available to you in this area.

For our pupils, parents and staff, St. Monica's is not just a school, but a real community of enthusiastic, lifelong learners.

We proudly welcome you to this community.

At St. Monica's, our aim is to share with you the richness of opportunities available to every individual and the purposeful nature of the learning experience.

As an inclusive Catholic community, we promote a set of values that are enduring and seek not only to achieve excellence intellectually, but also spiritually. We strive to nurture and develop well-rounded and fulfilled students in order that they may become caring, compassionate human beings ready to make a positive contribution to the wider community throughout their lives.

The idea for this Handbook came from realising that lots of the 'little' things about life at St Monica's Catholic Primary School could be a bit of a mystery to parents who are new to the school. So rather than wait for everyone to work it out for themselves, we decided to pull it together so parents can start the school armed with a better understanding of how things work.

I hope that this booklet provides you with a useful snapshot of all that you need to help you settle in as a parent or carer at St Monica's Catholic Primary School.

We aim to update this Handbook each year, and would be pleased to take your suggestions to improve it on-board. Please speak to any member of the office if you have any suggestions or other questions.

You are also welcome to contact the school office to request an appointment to tour our school.



**Mrs Amanda Ruthven
Headteacher**



We have revised our Mission and Vision Statements as below. We invite all stakeholders to help us make these Statements come alive for the benefit of all.

MISSION STATEMENT

At St Monica's, our aim is to be an Outstanding Catholic Community and an Outstanding Provider of education, growing in faith through the teachings of Christ our Lord.

A black and white photograph of a classroom scene. In the foreground, a young boy with dark hair, wearing a light-colored t-shirt, is seen from the side, looking towards the right. His right hand is raised, with his index finger pointing upwards. Behind him, another child is also visible, with their hand raised. In the background, several other children's hands are raised, some pointing upwards. The setting appears to be a classroom with a whiteboard or bulletin board on the wall and curtains in the background. The overall atmosphere is one of active participation and learning.

**“small school
where big
things happen”.**



Preamble

St Monica's Catholic Primary School is a small, Catholic school with only one class for each year group. We cater for children from the age of 2 years right through to 11 years when they move on to secondary education. Education for children from 2 to 5 years is non- statutory, but all pupils from 5 years (when they move to the Reception class) are legally required to be in school.

The school is particularly keen to involve parents in their child's learning, by letting parents know what is happening in class, and providing support to enable parents to help their child outside of class so that their learning is continuous and harmonised.

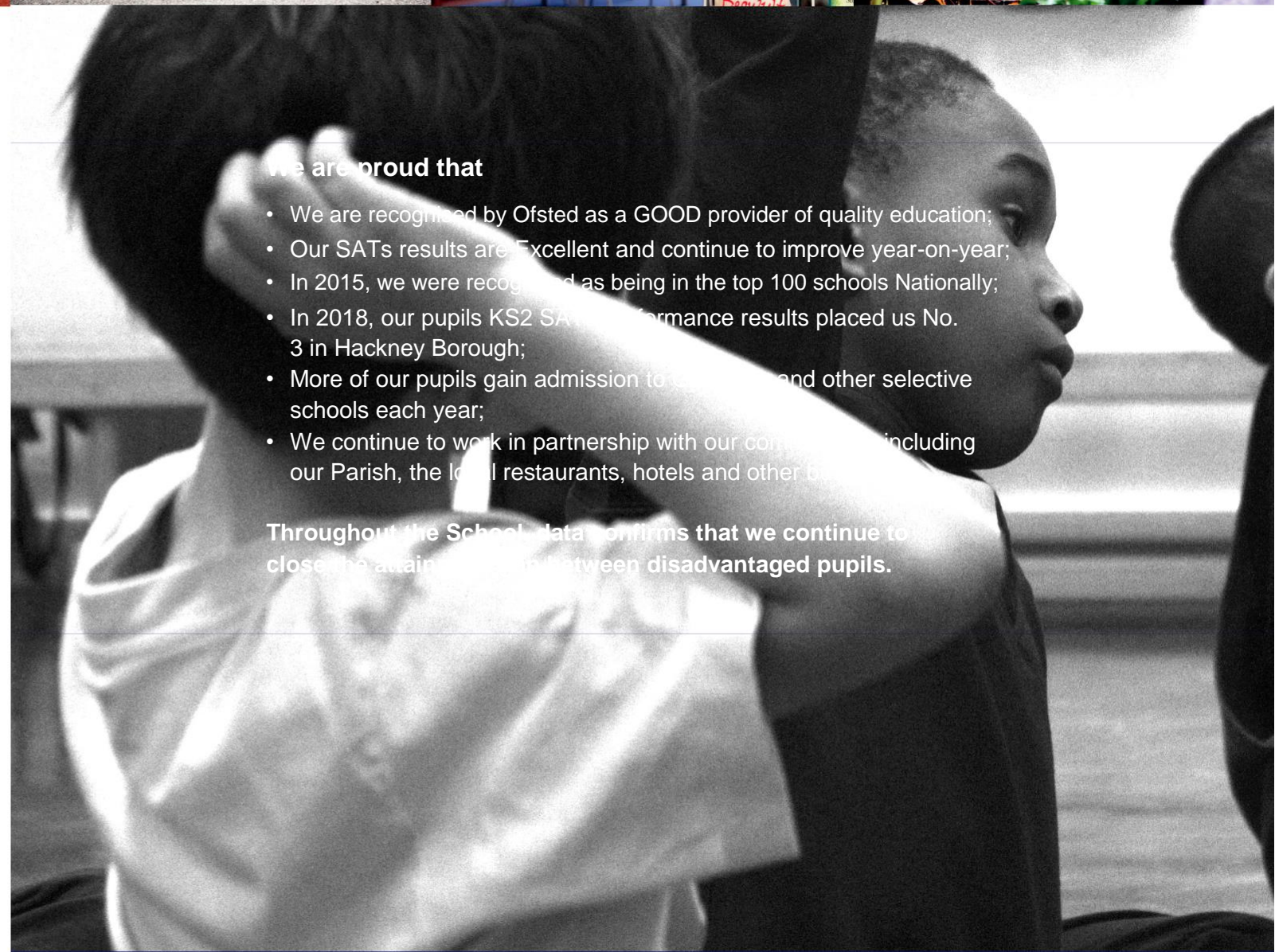
Please note: We have used Parents in this Handbook, to refer to all parents and carers – whether grandparents or other adults who look after our pupils.

All sorts of people have children at St Monica's Catholic Primary School. Whether you're outgoing or shy, new to the area or have been around for years, we hope you enjoy your time as a parent here.

We are proud that

- We are recognised by Ofsted as a GOOD provider of quality education;
- Our SATs results are Excellent and continue to improve year-on-year;
- In 2015, we were recognised as being in the top 100 schools Nationally;
- In 2018, our pupils KS2 SATs performance results placed us No. 3 in Hackney Borough;
- More of our pupils gain admission to grammar and other selective schools each year;
- We continue to work in partnership with our community including our Parish, the local restaurants, hotels and other businesses.

Throughout the School, data confirms that we continue to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils.





...her
...leader
...anager
...ite Manager

Mrs. Curro
Mrs. Ruthven
Mrs. Jallow
Mrs. Hradsky
Mr. Antoniou
Ms. Bart-Williams
Ms. Cham
Mr. Daniel (Schools Operational Services)

Child Protection and Safeguarding Children Statement

St Monica's Catholic Primary School is committed to the safety and protection of all its pupils.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Ruthven – Headteacher, and the Assistant Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs. Hradsky – Inclusion Manager. The Safeguarding Governor is the Chair of Governors – Mrs. Curro.

We work with the Local Authority and other agencies to fulfil our duties, in accordance with the requirements of OfSTED and the central government.

A copy of our Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures are available on our school website <http://www.stmonicasprimaryhackney.co.uk>.

School Organisation

There are 3 'Key Stages' in the school, namely:

Foundation Stage

For the Pre -school (2year olds), Nursery and Reception classes. They follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) curriculum which is play-based and involves a balance between 'child-initiated' (chosen by the child) and 'adult-initiated' (led by an adult) activities. For parent-friendly information about EYFS, have a look at www.ncma.org.uk/pdf/eyfs_parents_carers.pdf.

Key Stage 1

Includes Years 1 and 2, which are the first classes to follow the National Curriculum.

Key Stage 2

Includes Years 3 to 6, and is sometimes referred to as 'the Juniors'. You can search for 'national curriculum' at www.direct.gov.uk for more information.

Every class is led by a qualified teacher and supported by Teaching Assistants (TAs). There are also a number of Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) who are qualified to cover teacher absence in the classrooms.

The school aims to develop a really caring atmosphere, and older children are encouraged to help younger ones. All children are encouraged to take on some responsibility which are appropriate for their age. As part of the determination to build responsible citizens of the world, children are chosen to act as:

- School Prefects
- School Councillors
- Eco Councillors
- Peace & Justice Ambassadors
- Lunch-time Officers
- Buddies

Further information of how these groups work can be found on the school website.

School Term Dates

Each academic year runs from the 1st week of September to mid-July each year. Term dates change each academic year and dates for each year are available on our school website, in our fortnightly Newsletter and on class noticeboards.

School Opening Hours

The typical school day looks like:

	Soft Start	Classes Start	Fruit Break	Morning Break	Lunchtime	Finish
Nursery	08:30	08:55			11:30-12:15	15:15
Reception	08:30	08:55			11:30-12:15	15:15
KS1	08:40	08:55	10:00-10:10	11:10-11:25	12:15-13:15	15:15
KS2	08:40	08:55	10:00-10:10	11:10-11:25	12:15-13:15	15:25

The **'Soft Start'** is to enable pupils settle in before classes start. We also offer **free breakfast daily** (through Magic Breakfast) for all pupils. Class register is taken at 8.55am and any pupil who is not seated by this time is considered as 'late' to school.

Attendance

If your child is going to be absent from school, please ring the school on **020 7739 5824 Option 3 before 9.00am** to explain why your child won't be in. If you don't ring, the school will ring you to check. If absence is persistent you may be asked to provide medical evidence or appointment cards. Please try to make medical appointments outside school hours. You will need to provide evidence (e.g. appointment cards) for appointments in school time.

If you're going to be a few minutes late, you or your child will be asked to fill in the 'late book' in the school office to explain why you're late. If you're going to be later than 9.30am, you should ring the school to explain. If your child has a school meal, the school needs to know if your child is in or not by 9.30am. It really does help your child (and their class and teacher) to be in school on time.

Attendance is monitored and reported to the Local Authority and OfSTED, so it is important that your child attends school regularly and on time.



Late collections

Children should be picked up punctually on time, so that the staff looking after them can also go home on time. If you're unavoidably late, the children will be taken inside the school building to wait for you. You should ring the school to let them know you're on your way. After 4pm, you can only enter the school via the main school office on Hoxton Street. Please try not to be late!

If someone else is picking up your child

Please tell the class teacher in the morning if someone other than a parent is collecting your child. Otherwise ring the school during the day to inform them.

Some benches are available in the parents waiting area for your comfort.

What if we need some time off school?

Attendance is measured by the local authority and schools are under pressure to keep their attendance up. This is why no school is keen on children being away except if they're unwell and need to stay at home. Having said that, if you need to take time out of school for exceptional circumstances you need to fill out a form and get permission. **The school does not authorise holidays during term time.** If you need to go away for an extended visit overseas you have to apply to the Headteacher and agree a definite return date.



School Office

This is a very busy office and the telephone lines can get very busy; so please bear with the staff if they appear not to respond immediately. To gain access to the school office, please press the buzzers.

How can I find out what my child is learning?

At the beginning of each school year there is a 'meet the teacher' meeting for each class, where you can find out about that year group's planned learning and the aims and expectations of that particular year. This is a good chance to get to know the teacher and ask any initial questions. Further details are available on our school website: <http://www.stmonicasprimaryhackney.co.uk/typical-day/>.

Parents' Meetings

These are held three times a year, one each term. A list goes on the Main Hall and Office door and you sign up for a meeting time. If you can't get in to sign up, send a note to let the teacher know the times you are available and they will try to allocate slot to you. Parents usually have the chance to look at their child's books while they're waiting. The dates for this academic year are available on our school website and from your class teacher.

If you can't make a parents' evening, or if you would like more time to talk to your child's teacher, you can ask for an extra appointment. Teachers are very accommodating about these so don't be afraid to ask. Meetings will usually be after school.

School Uniforms

Our School Uniforms ensure that our pupils turn out smart, and project a positive image of the school. It also creates a sense of identity as ambassadors of the school.

SUMMER UNIFORM	
BOYS	GIRLS
White shirt	Navy blue & white check dress
Dark grey shorts	Black shoes and white socks
Black shoes and white socks	

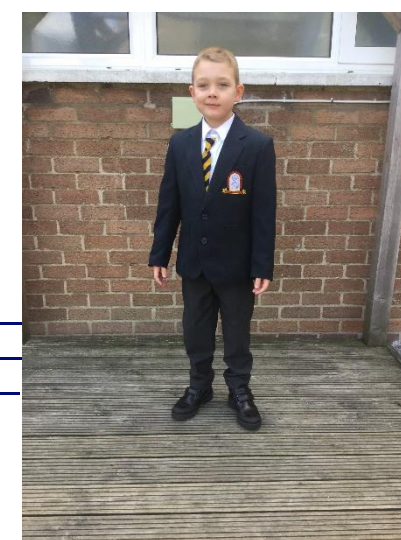
WINTER UNIFORM	
BOYS	GIRLS
Blazer	Blazer
White shirt	Grey skirt or trousers
Dark grey trousers	or pinafore
School tie	School tie
Navy blue sweatshirt	Navy blue sweatshirt or cardigan
Black shoes and white socks	Black shoes and grey tights

We encourage parents to ensure that pupils are appropriately dressed, taking cognisance of the weather – summer and winter.

Uniforms can be purchased from Mapac and the full range is available on <https://www.mapac.com/education/parents/uniform/stmonicasrcprimaryschooln16nt>.

Deliveries can either be made to the school office or parents' home addresses.

Trainers, raised heels, sling back shoes or boots are NOT PERMITTED, as they are not suitable for young children to wear all day. Please ensure that children come to school wearing shoes that are smart, comfortable and safe.



PE

All children have PE every week with a qualified PE teacher and are expected to wear appropriate PE uniform as below. These are also available to order from Mapac.

Swimming is taught in Key Stage 2 when the children have weekly swimming lessons at the local Leisure Centre. Children will need to bring a swimming costume (including hat) and a towel. Boys must have close-fitting trunks; no baggy shorts allowed!

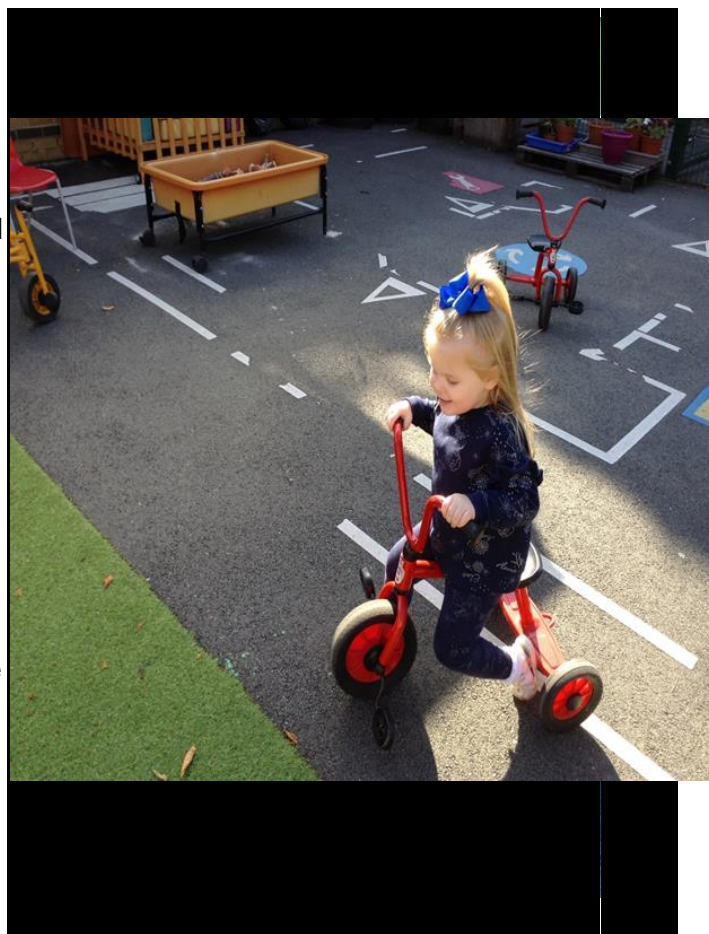
PE UNIFORM (Boys & Girls)	SWIMMING (Boys & Girls)
White PE t-shirt (<i>with logo</i>)	Swimming trunks (<i>boys</i>)
Royal blue shorts	Swimming costume (<i>girls</i>)
Black elastic plimsoles/trainers	Towel - all
Navy plain tracksuit bottoms in cold weather	

Jewellery

We do not encourage the wearing of jewellery to school. If parents choose to allow their children to wear earrings, these must be small plain studs and one pair only. Children **MUST NOT** wear nail varnish, make-up or any type of tattoo.

Hair styles

All long hair must be neatly tied back and kept away from the face. Hair accessories should be neutral or in the school colours. For haircuts, Mohican or shaved patterns are not permitted. No type of headgear (caps, hats etc.) are allowed. If required, sunhat and baseball-type hats with the school logo are available from Mapac.



Health and Medication

If a child is unwell during the school day, he/she will be taken to the Medical Room where a Qualified First Aider will attend to the child. A decision will be taken whether or not to contact the parent. In all cases, however, a note will be sent home with the child to inform parents of the details and how the child was looked after.



If your child has been given medication which needs to be administered during the school day, please speak to a member of staff in the office - you will need to complete a short form so this can be administered correctly. We can only administer medication that has been prescribed by the GP. All medicine must be clearly labelled with the child's name and dosage instructions.

The only medicines allowed in school are asthma inhalers, and epi-pens or similar for allergy sufferers. You will need to speak to your child's teacher about this. It is vital that you inform the school of any allergies or illnesses your child has. A form is available from the school office. In hot weather, parents are asked to provide children with sunhats. If it's likely to be sunny it's best to apply sunscreen before they get to school. You may leave sunscreen at school for your child, but teachers are not allowed to apply sunscreen to children, so make sure your child knows how to do this themselves.

Please inform the school if your child contracts a disease which can be transferred to other children. These include Chicken Pox, Mumps and Rubella or German measles.

For illnesses such as Vomiting and Diarrhoea, the NHS has directed that children should be kept away from school for at least 48 hours after their symptoms have gone.

The school nurse visits once a fortnight and undertakes general growth, sight and hearing tests. If you would like to see the nurse she can be contacted via the school office.

Our Inclusion Manager will work with the parents of children with more serious medical conditions, to devise a Care Plan.

Further information is available in our Medical Needs Policy.





Breakfast and Enrichment Clubs

We are aware that some parents need their children to be in school for longer because of work and other commitments. **The Breakfast Club** starts from 8am and costs only £1 per day; we also offer Enrichment Clubs to further support our curriculum after school.

Pupils who register for Breakfast Club will be dismissed to their classes for morning registration, while Enrichment Club pupils are dismissed straight into the Club after school.

Details of the daily programme of activities for the Enrichment Clubs are available from either the school Office.

If you are interested in either the Breakfast or Enrichment Club, please pick up a form from the school office.

Class Assemblies

Parents and Carers are cordially invited to attend our weekly Assemblies which offer a great opportunity for us all to come together and celebrate our wonderful children.

On **Mondays** at 9am, we have our Gospel Assembly which is led by pupils in the Peace & Justice Society.

On **Fridays** at 3pm we hold our **Achievement Assembly** celebrates the achievement of our pupils.

Please arrive approximately 10 minutes prior to the start of the assemblies.

Homework

Children from all years are encouraged to take a book home to read, or for parents to read to them. Different classes have different arrangements for homework, but it is usually something to build on what they've been learning in class. Children in EYFS and KS1 are expected to read daily and may be given additional short tasks. In KS2 children are expected to read daily and may be given maths, literacy or topic tasks to complete each week. The school Homework Policy can be downloaded from the school website.

Parent workshops

Research has proved that parents are better able to support their children's learning when they themselves understand how their children are being taught a particular subject.

If there are classes or workshops you would like to see, please speak to the Headteacher as she may be able to organise them.

Reading records

These are notebooks, provided by the school, to write down the different books your child has been reading. You fill it in for younger children, while older ones are expected to keep their own up to date. They are useful for the teacher to see the range of books being read. Sometimes teachers will note down their comments.

Extra-Curricular Activities

We are proud of the depth and range of the extra-curricular activities that we offer. We strategically review these activities to ensure that they remain current and relevant for our pupils. This includes:

Trips and outings

These are a really big part of the curriculum. There is usually at least one trip per term, designed to extend children's learning and make use of our fantastically central location. Parents are usually needed to come too, especially for the younger children – your child's teacher may send a letter home prior to a trip asking for volunteers. Sometimes families are asked for a financial contribution towards trips; but many trips are paid for from monies raised by the children and the PFA.

These trips are looked forward to all year and have an amazingly beneficial effect on children's confidence and independence. The memories of these trips remain with the pupils for many years to come!



Music

Music is taught for all pupils from the 2-year olds right through to Year 6. We have a well-equipped Music Room where pupils are encouraged to learn an instrument. We also have a school Choir and participate in the Hackney Music Festival every year.

Latin and Spanish

A specialist teacher for Years 3 through to 6 with teaches Latin lessons once a week. This is important to support the national curriculum especially Literacy (the origin of words) and broaden pupils' knowledge and outlook through the learning of different cultures. Spanish is also taught on a weekly basis.

Sports Clubs

Qualified Coaches run several clubs including Hockey, Football, and Tag Rugby after school to interested pupils. These clubs are paid for by parents and further details are available from the school office. Sports Day is a hugely popular event held in the summer term and all pupils, staff and parents actively engage. The emphasis is on fun and participation!

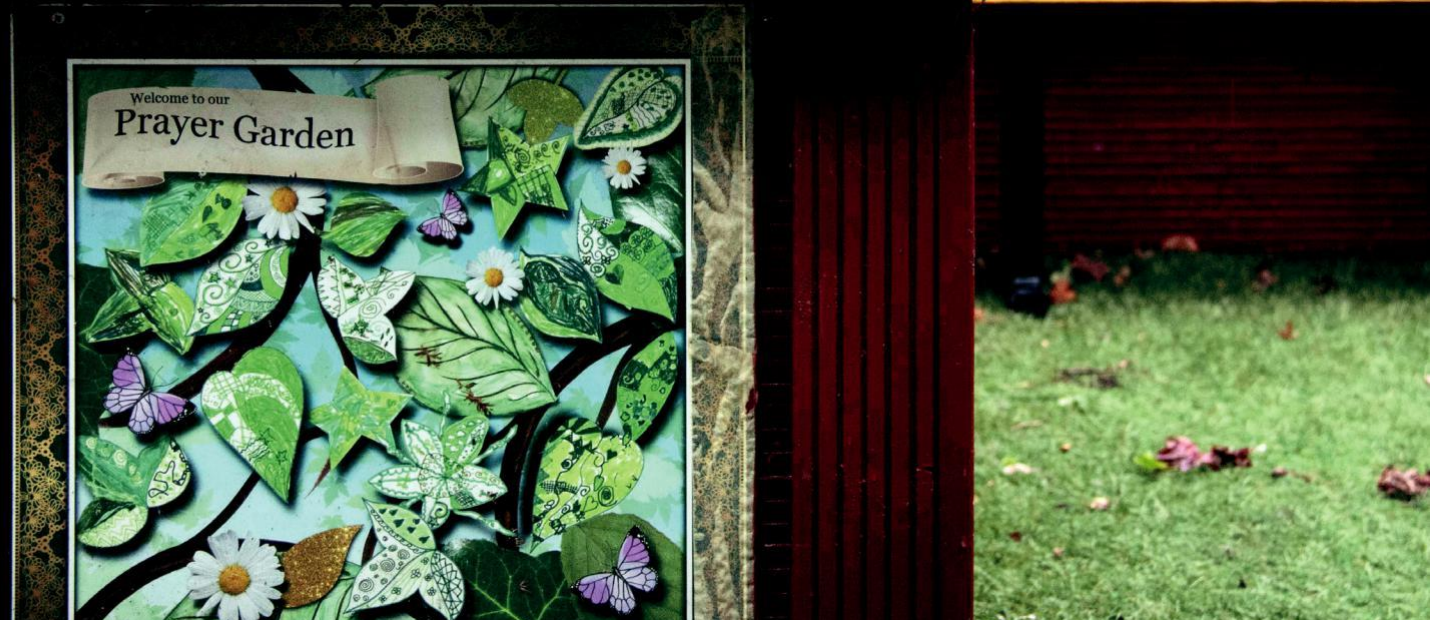
Behaviour

At St Monica's, we understand that good behaviour helps learning. However, sometimes children may go through some issues which may impact their behaviour.

If you, or your child's teacher, feel that your child is finding it difficult to learn or behave appropriately, good communication is the key to moving forward. It's always worth telling the teacher if there are any changes or issues at home that may be affecting your child's behaviour at school – moving house, illness in the family, etc. Staff will always speak to you first if they feel there is an issue. Maybe with a bit of extra support and communication between home and school, problems can be sorted out.

If your child needs extra help, Mrs Hradsky, the Inclusion Manager will speak to you about a strategy to support your child. This may be for your child to participate in a targeted intervention programme over a period, so they can catch up with their peers. It may be decided that a positive behaviour strategy which is consistent between home and school is required. If your child needs any extra help, you will be informed and involved from the beginning of the process. Parents of all children receiving extra support will be invited in for a special meeting to review progress and plan the next steps. Anyone receiving extra help is said to be on the 'special educational needs register'. If you have any questions about learning support and special needs, please contact our Inclusion Manager.

The Catholic Ethos is prevalent in life at St Monica's. Children are encouraged to have self-directed quiet moments in the Prayer Garden. This is a much respected and revered space.



Speakers of other languages

Many children at St Monica's Catholic Primary School speak a language other than English at home. Bilingualism has some real benefits for children's learning, so don't feel that it holds them back. The important thing is that they are fluent and comfortable in their home language, as this is how their understanding of the world develops. Children are amazing linguists, but they need a solid base of a home language before learning a new one.

School Premises and Grounds

At St Monica's we take pride in our surroundings and it becomes a way of life that we respect our environment. We are mindful of the fact that looking after the grounds costs money and time, therefore we do not litter, intentionally or maliciously damage equipment, write on walls or pull down items on our Display boards.

We continue to develop the ECO-Garden to offer natural habitats to invite wildlife into our garden. There is no better way to control slugs, caterpillars, snails and other plant-destroying creatures than allowing birds to feast on them - bird feeders are provided and we often have visits from the Starling, a bird which is local to London. We also have abundant frog spawn in the Pond.

Eco-friendly gardening also encourages the absorption of carbon dioxide by soils. The Eco Garden also provides teachers with a valuable learning tool and an outlet for children to have a break from the classroom and experience a new learning environment. It is a great way of getting children out of the classroom to learn first-hand the importance of the environment, recycling and being 'green'.

Our Gardening Club has a portion of the Eco Garden for growing vegetables which are used in the kitchen and this teaches children gardening skills which will aid their physical and mental development. We also have several apple trees, a fig tree, grapes and blackberries on our school grounds. We proudly harvest these organic produce which are healthy and free of harmful pesticides for use in our kitchen.

Communication with Parents

We want communication between our school and parents to be easy and 2-ways. We therefore use several methods to ensure that no one is left out:

Class Dojo

This is a brilliant system which was introduced to revitalise whole-school communication. Whilst this is also used to reward behaviour (see the bit about Behaviour earlier), it has proved very popular with parents and staff for the sending of messages, pictures and comments. Parents can see how their children are doing and being rewarded for their work, and comment on pictures as well.

Text Messaging

This system sends parents texts and emails of school news and notices. For example, if a club has to be cancelled you will be told by text. There is no extra registration or download needed for this, as telephone and email details are simply picked up from parents' completed registration forms.

Newsletters & Other Updates

These are sent out termly. Make sure the office has your up-to-date contact details.

Noticeboards

Parent Notice Boards are located in the Parents Waiting Area. There is also a staff noticeboard in the school office, with photos of all staff members, their names and role; the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors; Prefects and the Parent representatives.

A black and white photograph of children in a classroom. Several children have their hands raised, indicating they want to speak or answer a question. The background shows a classroom setting with a whiteboard and curtains.

help your child

to use your home language

Talk to your child in your home language

Read stories to your child in your home language

Encourage them to speak to you in your home language



Suggestion Box

This is located in the school office for any bright ideas or comments you have.

Questionnaire for parents and pupils

This is carried out to gather opinions on different aspects of the school. Please make the effort to complete this, particularly if you have ideas to put forward. The responses are often used when reviewing school policy as shown on our Website under 'You said... We did...' Children also complete a questionnaire to help the school to evaluate its teaching and learning.

School Reward Systems

We are very keen on recognising and rewarding children's effort and achievement with their learning and behaviour. Every class uses the Class Dojo system to reward behaviour and hard work. Each week, Class teachers nominate one child who has made outstanding contribution to school life or academic progress. In addition, Reading, Writing and Mathematics Stars are recognised. All these pupils are acknowledged as 'Stars of the Week' and praised in assembly. The Reading, Writing and Mathematics Stars have their pictures displayed on the Stars Banners in the school office.

Attendance Awards

Each week, the class with the highest attendance receives a certificate in our Friday assembly. Punctuality rates are shared each week in assembly and the winning classes are displayed on a special Display in the corridor outside the Headteacher's office.

School Dinners

We are very proud of the quality of our school dinners here at St. Monica's, and we encourage all children to have a school dinner. All pupils in Reception to Year 2 are entitled to a free school lunch.

Lunches are prepared on site by our qualified Chef and his team; and served in the main Hall. Our nutritious and tasty meals are reviewed every term and assessed externally. The School Council worked with our Chef to design the menu for one week and this has been adopted as the Week 4 Menu. There is always a vegetarian option, a starchy dish, a salad bar and a dessert. Children are encouraged to try out a range of foods and watch how new dishes are prepared. Every year there is an opportunity for parents to taste the school meals – this is usually in the Autumn term. Details of the weekly meals are available on our school website:

<http://www.stmonicasprimaryhackney.co.uk/school-dinner-menu/>

As each class enters the hall, those having packed lunches sit at tables and mix with school lunch eaters. Older children act as **Midday Helpers**, to encourage the older children to help the younger ones. Children collect their plates, bowls and cutlery and choose their lunch options. Tables are laid with bread baskets, glasses and jugs of water. If there is any food left after all children have been served, second helpings are offered. This usually benefits the second sitting! Eating is monitored by the lunch staff and all pupils are encouraged to have a realistic lunch.

To help our children cultivate a healthy eating habit from the very beginning, we do not encourage crisps, sweets or fizzy drinks on site. We would also ask that, if these items are included in party bags, they should not be consumed in the school. Our Packed Lunch Policy has more information.

School meals currently cost £1.60 per day, or £8 per week, and payments for dinner money can be made online at <https://www.scopay.com/stmonicas-hackney>.

Snacks

Fruit is provided to all children up to Year 2, and all other children are encouraged to bring in fruit, as a snack at morning break times. Children are not allowed to bring in their own snacks. Also, children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One have a carton of milk during the day. There are drinking water taps in the classrooms and water fountains are available in the playgrounds which children are encouraged to use.

Free School Meals

If you are receiving any of these benefits, you are likely to be eligible for Free School Meals (FSM).

- Income Support
- Income Based Job Seekers Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income-Related)
- National Asylum Seekers Support (NASS)
- Guarantee Element of the State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit Only, but not Working Tax Credit. If you receive Working Tax Credit and no other qualifying benefit other than Child Tax Credit you will not be eligible for Free School Meals.

For more information please talk to a member of staff in the school office.

Buddy System

The school runs a buddy system. Children in Years 5 and 6 apply and are interviewed for the role. These children support and play with younger pupils in the playground and also look out for their peers who may be feeling lonely. We have a zero tolerance for bullying.

The Library

Children may borrow one book at a time from the school library. Books should be returned within 2 weeks. Any lost or badly damaged books must be paid for. Reminder notices

are sent if your child's book is overdue. Parents may use the library with their child on designated days and times. Please speak to your class teacher to confirm their scheduled slots.



Child Protection and Safeguarding

As published by the government in the Department for Education's 'Keeping Children Safe in Education':

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child-centred. This means that they should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as:

- **protecting children from maltreatment**
- **preventing impairment of children's health or development**
- **ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care**
- **taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.**

Children includes everyone under the age of 18. The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.”

If you are at all worried that a child is being abused or neglected you should share your concerns with the Headteacher, who is the Designated Child Protection Lead for the school. She will ensure the correct procedures are followed. (In emergencies, contact the police). If there are any concerns about your child's safety or wellbeing, you will be closely involved in the process, unless it is deemed unsafe to do so. This may involve external agencies such as Hackney Social Care team. Please familiarise yourself with the Safeguarding Notices around the school, and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.



Parents and Friends association

The St Monica's Catholic Primary School PFA has two main roles: to fundraise for extra resources for the school and to organise extra activities for the children and their families. All parents automatically become members of the PFA which is run by elected parents who hold the offices of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Elections are held at the beginning of each academic year.

The PFA Notice Board is located at the parents' collection waiting area.

In collaboration with the PFA, the school also organises an annual Summer Fair, discos at Christmas and the end of the summer term for the Year 6 leavers, an International Evening in the spring term, Easter Bonnet Parade and many more.

Class Reps

Each class has at least one parent 'rep' whose job is to liaise between the parents in 'their' class, passing on messages, spreading the word about events, etc. Anyone who would like to be a rep can offer to do the job, or to share it with someone else. Please speak to your child's class teacher if you are interested.

Parent helpers are also welcome to help in various capacities in the school. If you are interested, please speak to a member of staff.

Parents' Workshops

These vary, but usually include ways to support your child's learning, parenting classes, ICT support, internet safety workshops, Maths and English workshops and support for transfers to secondary school. These are held throughout the year and are free.

Parents are welcome to use the computers in the Meeting Room on Thursday mornings. Please speak to the office staff to book a place and let them know if you would like some support.

Cake Sales

Each class has a cake sale at least once a term. They are held on Fridays after school and are for fundraising for class trips, etc. The dates of the cake sales are in the monthly newsletter. The children in that class spend much of the day baking in readiness! Parents are invited to make cakes/biscuits or other treats (toffee apples, fruit kebabs, etc.) to sell. Either bring them into school in the morning in a labelled container, or at the end of the school day. It's great if you can arrive at school at 3.15pm on the Friday and help set up and work on the stall. It's usually pretty frantic but all over by 4pm!

Monies raised through Cake sales are a great addition to a class budget and are used to fund some local trips.

School Photographs

Individual pupil photographs are taken during the year and parents/carers can purchase these professional photographs. Dates will be sent home in good time, and siblings can be brought in to join in these sessions.

The school uses photographs and videos of children on a regular basis, in compliance with GDPR. If you do not wish your child's photographs to be used, please indicate this on the consent form.

How is the school led and managed?

St Monica's Catholic Primary School is a relatively small primary school with only one class per year group. It is a voluntary- aided school, which means it is owned by the Catholic Diocese of Westminster and run by the local authority. **The Senior Management team (SMT)** includes the Headteacher, the Assistant Headteacher, the Inclusion Manager, the Early Years Phase Leader and School Business Manager. The **Middle Managers** are responsible for leading a subject or area within the school and form the middle leadership team.

Governing Body

This is the body which has legal responsibility for the school, but (less scarily) has the job of supporting the school with its long term planning, developing policies and keeping its work under review. Its main job is to make sure that high standards are maintained, to be a 'critical friend' to the school's leadership, and to be responsive to the needs of parents and the wider community. It is not there to manage the day to day life of the school.

The governing body composition is stated in a document called the *Instrument of Governance* and has provision for 14 members: 8 Foundation governors; 1 Local Authority governor; 3 parent governors; 1 staff governor and the Headteacher.

The governing body can decide to appoint Associate governors who are not Catholic, but who have skills which can improve or enhance the governing body.

The current composition of the governing body and its Committees can be found on the school website.

School Council

This is the children's forum in the school. Two representatives (a girl and a boy) from each class are elected by their classmates. The school council meets on a regular basis and contributes ideas on the running of the school, and defining its policies (for example, ideas about becoming an 'Eco' school). There is a school council noticeboard next to the Meeting Room.

What should I do if I'm not happy with something about the school?

We want you and your child to enjoy your time at St Monica's Catholic School. We are a Listening School, and will do our best to resolve any issues that arise.

Class Teachers

If there is a problem to do with your child, their class or their learning, the first person to speak to is your child's class teacher. You could catch them any afternoon if it's a quick question or arrange an appointment if you feel you need more time or privacy.

The Headteacher would much prefer parents to talk to her about any problems or complaints than to brood on them alone! She is usually in the playground at the beginning and end of each day if you need a quick word. If you would like to make an appointment to speak to her for longer, ask to book an appointment in the office.

Parent Governors

There are three parents on the governing body. Their names, photos and contact details are on the Staff notice board. You may prefer to speak to a governor rather than go to a member of the school staff, but please remember that they are not parent representatives.

Complaints Procedure

If you have tried to resolve a problem in-school but still feel unhappy, you are entitled to complain to the local authority or to Ofsted. We hope it doesn't come to this! The school complaints policy is available on the website or from the office.

Our Pupils, Parents and Staff work together to continually seek out and adopt things that will improve our school.

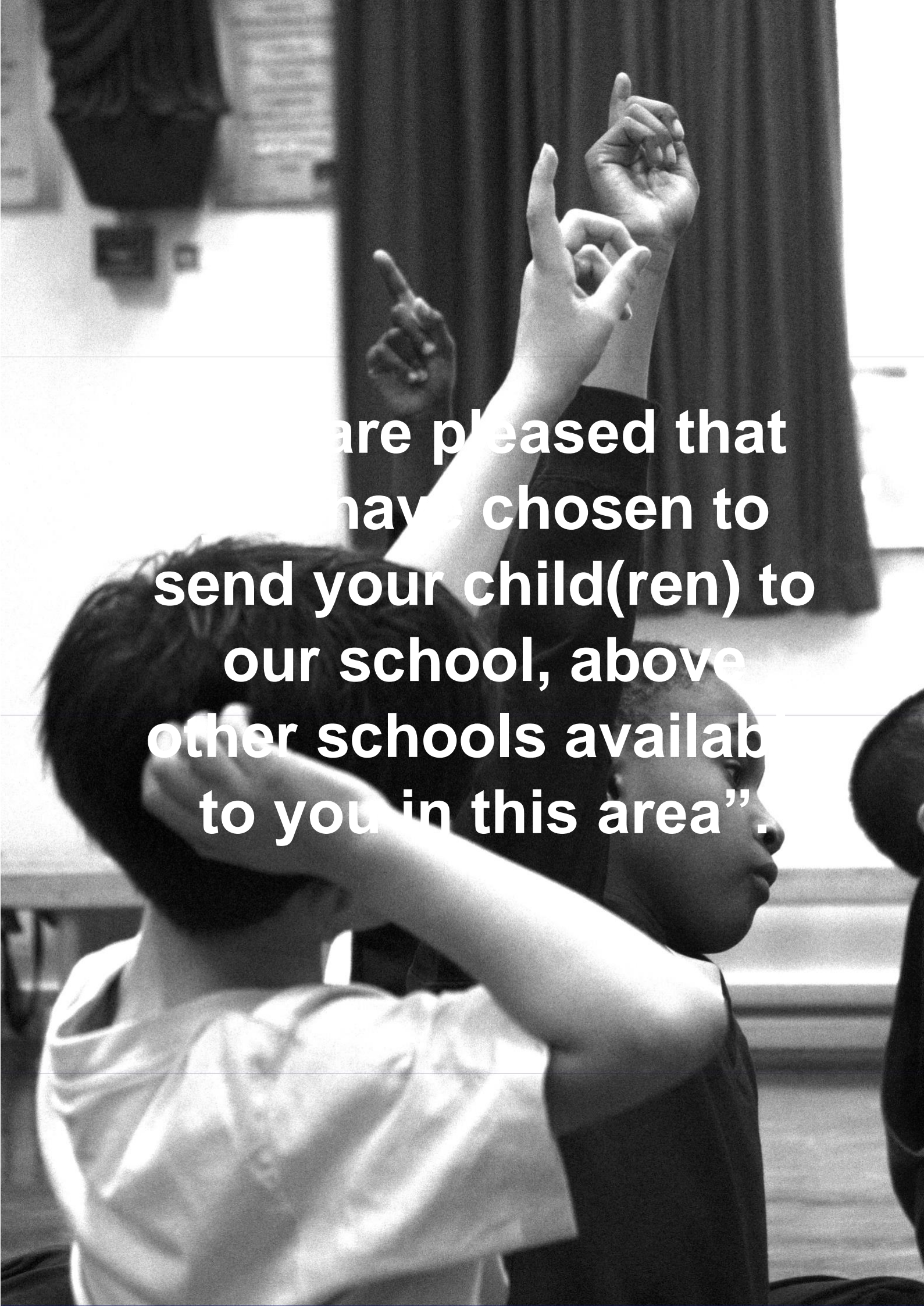
We hope this handbook will help you to settle into school, give you a brief insight into how the school runs and answer any questions you may have.

Our website <http://www.stmonicasprimaryhackney.co.uk/> has more detailed information and exciting news of school life. Please familiarise yourself with it and make a note to visit it regularly for updates and breaking news.

Many of our Policies and Procedures are also available on the website, and if you require any more documentation, the office staff will be more than happy to help.

Finally, if you have any suggestions and/or ideas, please do not hesitate to contact any member of staff or simply drop your ideas in the suggestion box in the main office.

TOGETHER WE *LEARN*
TOGETHER WE *GROW*
TOGETHER WE *EXCEL*



are pleased that
may have chosen to
send your child(ren) to
our school, above
other schools available
to you in this area”.