



# Vallis First School

## Prospectus

[www.vallisfirstschool.org](http://www.vallisfirstschool.org)



# Welcome from our Headteacher

Welcome to Vallis First School. I feel very privileged to be leading this amazing school in the beautiful market town of Frome.

I started as Headteacher in September 2019 and I am very proud of the happy, safe and purposeful atmosphere in the school that is created by our dedicated and skilled staff team and the great learning attitudes of our children.

The school feels like a large family and the strong nurturing and inclusive environment ensures that all our children achieve to the very best of their abilities.

I believe a wide and varied curriculum that is well planned and progressive with its roots in maths, reading and writing is crucial for children in acquiring a rich, creative and broad education; the environment needs to be supportive and inclusive so all children can feel a sense of achievement.

We sow those seeds of curiosity and questioning in a child's first few years of education but along with this, I feel developing the learning skills of children is vital too in giving them life skills to support them in dealing with the many challenges the world throws at us.

Our four learning powers, that form a core thread throughout everything we do at Vallis, (Resilience, Resourcefulness,

Relationships and Reflectiveness) help to reinforce skills which the children can use in all areas of their lives to help them be successful. Through this vision, I hope that children can leave Vallis being confident individuals with aspirations and the motivation to lead long and fulfilling lives.

There is a lot of information on our website, but if there are any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to telephone or come in as we will be very happy to help. If you are looking for a school for your child, I would be very pleased to show you around our school so you can see and experience for yourself the unique Vallis First School. Please have a look through the gallery on the web site as this shows the range of learning and enrichment activities that the children experience.

Nick Firkins



# Our Vision and Values

our Vision is to be a safe and happy school where we can all be the best we can be

Underpinning our vision is a set of core values:

- To inspire children in their learning by making it fun and relevant
- To meet the needs of families and involve them in their children's learning

- To value children as individuals but to encourage them to recognise the needs of others
- To help children to feel safe and to be happy and healthy
- To give children access to the skills they need to enjoy life and achieve personal fulfilment
- To involve children in the wider community





# Our Curriculum

We aim to teach a broad, balanced and creative curriculum which reflects our nurturing school ethos.

It covers not only the National Curriculum, but embraces our ever changing school and local community to help children make memories that support their learning experiences.

We have a full range of educational visits, including a residential stay during the Spring Term of Year 4, where children learn through hands on experience providing them with the opportunity to grow in confidence.

In addition to the standard curriculum we also offer:

- The opportunity to learn a musical Instrument in Key Stage 2
- Forest School sessions for every year group using our forest school space on school property and our local allotment
- Extra-curricular clubs including (but not limited to) football, dodgeball, multi-sports, tennis and athletics
- Work with local music education trust Jackdaws to bring music to life through singing and instruments
- Swimming for children from Year 3 onwards.



## Early Years Foundation Stage

The curriculum for our Reception children is planned to enable the children to achieve in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication and language, physical development, literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

## Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1 (KS1), core skills in English and Mathematics are taught separately with phonics taught on a daily basis. All other subjects are taught through cross-curricular themes designed to stimulate the children's natural interest and encourage questions.

## Key Stage 2

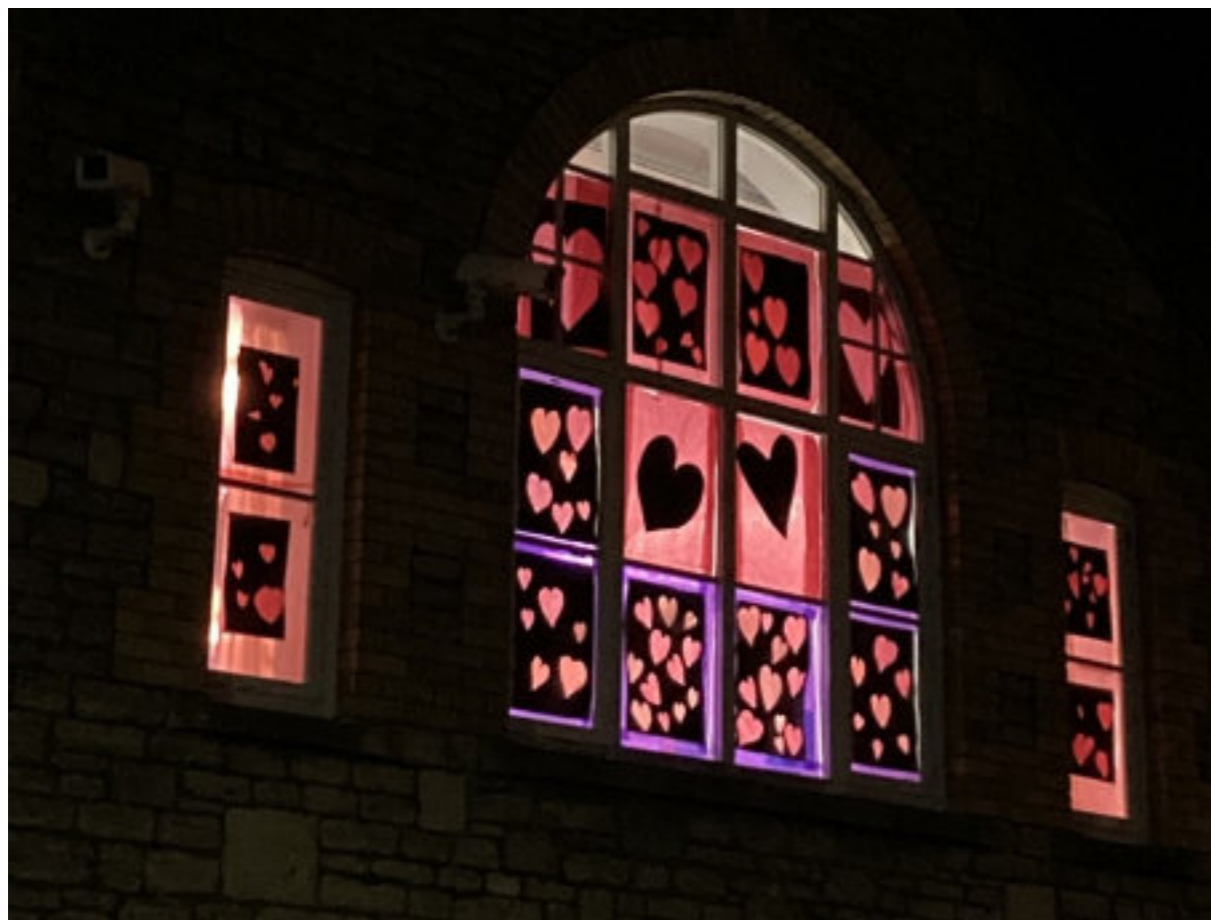
In Key Stage 2 (KS2) all subjects are taught as discrete subjects, with each unit of work built around a high quality text to focus our learning and provide purposeful outcomes.

We follow the National Curriculum, which consists of the core subjects of English, Mathematics and Science and the foundation subjects of Art, Computing, Design Technology, Geography, History, Modern Foreign Languages (French), Music, Physical Education, Religious Education and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

We are continually reviewing our approach to the curriculum and regularly update our website with our latest plans, so please take a look for more information.



# Safeguarding



All schools have a legal duty to ensure the safety and well-being of all the children in the school.

They are required to appoint a Governor and a member of staff with responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection and to have Safeguarding and Child Protection policies in place (see our Vallis Safeguarding Policy).

As a school, we work hard to support parents and children whose families are experiencing difficulties and we work closely with support agencies to access help where parents request it. We currently have available a Parent and Family Support

Advisor to whom families can be referred, who will offer help.

We will always discuss any concerns we have about a child's well-being and safety with their parents unless doing so would endanger the child. In the latter case, we would always follow the advice of Children's Social Care, which is our legal duty.

Children should not have a mobile phone in school, but if they do need one due to an emergency, it should be handed in to the office first thing in the morning and collected at the end of the school day. Children should not wear a smart watch to school.

# Admissions

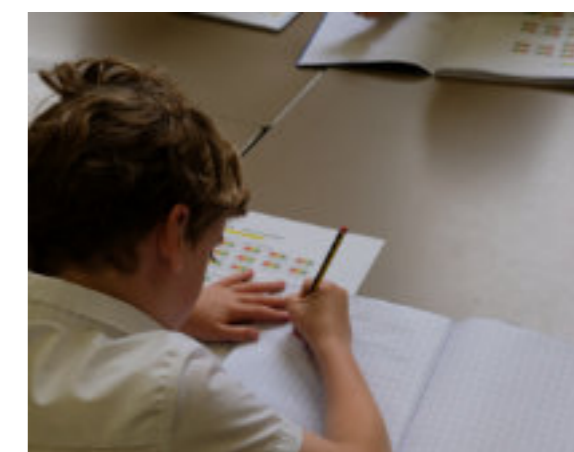
In accordance with the County Admissions Policy, children who are 5 within the qualifying year (which starts 1<sup>st</sup> September and finishes 31<sup>st</sup> August) are entitled to start school from the first day of the academic year that starts in September. Somerset Council is responsible for arranging admissions criteria and the application is done via the Somerset Council website. If you need help, please contact a member of the school office who will be pleased to help.

We can admit 56 children each September and have a total of 280 places available across all year groups.

Details of dates, times and arrangements for children starting in September are

given at our New Parent's meeting, normally held in June. Our EYFS teachers use the first week of the academic year for parent and child meetings to collect information from parents about their child. Our EYFS pupils usually start school the second week of the academic year, starting with full days. However, we have a very flexible approach during the first half term to allow children to settle at their own speed and adapt to what can be a tiring change!

If you are looking to join us mid-year, you will need to complete an in-year application form and submit to Somerset Council. These can be obtained from the School Office or the Somerset Council website.





# School Life

We are open for pupils for 190 days of the year. Details of holidays and In-Service Training days are given as far in advance as possible. We follow the standard Somerset Council term time dates.

Our doors open at 8:45am, with school formally starting at 8:55am. Lunchtimes vary depending on the age of the child, but our afternoon session starts at 1:00pm. The school day ends at 3:00pm.

We are able to offer wraparound care from 7:45am with our Before School Club until 6pm with the onsite Childs Play Clubs afterschool care. These are open to all children who attend the school.

## Attendance

Poor attendance is often associated with poor achievement at school as children miss



key lessons and struggle to understand further work. As a school, we place a very high priority on maximising attendance and we work closely with parents to ensure that any difficulties are addressed.

In line with Government guidance, leave or holidays in term time are not permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances. Parents should apply for a Leave of Absence by completing a form available from the school office. The leave will be authorised at the Headteacher's discretion.

## School Uniform

We wear school uniform to instil a sense of pride and togetherness.

Our children wear a dark green sweatshirt or cardigan with a black or grey skirt, pinafore, trousers or shorts. Sweatshirts and cardigans are available to purchase from the School Office. Summer dresses should be green. Children should wear sensible black shoes (not trainers) - sandals or flip-flops should not be worn for health and safety reasons. For PE, your child will need a pair of daps or trainers, a pair of plain black shorts and a plain white t-shirt.

We ask that all families support us in this aspect of school life. We also ask that all items are labelled to try to keep lost property to a minimum.

Our parent association - the Vallis School Association (VSA) - hold secondhand uniform sales on a regular basis to encourage the reuse of uniform that children may have grown out of.

# Special Educational Needs

## Our vision for Special Educational Needs

At Vallis First School we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to '...be the best they can be.'

The achievement, attitude and well-being of every child matters and inclusion is the responsibility of everyone within our school. Every teacher is a teacher of every pupil, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. We respect the unique contribution which every individual can make to our school community.

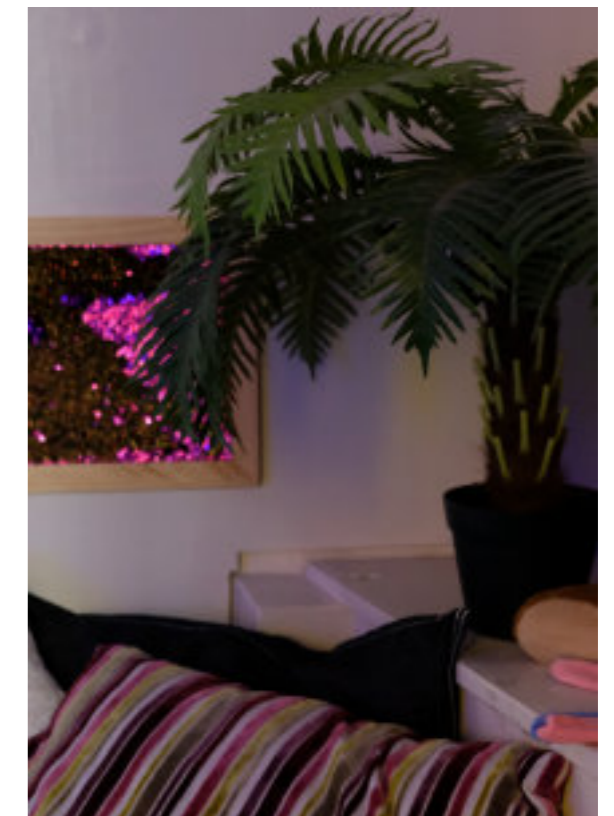
At Vallis First School all children, regardless of their particular needs, are provided with inclusive teaching which will enable them to make the best possible progress and feel that they are a valued member of the wider



school community. We expect that all children with SEND will meet or exceed the high expectations we set for them against national data and based on their age and starting points.

We will use our best endeavours to give children with SEND the support they need, whilst having access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Working in partnership with families, it is our aim that children will become confident individuals able to make a successful transition on to the next phase of their education.

To access our SEND Information Report, please see our website. This document has been designed collaboratively with parents and aims to answer many questions that you might have about SEND provision at Vallis First School.





# Home/School Partnership



The success of our children's education is a result of a strong and effective partnership between home and school.

As a school we will encourage children to do their best at all times and take care of their surroundings and others around them. We will let parents/carers know about their child's progress and concerns or problems. We will maintain high standards in all areas of school life and provide a welcome and smile for everyone!

Parents are welcome in the school at any time and we will send out weekly newsletters to keep you informed of forthcoming events.



We ask parents to try to ensure children attend school regularly and on time with the right uniform and PE kit, share any concerns as soon as possible and support your child with their reading, spelling and other homework.

We ask that you make every effort to attend the regular parent's evenings and family learning events.

Together we will:

- Be polite to each other
- Listen, whatever the pressures
- Support learning to help everyone achieve their best
- Create a happy atmosphere for everyone connected with our school

# Behaviour

We pride ourselves on our children's good behaviour.

The school's Behaviour Policy, which is endorsed by the Governors and has elements that are adopted by all Frome schools is available on our website or in school. As a school we seek to create a supportive environment for all children and staff and we do not tolerate racist, homophobic, cyber, physical or verbal bullying behaviour.

The children, staff, parents and Governors have agreed the following Golden Rules together:

- Be gentle - don't hurt anybody
- Be kind and help - don't hurt people's feelings
- Work hard - don't waste time
- Listen - don't interrupt
- Look after property - don't waste or damage things
- Be honest - don't cover up the truth



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