



*SCHOOL
PROSPECTUS*

At Cunningham Hill Infants' our aims are to be:

Welcoming ~ a school community where everybody feels welcome

Exciting ~ achieve high quality learning through a stimulating, creative and technological curriculum

Safe and caring ~ provide a safe and secure environment where each individual is valued

Know what you are doing, do it by yourself ~ ensure children become confident, independent and responsible members of our school and ultimately our society

Behave well ~ value the importance of courtesy, good manners and respect for everyone

Love learning ~ promote curiosity and an active, lifelong love of learning

Be your best ~ enable everyone to be the best they can be



Our school

Cunningham Hill Infant School is a two-form entry County school, maintained by Hertfordshire County Council, for children aged 4 to 7 years. Each class has up to 30 children, with one intake in September. Children enter the school from a range of nurseries around the town and each child is welcomed as an individual with his or her own unique talents, abilities and personality. We have an experienced, highly committed staff that work hard to foster a co-operative approach in and out of the classroom, which ensures a consistent approach to teaching, learning and behaviour throughout the school. Mutual respect and consistently high expectations between all members of the school community ensure a caring ethos in which children are encouraged to become independent, enjoy their learning and can take risks in an atmosphere of safety and support. This provides the background for our stimulating and creative learning environment. Through learning about themselves as individuals and being part of the school community, children develop their understanding of responsibility, friendships and care and respect of others. We are committed to raising standards for all pupils in all areas of their development. We welcome a close working relationship with parents in order to support their children fully. Your help and encouragement are essential to your child's progress and development so we look forward to your involvement and commitment in a partnership between school and home.

Facilities

The school was built in the late sixties and shares a large site with Cunningham Hill Junior School. There are six classrooms; one mobile classroom (Garden Room); a library; a large hall; dining room surrounding an open classroom for the Foundation stage children; the Discovery Room and the Rainbow room. The school has its own kitchen and meals are prepared on site. There are additional facilities for parents and staff.

Classrooms

The learning environment is designed specifically for the age and needs of young children. Each classroom is fully carpeted and furnished with attractive and modern furniture. Classrooms are light and airy with recently refurbished integral toilets and cloakrooms.

Outside Classroom

The school was built around an open area which we have turned into an outside classroom space for our children in the Foundation Stage. This provides a safe environment for practical activities e.g. sand, water, digging and exploring.

School Hall

This is a large well planned area which is used throughout the day for P.E., Music, Dance and Drama activities. In addition there is a projector and screen, a well resourced Music area and a Reading area.

Library

We have an excellent fiction and non-fiction library. The children use the library on a regular basis throughout the week and they borrow books to share at home. We regularly audit, review and update our stock of books. There is an interactive whiteboard in the library.

Discovery Room

This area provides a practical space for groups of children to work with an adult on cooking, sewing and related science activities. The room has a fully fitted kitchen and work area.

Rainbow Room and Garden Room

These rooms provide additional teaching space for smaller groups of children.

School Grounds

To the front of the school there is an area of trees and grass with paths which direct you to the classrooms. At the rear there are two hard playground areas and a large field for children to use. In the playground we also have an activity area and large wooden play equipment. There is a large wooden shelter for sitting under, which also provides shade, and a play stage with additional seating. Close by are fixed musical instruments which the children use at play time. There is a quiet garden area for children to use throughout the day which has been planted with flowers and herbs.

We continue to develop our school grounds to provide another learning resource. The school initially worked with the local conservation group "Earthworks" to clear and develop an area of the school field, known as the Wild Life Area. This is where the children can spot different birds, mini beasts, squirrels, hedgehogs and flowers in their natural habitat.

Resources

In each classroom we have invested in a range of resources to support and extend our children's learning both practically and creatively in all areas of the curriculum. We are well resourced in all aspects of I.C.T. including clever touch screens, digital video/cameras, digital microscopes and sound and recording devices. There are at least two individual computers in each classroom, plus a large number of portable computers that can be used throughout the school. Children also have access to iPads to support learning.

School Fund

Each term we ask for a voluntary contribution of £5 from each child to be paid into School Fund. This money is used to help provide materials for cooking and art work - all things that your child will eventually bring home. It also subsidises special visitors and events in school which enrich the children's experiences and learning. We also use the fund to subsidise school trips.

Staff

The school has a very experienced teaching and support staff. We maintain a high ratio of adults to children. Each class has a full time Teacher and Teaching Assistant. Additional Teachers work across the Year Groups to provide support for children and staff. The school also employs a specialist Music Teacher. Further Teaching Assistants support small groups of children including those with special needs. The Teachers work closely together to plan for the children's learning. The Administration staff and Site Manager are based in the Office and they are there to support children, staff and parents. Our full staffing list can be found on our website.

Governors

As a Community School we have our own Governing Body. A full list of the Governors of this school is on the school website. Governors are happy to discuss all aspects of the school. They have a legal responsibility to work as a body to manage the school, are actively involved in school life and attend training courses throughout their terms of office.

Parents

We believe that a successful education needs to be a working partnership between home and school. Parents are welcomed into school on many different occasions. We encourage parents to come and talk with the staff about any concerns or queries they may have. Communication between home and school is important and during the year there are both regular formal and informal opportunities to meet. The school sends out regular newsletters and updates which are useful to parents. We are very keen to involve parents in school at all levels, some parents may help in the classroom or on school trips and some parents may help in the library or the garden. Also if you have a particular hobby or a specific job that you would like to share with the children please let us know.

Admissions

Since September 2011 all children who become five years of age in the next academic year are offered a full time place in September. Parents may request that their child attends on a part time basis in the Autumn Term and school will consider this. Children are required by law to begin full-time education at the beginning of the term **following** their fifth birthday but cannot defer the place beyond the year for which it is offered.



Teaching and learning

Organisation

Each class has 30 children and there are two parallel classes in each year group. Children are organised in a variety of ways, based on knowledge of the children and their learning and personal, social and emotional needs including:

- Whole Class
- Flexible groupings of different sizes including
- Friendship
- Ability / Mixed Ability
- Behaviour
- Working individually / Working in pairs
- Interacting across and within the year groups with other children

However children are organised they learn and progress at their own rate according to their individual abilities and educational needs. This will involve individual, group and whole class teaching at various times through the school day. Teaching methods include: explanation, discussion, questioning, 'by example' and demonstration.

Emphasis is placed on extending the children's understanding and knowledge through a wide range of activities and opportunities. However in order for children to develop as learners they must be able to express their ideas in a variety of ways. Therefore at the very centre of our teaching is a strong commitment to teach children the basic skills that they need in order to access the wider curriculum. The children are encouraged to become self-confident, independent and constructively critical in their approach to learning. The teacher provides a stimulating environment that is purposeful, challenging and pleasurable. Each classroom is organised and managed in a similar way so that children feel secure and confident when changing classrooms and teachers. Individual progress and continuity in learning are ensured by a whole school policy approach to assessment, record-keeping and planning.

Opportunities for Learning

We introduce children to a wide range of concepts, experiences, knowledge and skills. We ensure that the curriculum is well balanced and covers all aspects of learning. Through careful planning we give children opportunities to use their skills, develop their ideas and take their learning forward thus children have ownership of what they do. The curriculum we offer provides a sound foundation for children's future development. Our curriculum covers the statutory framework and guidance for Early Years Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum (2014) for Key Stage 1.

Foundation Stage (for children starting school age 4+)

There are seven areas of learning and development which are interconnected. There are three prime areas:

- Communication and Language
- Physical Development
- Personal, social and emotional development

These are strengthened and applied through four specific areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

We provide many opportunities for our Foundation Stage children to learn through play and through first hand experiences both indoors and in the outdoor area. Children are regularly involved in individual, group and whole class activities. The Teacher helps to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding through a carefully planned curriculum. This builds on the children's' prior experiences. Our curriculum is planned to provide many opportunities to develop children's skills and knowledge both in a practical and creative way. The **Early Learning Goals** establish the National expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage and provide a framework for planning the curriculum. This framework provides a natural progression into the National Curriculum.

Year 1 and Year 2 (Key Stage 1)

Our curriculum is designed to be relevant and meaningful for young children. We help children to learn the skills and knowledge through direct teaching within an exciting cross curricular framework. We build on children's prior learning and move them forward in a way that supports and challenges them.

The National Curriculum covers the Programmes of Study in the following areas:

English: We follow the 'Read Write Inc' programme for teaching reading and writing. We work extensively to develop the skills of speaking and listening in order for children to communicate, ask questions and listen attentively. When teaching reading we use a wide variety of methods including an emphasis on phonics and recognition of word pattern. Children learn strategies to help them read a variety of material and emphasis is given to developing their understanding. We encourage children to use their reading to read for pleasure and increase their knowledge. Children are taught to develop skills of handwriting, presentation and correct spelling of everyday words which are relevant to this age group. They are also taught punctuation and how to organise and present their ideas. Children are encouraged to write for a wide range of different purposes, both fiction and non-fiction: this includes stories, accounts, instructions, letters etc.

Mathematics: Covers number recognition, calculation, measurement, patterns, shape, space and handling data. We structure the children's learning to include practical experiences which help them understand mathematical concepts and apply them in different situations.

Science: Children learn about living things, physical processes, materials and their properties. The most important aspect of the Science curriculum is developing children's ability to ask questions and apply the skills of scientific investigation to a range of experiences.

Computing: Children work with and are taught to use a wide range of technologies that include computers, tablet PCs, digital cameras, video cameras, recording devices, iPads etc. Children develop their computing skills, use of the Internet and are encouraged to use ICT as a tool in all areas of the curriculum to support their learning.

History: Children learn about people and events that happened in the past, including how people lived and how things have changed. They develop skills to research and ask questions and begin to recognise the effects of past events on the present.

Geography: Children learn about places both local and distant, how people live and work and develop their awareness of the environment.

Music: Children listen carefully to a wide range of music. They learn to play simple musical instruments and sing a variety of songs from memory adding accompaniments. They learn to make simple musical compositions and how to perform to others.

Art and Design: We use a variety of materials to explore and develop children's ideas. They begin to understand about colour, shape, space, pattern and texture and apply different techniques to their work. They also learn about famous artists and sculptors.

Design and Technology: Children improve their ability to design and make models, and structures in a range of contexts. Skills are taught using different tools and materials, including food.

Physical Education: The children are encouraged to engage in a range of different skills to develop and refine gross motor co-ordination as well as understanding the effects of exercise on the body as part of a healthy lifestyle.

RE: Based on the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus which is available in school. Children learn about themselves, about other faiths and how people celebrate special occasions. We take every opportunity to encourage children and their parents to share information about their faiths and festivals with us. This not only helps our children to understand different beliefs and ways of life in a multi-racial society but also encourages them to respect other people.



Healthy schools

We teach children how to stay healthy and make informed decisions about themselves. They learn to express their feelings within a safe environment and how to build good relationships with others. Children learn about a healthy balanced diet, the importance of water and sun safety. They are taught road safety skills and scooter safety.

Enriching the curriculum

To enhance the children's learning and first hand experiences we plan special activities and themed events throughout the year. These could include visits around our local area, longer visits to places such as St Albans Abbey, Ashridge, Knebworth, Boxmoor Trust. Such visits provide children with opportunities to find out about new things and extend their learning. We invite special visitors to our school to give children new skills and opportunities in a range of contexts.

Extra curricular activities

Where possible the following additional activities are offered to children either in Year 1 or Year 2; French, Music, Gardening, Cooking, Knitting, Ukulele and a range of Sports/Dance activities.



Our school day

Our school day starts promptly at 9.00 am and we welcome children into the classroom from 8.50 am. We have a morning playtime at 10.25 am and lunchtime is from 12.00. During the morning children will have a milk drink or a drink they have brought from home. The school is part of the Fruit & Vegetable Scheme and this is served at morning break. School meals are cooked on the premises. A well-balanced and attractive selection of healthy meals (including a non-meat dish and fresh fruit) is prepared by the School Meals' staff (Herts Catering). We also encourage children to bring a water bottle and water is available all day.

Children are collected at 3.15 pm.

During the school day the children will be working in their classrooms or other areas of the school for various activities. All children have a PE or games activity every day in the school hall or outside.

School meeting

The children come together in a short daily act of collective worship, part of which is linked with Religious Education in its widest sense. In our school this is called a "Meeting" and reflects the needs of our children and the ethos of the school. It is a coming together of the school community to celebrate, share and learn about each others lives. The 1988 Education Act requires school to organise a daily act of worship of a broadly Christian nature. However, parents do have a right to withdraw their children from collective worship and R.E. and the school would be happy to discuss this matter more fully if it is appropriate.

Extended care

We offer a Breakfast Club/Early Birds (7.45-8.45 am) and an After School Club based at the Junior School (3.15-6.15 pm). Information on these clubs is available from the School Office.

Inclusion and children's wellbeing

The school community is committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve the highest of standards. The achievements, attitudes and well-being of all our children are important to us.

Special Educational Needs

Within school we recognise that children may have a range of special and specific needs. We closely monitor children who find learning more difficult and give additional support within the normal classroom situation wherever possible, reflecting current policy of inclusion for all children. We are able to differentiate the work given and use a variety of teaching materials in order to support learning.

Any learning difficulties are discussed with the parents as soon as they are identified. Positive support from home and school is essential. In some cases we have to involve outside agencies such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapist, Behaviour Support, Child and Family Services etc. Their advice enables the school to support learners more fully.

In some circumstances 'Child Centred Learning Plan' are drawn up which identify the child's strengths and needs and lay down a set of achievable targets, which can be monitored, assessed and revised as required. Regular review meetings are held, to which parents are invited, to ensure careful monitoring of progress. Children with Special Educational Needs may be, when necessary, formally assessed after consultation with parents, the School Educational Psychologist and the Head. Our policy is in line with the recent SEN Code of Practice. Our SENCo is Mrs Vicky Fernandes.

Disability and Equality

The school is committed to meeting the requirements of the Disability and Equality Act 2010 and is inclusive of all children. No child is debarred because of a disability. The school has an accessibility plan which is regularly reviewed. The school is committed to working with outside agencies to support children with disabilities. As a school we are committed to promoting equality of opportunity throughout every aspect of school life. We endeavour to promote and educate our children to understand and appreciate the breadth of cultural diversity not only within our school but in the world in which we live. Together we ensure that everyone is valued as an individual. All children and parents, regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, gender and socio-economic background are welcome as members of our whole school community (our policy is in line with new legislation).

Pastoral Care

The trust between a child and his/her teacher is treated with care and respect. Time is always made for a child to share any problems with their teacher or the Head. Children will talk to a trusted adult and this is taken very seriously.

Similarly if there are any problems at home it is essential that we are made aware so that we can support your child in an understanding and sympathetic way. Confidentiality is always respected.

Safeguarding

All schools have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils and may need to share information and work in partnership with other agencies when there are concerns about a child's welfare. Our school has a Safeguarding Policy and a copy of Hertfordshire Area Child Protection Procedures, both of which are available for parents/carers to see. The school has a Designated Senior Person for child protection matters. Any parent helping in school on a regular basis is required to have a Criminal Record Bureau clearance certificate and read and sign a school safeguarding advice booklet.

Sex and Relationship Education

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. Sex Education is not taught as a specific subject in school but is covered through discussion arising from natural events that occur during the school year, e.g. the birth of a baby. Our school environment also provides the chance for individual children to confide in adults who would sensitively answer questions and give reassurance. Self esteem is a vital factor in child development. Children who have a wholesome image of themselves are more likely to be well balanced in their personal relationships.

Behaviour and Discipline

Our aim is to create and sustain an atmosphere where children learn to be responsible for their own actions and behaviour. The school has a set of 'Golden Rules' which are designed to encourage the children in responsible and caring attitudes, both for themselves and others. This is something which young children need support with, through example and discussion, so that they learn to understand the reasons for good behaviour. It is important to emphasise the positive rather than the negative. We expect courtesy towards each other (child to child, child to adult, adult to child, and adult to adult).

Praise and gratitude are to be expressed whenever appropriate. On the other hand, after any inappropriate behaviour, we take the time to discuss the matter with the children involved, and work with them to see how they should act more responsibly in future. Verbal apologies are always expected and where necessary written apologies as well. Sometimes a more specific discipline is necessary. In these instances we try to ensure that the child (or children) understands the reasons why they are being disciplined and that any sanctions are fair, just and relevant. Children are encouraged to confide in a member of staff if they are upset or troubled by the

behaviour of others. Staff will always take the concerns of children and their parents seriously, investigate, and take appropriate action where necessary.

The school has an Anti-Bullying policy and we follow County procedures. Persistent discipline problems and incidents of verbal/physical abuse are always discussed with parents of the children involved. Children need to know that home and school support each other in dealing consistently with unacceptable behaviour. We work with our children and constantly monitor their behaviour to ensure that it is appropriate and does not cause harm or upset to others.

Health and safety

Security

The safety and security of our children during the school day is very important to us all. With your co-operation we feel confident that we have created a secure school environment. We have clear procedures and policies based on the Hertfordshire guidelines for the health, safety and security of all within the school and for parents and other visitors. We provide advice on Security, Safe Routes to School, Sun Awareness and guidance on Health & Safety matters. From time to time we send reminders to parents about safety issues. Children are taught how to use resources sensibly and to take responsibility for themselves as they play and learn safely together.

Parent Helpers/Visitors

Any parent who is helping in school or attending a specific meeting is required to sign in the Visitor's Book and wear a visitor's badge. These are managed in the School Reception Area by the office staff.

Parking

Please park thoughtfully, safely and with consideration for local residents. Hertfordshire Police has issued information to schools concerning 'Flying Traffic Wardens'. They can issue fixed penalty fines and will target infringements of the parking regulations outside school, including:

- parking on pavements,
- parking on yellow lines including zig zag lines, and
- parking on "School Keep Clear" zone

Pedestrians

Please only enter the school using the small green gates. Remember to use the paths and do not walk across grassed areas. Children should be delivered to the classroom doors by a responsible adult. Access to the classrooms and to the rear of the school is restricted between 9.05am and 3.00pm (side gates are locked). Please ensure that no bikes or scooters are ridden through school grounds. Please do not bring dogs onto the school premises.

Safe Routes to School

As part of the school's travel plan we have produced maps of walking routes to school from different parts of the local area. These are available on request.

Off Site Educational visits

These are organised following advice and guidelines issued and regularly reviewed by Herts County Council. Visits are considered to be a valuable part of an enriched curriculum planned to complement topic based learning within the classroom. Separate information and permission slips will always be sent to parents prior to any off site visits.



General information

School uniform

The school colours are purple, gold and grey. Sweatshirts, cardigans and polo shirts with the school logo can be purchased from Stevenson's School Wear, 133-135 Victoria Street, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3XS, Tel: 01727 853262. The school has book bags, P.E. bags, legionnaire hats and water bottles available to purchase from the School Office. All items must be labelled with your child's name.

It is important that your child can get in and out of his/her clothes and shoes easily so please consider this when making purchases. School footwear should be appropriate for young children's needs in and around school.

P.E. Kit/Art Aprons

All children need to have an old shirt or plastic apron with long sleeves, or similar item, for all art and craft work.

For PE children need shorts, T-shirts without buttons, socks and plimsolls. Long hair needs to be tied back for safety reasons so please provide an extra hair band to keep in school. A PE bag to hang on the child's coat peg is required to hold these items when they are not being used.

Jewellery

Due to Health and Safety regulations and as recommended by Hertfordshire County Policy young children are not allowed to wear stud or drop earrings, jewellery or watches in school.

School meals

Children may choose to have a school dinner or a packed lunch. We operate a 'pupil choice' system which allows the children to choose their meal at the start of every day. Menus are sent home termly and are available on the Herts Catering website. Children with packed lunches should be able to cope with opening all containers and eating the food by themselves. Please send drinks in cartons or plastic flasks only, no cans or glass bottles.

Please be aware that we have several children in school with severe allergies and would ask that you do not include anything that contains nuts of any type.

School Dinners

Children eat altogether in the dining room. However, because seating is limited a rota system is in place and ensures every child has adequate time to eat their food. The children collect their meals and cutlery on an 'airline' tray. It is important that your child can use a knife, fork and spoon properly.

Free School Meals

All children are entitled to a 'Universal Infant Free School Meal'. However, if you receive benefits you must register with Herts County Council at www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals or telephone the customer service centre on 0300 123 4048. The school receives a substantial amount of money for every child that is registered. If you are eligible you are also entitled to free school milk and a reduction on school clubs and trips.

Milk

A drink of milk can be provided for children on a daily basis (subsidised by European Community). This can be ordered through 'Cool Milk', a form is provided in the starter pack for new children (forms can also be collected from the School Office). Payment can be made on a weekly/termly basis, all children under five are entitled to free milk.

Drinks

Children who do not have school milk have a drink from their water bottle at morning break. Fresh water is freely available from the drinking fountains during the day. (Classroom taps are not drinking water sources.)

Attendance/absenteeism

Children can only make the most of the educational opportunities available to them if they attend school regularly and punctually. Under Government regulations we are obliged to report on all unauthorised absences. It is essential therefore that we are informed of the reason for non-attendance at school.

Other authorised absences

School is unable to authorise absences unless in exceptional circumstances. Medical or dental appointments should be made outside the school day. Please inform the Head Teacher in writing well in advance.

Holidays

Parents are asked not to book family holidays during term time. Any requests for absence should be made in writing to the Head teacher before booking who may then refer to the School Governors before granting authorisation. Please be aware that most holidays will not be authorised unless there is an exceptional reason. The cost of holidays does not fall in this category. We do expect parental co-operation in this matter.



Communication between home and school

We believe that a successful education needs to be a working partnership between home and school. Parents are welcomed into school on many different occasions. We encourage parents to come and discuss any concerns or queries they may have with the class teacher or Head.

Newsletters

You will receive Newsletters with dates and general information about events during the term. Parents who register for ParentMail will receive these via the electronic system.

Curriculum Information

Information sheets are sent home to parents to update them on the work their children will be covering each half-term and how they can support them with this learning. A home learning grid is also sent out which has activities for you to support your child with at home.

Parent Workshop

Early in each school year a meeting is arranged for all parents so that class teachers and support staff can be introduced. The class teacher will then outline and explain the curriculum your child will have access to in their new class.

Consultation Evenings

Termly Teacher/Parent Consultation Evenings will be arranged to discuss your child's progress on an individual basis. Other meetings are arranged regularly to inform you about the curriculum and how you can help your child.

Open Afternoons / Evenings

This is a chance for family and friends to look at all the children's achievements throughout the school. Dates will be advised.

After School

You are welcome after school to come and share your child's daily learning and to talk with the teacher. Please do not discuss any worries in front of your child - make provision for a private talk with the teacher or Head teacher.

School Website - www.cunninghaminfants.herts.sch.uk

The website is a source of information for parents including latest news, term dates, diary dates and photographs of school activities. This also has weekly blogs from the class teachers so you can keep up to date with what is happening in class.

Parents Association

Cunningham Hill Infant School Society (CHISS) raises money for the school by organising a variety of fun events throughout the year for parents, staff and children. CHISS is totally dependent on the help and involvement of the parents. The committee members are appointed annually and welcome support from all parents. We are extremely grateful for the funds that they make available to the school. They hold regular coffee mornings on the first Friday of every month for new and existing parents to meet and chat over a coffee and a piece of cake. Information is sent out via Newsletters from the Committee.

